The MAIN Causes of WWI

- Militarism
- Alliances
- Imperialism
- Nationalism
MILITARISM

• Germany was competing with the UK to build battleships. Why?
• Germany **Feared** a Two Front War
• The British **feared** an attack on their Empire
• Other countries also began to build their Militaries out of **fear**
MILITARISM

- Germany was competing with Russia and France to expand their armies
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1914</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1.3m</td>
<td>5.0m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>0.73m</td>
<td>4.0m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>0.40m</td>
<td>1.2m</td>
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Militarism & Arms Race


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1870</th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1914</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>94</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1910-1914 Increase in Defense Expenditures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Increase</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>73%</td>
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</table>
Alliances

• By 1914 all the major powers were linked by a system of alliances.
• The alliances made it more likely that a war would start.
• Once started, the alliances made it more likely to spread.
Imperialism

• All the great powers were competing for colonies / territory. Why?
• Cheap supply of raw materials and looking for markets for their manufactured goods
• The British feared Germany in Africa.
• The Austrians feared Serbia / Russia in the Balkans
This map shows Africa in 1914 and shows how much land the major nations had taken over.

There is so much detail that it is a little difficult to see exactly what has happened.

To get a better idea of how much of Africa was controlled by each European power, click on any of the links below.
Nationalism

• National Interests more important than foreign cooperation.
• Goal was to gain Glory and achieve a “place in the sun”.
• In Europe Slavs, aided by Serbia and Russia, wanted to be free of Austrian rule.
Pan-Slavism: The Balkans, 1914
Underlying Causes

FEAR

• Secret Treaties
  - Allied Powers: France, GB and Russia
  - Central Powers: Austria-Hungary, Germany and Turkey (Ottoman Empire)
• Two Front War
  - Germany had Russia to the east and France to the west
  - Germany decides to build up its military
  - This leads other countries to build up their military
  - “Arms Race is On”
Underlying Causes

Misperception

• The greatest lesson one can learn from WWI
• Having a diabolical enemy image which was rampant just before the war
• Having no regard for the adversary’s point of view
Significant Individuals 1.

- Kaiser Wilhelm II
- Built up German army and navy
- Aggressive foreign policy
- Determined to make Germany a top nation.
- Distrusted by other powers

“Germany must have its place in the sun”
“The world belongs to the strong.”
Significant Individuals 2

- Count Berchtold
- Austrian Prime Minister.
- During the July Crisis, decided on a very tough ultimatum for Serbia

“Were the Serbs to agree to all the demands, this would not be to my liking”
Significant Individuals 3

- Bethmann Hollweg
- German Prime Minister
- Gave very strong support to Austria during the July crisis while Kaiser was cruising on his yacht

“The Austrian demands are moderate. Any interference by Britain, France and Russia would be followed by incalculable consequences”
The Crisis 1.

- 28 June 1914
- Heir to Austrian throne Franz Ferdinand visits Sarajevo.
- Capital of Bosnia, recently grabbed by Austria.
- Hotbed of Slav nationalism

Seal of the Black Hand group
The Crisis 2.

- “Black Hand” terrorists attack the Arch Duke
- Bomb attempt fails in morning
- Gavrilo Princip shoots Archduke and wife in the afternoon.
- Austrians blame Serbia for supporting terrorists.
The Crisis 3.

- Austrians, supported by Germany, send Serbia a tough ultimatum.
- Serbia agrees to all but two terms of the ultimatum.
- Russia mobilizes her troops to support Serbia
- Germany demands that Russia stands her armies down.
- Germany declares war on Russia

“Demands must be put to Serbia that would be wholly impossible for them to accept …”
Why did Britain get involved?

- Britain had **Ententes** with France and Russia.
- Only “friendly agreements” but French and Russians given impression Britain would fight.
- The Schlieffen Plan

Sir Edward Grey
British Foreign Secretary
… “There’s some devilry going on in Berlin”
The Schlieffen Plan

- Germany’s military plan to defeat France and Russia.
- “Knock out blow” aimed at France first.
- Avoid French defences by invasion of Belgium.
- Germans thought Britain would not intervene.
Britain’s Reaction

- 1838- UK had signed a Treaty to protect Belgium.
- Britain also scared of Germany controlling Channel ports.
- Did not want Germany to defeat France and dominate Europe. Britain next?
- UK issued ultimatum to Germany to withdraw troops from Belgium. War declared August 4 1914