

Bulgaria, that little country between the Danube and the Balkans, is far from being an object of adequate importance... for which to plunge Europe from Moscow to the Pyrenees, and from the North Sea to Palermo, into a war whose issue no man can foresee. At the end of the conflict we should scarcely know why we had fought. ---Otto von Bismarck

EVENTS LEADING UP TO WORLD WAR I

<p>IMMEDIATE</p> <p>Assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, by a Bosnian separatist.</p> <p>Austria-Hungary issues an ultimatum to Serbia (complicit in the plot), which is rejected. Russia mobilizes its troops in support of the Serbs (fellow Slavs), which in turn incites Germany to fight a quick war with France before Russia would have all its forces ready to fight. World War I was on (1914).</p>	<p>ECONOMIC</p> <p>German economy industrializes heavily—greater manufactured exports, reliance upon food imports (late 1800s).</p> <p>Scramble for Africa carves up Africa for primarily for the benefit of Britain and France; Germany and Italy, only recently united, get unprofitable colonies (1880s onward).</p> <p>From 1880, nations move to raise tariffs against foreign products (US tariffs are high, in the 40% range in the 1890s). Germany is very reliant upon foreign trade, and sees its position as an exporter of manufactured goods become more fragile.</p>
<p>MILITARY</p> <p>Decline of Ottoman power in the Balkans, seen in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, creates independent nations in the Balkans. Austria-Hungary and Russia seek to expand their influence there.</p> <p>Rise of Serbia, which doubled its territory in the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, freeing Serbs under Turkish control. Their next target is Austria-Hungary, which also had Serbs (Bosnia) under their control.</p> <p>Schlieffen Plan calls for a quick strike against France (through Belgium and the Netherlands), before turning against Russia (1905). Russia and France in the early 1910s also adopt war plans involving attacks against Germany.</p> <p>German naval arms buildup German naval budget more than triples from 1899 to 1913, from 133m marks to 467m marks.</p>	<p>DIPLOMATIC</p> <p>Kaiser Wilhelm II makes the fateful decision not to renew a treaty with Russia, with a view to forging closer ties with Austria, which is in conflict with Russia in the Balkans (1890)</p> <p>Franco-Russian Alliance, supplemented with French loans to Russia. This guarantees a two-front war for Germany and Austria, if they chose to attack either France or Russia (1892).</p> <p>Britain signs ententes with France and Russia, settling its disagreements among them over colonies in Africa and Asia. British entente with France calls for their navies to patrol separate waters and protect each other's territory (1904, 1907, 1912).</p> <p>Balance of Power disrupted by union of Germany, and decline of monarchies.</p>