

## The Slippery Slope to Total War June - August, 1914

You and your group will be asked to assume the role of each of the six major European powers in turn and respond to a given situation given your national profile. It is very important that you don't flip ahead in the booklet and that we proceed in the order the countries are presented. Let's see if we would have gone to war in 1914.

For each of your decisions please give a rationale.

## **Phase 1 - Austria**

### **Profile:**

- You are one of the oldest empires in Europe
- Your lands contain many nationalities - Slavs, Magyars, Hungarians, Gypsies, German speaking peoples, etc.
- For the past sixty years your empire has been rocked by a series of nationalistic revolts - most of which you have put down with your army
- Your military is fairly well equipped, but many believe it is not large enough to protect your vast empire, especially against the threats of the Russian Empire
- You are traditional enemies with the Russian empire whose national interest is generally opposed to your own - you want to stop Russian expansion toward the Mediterranean Sea
- In order to make up for this deficiency, you have signed a mutual defense agreement with Germany and Italy called the Triple Alliance - Germany is the acknowledged head of this alliance and Italy has dropped out of the alliance. You have “issues” with Italy regarding territory on your southern border
- You have recently come into conflict with Serbia over your annexation of Bosnia
- Nationalistic revolts are spreading in your southern territories - you suspect that Serbia is encouraging these revolts
- As a nation you fear that you are losing influence in European affairs and wish for a return to the days when Austria was a major player on the continent
- You see the rotting of the Ottoman Empire as a chance to expand in this region

### **Situation:**

The heir to the Austrian throne - Arch Duke Francis Ferdinand - has been assassinated in the Bosnian city of Sarajevo by a terrorist. You suspect the Serbians may have been behind the murder.

List three courses of action which you as the leader of your country would take and the rationale for each.

## AUSTRIA - HUNGARY

<b>Political system</b>	Dual monarchy and empire. The kingdoms of Austria and Hungary were united in 1867.
<b>Leader</b>	<u>Franz Josef I</u> : emperor, 1848-1916 <u>Karl I</u> : emperor, 1916-18
<b>Population</b>	51 million (1910).
<b>Army</b>	325,000 men in the Imperial and Royal Army (drawn from all parts of the empire), 40,000 men in the Austrian territorial army and 30,000 in the Hungarian territorial army (1914). When the war started, Austria-Hungary mobilised 2.25 million men. A total of 7.8 million were mobilised for army service during the war.
<b>Navy</b>	15 battleships, 7 cruisers, 18 destroyers, 5 submarines, 90 torpedo boats (1914).
<b>Air Force</b>	250 aircraft (1916)
<b>Recent Diplomacy</b>	<p>With Germany and Italy, Austria-Hungary was a member of the <u>Triple Alliance</u>, formed in 1882, which was meant to protect its member countries against attack by Russia or France. It was renewed every five years.</p> <p>There was, however, underlying tension with Italy - a number of ethnic Italians lived within the empire.</p> <p>Austria-Hungary's annexation of Bosnia in 1908 drew it into conflict with Serbia. The Serbs wished to see Austria-Hungary expelled from the Balkans.</p>
<b>Additional information</b>	Austria-Hungary was a multi-national, multi-lingual and multi-ethnic empire. The Austrians and the Hungarians constituted the largest groups, but it also included Poles, Croats, Bosnians, Serbs, Italians, Czechs and numerous others. This ethnic and linguistic diversity weakened the power of the Austro-Hungarian military - 80% of all officers spoke German, but only 30% of other ranks.

## **Phase 2 - Serbia**

### **Profile:**

- You are a Slavic country
- You are a sovereign country
- You see yourself as the natural leader of the Slavic countries in the Balkans
- The people in your country are feeling ever more nationalistic
- You have unofficially supported organizations working toward Slav nationalism - even terrorist groups such as the Black Hand
- You have a loose defense alliance with the Russian Empire, but you are not part of the Triple Entente
- You are sympathetic to Slavic nationalistic groups within the Austrian Empire who wish to join your country
- You are traditional enemies with Austro-Hungarian Empire - your national interests are directly opposed by hers
- You are extremely bitter about Austrian annexation of Bosnia
- You have recently gone to war with Bulgaria to assert land claims, but were only partly satisfied
- Your recent expansion into Albania was frustrated

### **Situation:**

The Black Hand have assassinated the heir to the Austrian throne. The Black Hand have been receiving unofficial aid from you for years. The Austrian government has demanded they be allowed to investigate the murder within your borders. They have issued you an ultimatum - if you don't comply with their demands they will attack your country.

List three courses of action which you as the leader of your country would take and the rationale for each.

## SERBIA

<b>Political system</b>	Serbia became a monarchy in 1882 after gaining independence from Turkey (1878)
<b>Leader</b>	Peter I: sovereign, 1903-21. In 1914, Crown Prince Alexander became regent with executive authority, owing to his father's ill health. Nikola Pasic: prime minister, 1903-26
<b>Population</b>	4.5 million (1914)
<b>Army</b>	360,000 men mobilised for service in 1914
<b>Air Force</b>	15 aircraft (1914)
<b>Recent Diplomacy</b>	<p>Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and Montenegro formed the Balkan League in 1912 and won a series of victories over Turkey in the First Balkan War. However, Bulgaria was disappointed by its gains from this conflict and declared war on Greece and Serbia in 1913. The Second Balkan War ended when Bulgaria was invaded by Romania. The subsequent peace treaty doubled the size of Serbia and gave Greece control over most of the Aegean coast. Romania also gained territory.</p> <p>Serbia's long-term goal was to expel Austria-Hungary from the Balkans and form a Slav super-state.</p>
<b>Casualties by 1918</b>	Military losses (dead, wounded and missing) were in the region of 300,000-350,000, but many of these were due to disease. Civilian losses following the <u>flight over the mountains</u> may have exceeded 600,000.

### **Phase 3 - Russia**

#### **Profile:**

- You are the largest country in Europe
- Although your country is huge, you lag behind the western European powers in terms of industrialization
- Most of your population is made up of poor peasants
- You have recently suffered a series of foreign policy/military setbacks including an embarrassing loss to Japan in a 1905 war, an internal revolt in 1905, backing down over Austrian annexation of Bosnia, failing to back Serbia in its claim to Albania
- Your military is huge but ill equipped and poorly led. It takes a great deal of time to get it moving (mobilization) - if you plan to go to war, you must get a head start
- Your major foreign policy aim is to expand into the Balkans. You desire warm water ports on the Mediterranean for your navy.
- You see yourself as the natural allies of the Serbs for nationalist reasons
- Austria-Hungary is your traditional enemy
- You share a long border with Germany who is allied with Austria. You fear the German military because it is so strong, well equipped and well led
- Your royal house - the Romanovs - is related to the Royal houses of both Great Britain and Germany
- You are part of a loose defense alliance with France and Great Britain (Triple Entente) - Although you know you can depend on France for assistance you are unsure of whether Great Britain would come to your aid in case of war

#### **Situation:**

Serbia has asked you for unconditional military support in her conflict with Austria. These are in fact the terms of your alliance with Serbia.

List three courses of action which you as the leader of your country would take and the rationale for each.

## RUSSIA

<b>Political system</b>	<p>Tsarist autocracy and empire to 1917. A parliament - the Duma - was created following the 1905-06 revolution, but its role was purely consultative.</p> <p>In March 1917, the Tsar was forced to abdicate as a result of growing discontent with the war and deteriorating conditions at home. He was replaced by a provisional government in which Alexander Kerensky became the dominant figure.</p> <p>In November 1917 (October in the Russian Julian calendar), Kerensky's Provisional Government was overthrown by Lenin's Bolsheviks and Russia became the world's first communist state. The Tsar and his family were executed by the Bolsheviks in July 1918.</p>
<b>Leader</b>	<p>Nicholas II: tsar, 1894-1917 Vladimir Lenin, 1914-17</p>
<b>Population</b>	<p>166 million (1910)</p>
<b>Army</b>	<p>1.4 million men (1914). Russia's army was the largest in the world and, by December 1914, had grown to 6.5 million men</p>
<b>Navy</b>	<p>9 battleships, 12 cruisers (different classes), 29 destroyers, 67 torpedo boats, 15 submarines, 8 minelayers, 7 coastal gunboats in the Baltic and Black Sea Fleets (1914)</p>
<b>Air Force</b>	<p>360 aircraft, 16 airships (1914)</p>
<b>Recent Diplomacy</b>	<p>Russia had been humiliated by Japan in the 1904-05 war, and this had triggered a period of reform, unrest and modernisation. The Duma was established following the 1905-06 revolution, and the armed forces were modernised.</p> <p>Russia regarded Germany as its main threat, and signed an Entente with Britain in 1907.</p> <p>In 1914, the country was still racked by political dissent, which, three years later, would explode into major revolution.</p>
<b>Additional information</b>	<p>Russia's army was huge but poorly equipped: in December 1914, 6.5 million soldiers shared 4.6 million rifles. The country's primitive transport infrastructure made it difficult to deploy this huge force</p>

## **Phase 4 - Germany**

### **Profile:**

- You have the most advanced army in Europe. The only navy which can rival you is that of Great Britain
- Your country is highly industrialized and very well organized. Its system of railroads are the most advanced in Europe
- You desire an expanded empire, both over seas and in Europe
- You see yourself as the natural leader in Europe
- You are traditional enemies with France - you have controlled two French provinces since the Franco-Prussian war of 1871
- Your biggest fear is that you will have to fight a two-front war - against both France (in the west) and Russia (in the east) as this means you will have to divide your army in two
- You are unsure if Great Britain will come to the aid of Russia and France
- Your king is related to the British King
- You are the leader of the Triple Alliance and have pledged unconditional support to Austria in her dispute with Serbia and Russia
- You believe that it will take Russia a long time to mobilize her army

### **Situation:**

In response to your unconditional support of Austria, the Russia army has begun its cumbersome mobilization against both Austria and Germany.

List three courses of action which you as the leader of your country would take.

## GERMANY

<b>Political system</b>	Federal empire in which Prussia's monarch was also Kaiser (emperor) of Germany. Although elected on the basis of universal male suffrage, Germany's parliament ( <u>Reichstag</u> ) was primarily a deliberative chamber. The Kaiser controlled foreign policy, the armed forces and all ministerial appointments.
<b>Leader</b>	<u>Wilhelm II</u> : emperor, 1888-1918 Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg: chancellor, 1909-17 Bethmann-Hollweg was succeeded by a number of puppet chancellors until the German (Weimar) <u>republic</u> was declared on 9 November 1918.
<b>Population</b>	65 million (1914)
<b>Army</b>	700,000 men (summer 1914). Within a week of war being declared, the German army had expanded to 3.8 million men, and by August 1916, 4.5 million German soldiers were fighting on the Western and Eastern Fronts.
<b>Navy</b>	17 dreadnoughts, 20 pre-dreadnought battleships, 5 battle-cruisers, 25 other cruisers (various classes), 28 submarines and a further 17 under construction (1914). Germany's navy was the second largest in the world.
<b>Air Force</b>	260 aircraft, 11 airships (1914)
<b>Recent Diplomacy</b>	Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy were all members of the <u>Triple Alliance</u> (1882), a diplomatic arrangement that was designed to protect its members from attack by Russia or France.
<b>Additional information</b>	Germany emerged as a major industrial, military and political power in the late 19th century and began to acquire imperial possessions in Africa, the Pacific and the Far East. The older imperial powers regarded this as a threat to their own status.

## **Phase 5 - France**

### **Profile:**

- You see yourself as a traditional leader in the affairs of western Europe
- You are traditional enemies with Germany and have hated them for their occupation of Alsace-Lorraine since 1871
- You have a large military, but it has been rocked with scandals over the past fifteen years
- Your colonial empire has been rocked by nationalistic movements
- Germany has challenged your claims to some of your colonial holdings
- You are a member of the Triple Entente and have pledged you support to Russia in case they are attacked by Germany or Austria
- Your defenses are concentrated against Germany and not in the north of the country
- You feel confident that Great Britain would come to your aid if you were attacked

### **Situation:**

Germany has invaded Belgium to the north and mobilized its whole army in the west.

List three courses of action which you as the leader of your country would take and the rationale for each.

## FRANCE

<b>Political system</b>	Republic
<b>Leader</b>	<p>Raymond Poincaré: president, 1913-20</p> <p>Alexandre Ribot: prime minister, 1914</p> <p>René Viviani: prime minister, 1914-15</p> <p>Aristide Briand: prime minister, 1915-17</p> <p>Alexandre Ribot: prime minister, 1917</p> <p>Paul Painlevé: prime minister, 1917</p> <p><u>Georges Clemenceau</u>: prime minister, 1917-20</p>
<b>Population</b>	40 million (1911)
<b>Army</b>	770,000 French troops, 46,000 colonial troops (summer 1914). An additional 2.9 million men were mobilised by mid-August. A total of 8.32 million Frenchmen and 475,000 colonial troops served in France's army during the war
<b>Navy</b>	19 battleships, 32 cruisers, 86 destroyers, 34 submarines and 115 torpedo boats (1914)
<b>Air Force</b>	132 aircraft (1914)
<b>Recent Diplomacy</b>	France had been humiliated by Prussia during the 1870-1 war (losing Alsace-Lorraine) and regarded Germany as her main enemy. France and Russia concluded an alliance between 1891-94 (which would enable them to squeeze Germany in any future two-front war) and in 1904, France and Britain concluded the Entente Cordiale (which resolved outstanding disputes in North Africa). Russia and Britain concluded an Entente in 1907, and the <u>Triple Entente</u> was generally seen as a counter-balance to the <u>Triple Alliance</u> of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy.
<b>Additional Remarks</b>	France had extensive imperial interests and could count on the support of these colonies in time of war.

## **Phase 6 - Great Britain**

### **Profile:**

- You have the largest empire on earth. You depend on this empire to supply your country with the necessities of life
- You have the largest navy on earth and depend on it to defend your empire and ensure you can import all the goods you need. This is especially important considering that you are an island
- You have a loose agreement with Russia and France to come to their aid if they are attacked by Germany or Austria
- You have a more solid agreement with Belgium guaranteeing her neutrality (you will use your military to help ensure it).
- You are particularly wary of a hostile power gaining control of the territory directly opposite your eastern shores
- Your king is related to the Kaiser in Germany

### **Situation:**

Germany has invaded Belgium in an attempt to outflank the French army. Belgium, France, and, Russia have all asked for your assistance.

List three courses of action which you as the leader of your country would take.

## UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

<b>Political system</b>	Constitutional monarchy and empire
<b>Leader</b>	George V: sovereign, 1910-36 H H Asquith: prime minister, 1908-16 <u>David Lloyd George</u> : prime minister, 1916-22
<b>Population</b>	45.2 million (Britain and Ireland)
<b>Army</b>	250,000 regular troops (1914). Half of these were stationed abroad; half were in the British Expeditionary Force. Britain was forced to introduce conscription in 1916
<b>Navy</b>	24 dreadnoughts, 29 pre-dreadnought battleships, 200 cruisers (different classes), 200 destroyers (1914). Britain's navy was the largest in the world
<b>Air Force</b>	63 aircraft (1914)
<b>Recent Diplomacy</b>	Britain joined France in the Entente Cordiale ('friendly understanding') in 1904. This was expanded into the <u>Triple Entente</u> when Britain signed an entente with Russia in 1907. However, neither of these committed Britain to military action. On the whole, it wanted to stay out of European wars (as long as no single power dominated the continent) and concentrate its energies on its empire.
<b>Additional information</b>	Britain's was the largest empire in the world in 1914, covering 11.5 million square miles and comprising 365 million people. There were British colonies and dominions in Africa, the Caribbean, North America, the Pacific and Australasia, and Britain could count on support from these territories in time of war. By the start of the 20th century, Britain's economic pre-eminence was under threat from both Germany and the United States.

## **Phase 7 - Canada**

### **Profile:**

- Your country gained a measure of independence from Britain in 1867
- The majority of your population are first or second generation Canadians from Great Britain who retain a great deal of loyalty to her
- The large Francophone population is at best ambivalent about the war, at worst opposed to it
- Your foreign policy is dictated by Great Britain and thus as soon as she is at war, so are you
- In the last war that Britain was involved in, the Anglo-Boer War of 1899, Canada sent a contingent of volunteers to fight in South Africa, funded and led by the British
- You have a very small army (6,000 soldiers) and two ships in your navy
- Agriculture is your largest economic sector.
- The population of your country in 1914 is 8,000,000

### **Situation:**

The moment that Great Britain declared war on the Central Powers, Canada was also at war. It is up to you, though, exactly how Canada will contribute to the British war effort. Military, economic, financial, or some combination thereof. Also, it is up to you the size of the contribution.

## CANADA

**Political system**

Self-governing dominion within the British empire (1867)

**Leader**

Robert Borden: prime minister, 1911-20

**Population**

7.2 million (1911)

**Army**

3,000 regular soldiers backed up by a volunteer militia (1914). Anticipating the outbreak of a European war, Canada established a Canadian Expeditionary Force in mid-1914, and 30,000 Canadian troops were training in Britain by November 1914. A total of 620,000 Canadians volunteered for service during the First World War, mainly in the army but also on naval duties and with the Royal Flying Corps.