



“ The Great War was without precedent ... never had so many nations taken up arms at a single time. Never had the battlefield been so vast... never had the fighting been so gruesome...”

WORLD WAR I CAUSES OF WWI

-  Nationalism
-  Militarism
-  Imperialism
-  Alliances
-  Unrest in the Balkans

NATIONALISM



Strong feelings of pride in your country. A desire to make your country more empowered.

- Large countries wanted to get larger
- Smaller countries wanted to protect themselves
- Some ethnic groups within a country wanted to break away and form their own country



In 1914, all over Europe, people greeted war with great joy and enthusiasm

People were very proud and patriotic across the world and were very eager to let the rest of the world know how strong and important their country was. Many people thought that their country was better than others.



A mobilization rally in Germany, 1914. Recognize anyone?

MILITARISM

- Countries believed that it was good to have a strong military.
- Making your country bigger and more powerful was a goal.
- Survival of the Fittest.
- Aggressive Military Build-up.





Britain and Germany were competing to have the most powerful navy in the world. This caused fear in other countries and led to a real sense of tension in Europe.

The arms race between Great Britain and Germany in the decades before World War I saw a boom in the construction of state of the art battleships such as this British Dreadnought built in 1906.

Countries competed to see who could build up the biggest store of weapons.

All the major countries of Europe built up their armies and navies.

In 1914, their armed forces stood like this:

- Germany: 2,200,000 soldiers, 97 warships
- Austria-Hungary: 810,000 soldiers, 28 warships.
- Italy: 750,000 soldiers, 36 warships
- France: 1,125,000 soldiers, 62 warships
- Russia: 1,200,000 soldiers, 30 warships
- Great Britain: 711,000 soldiers, 185 warships

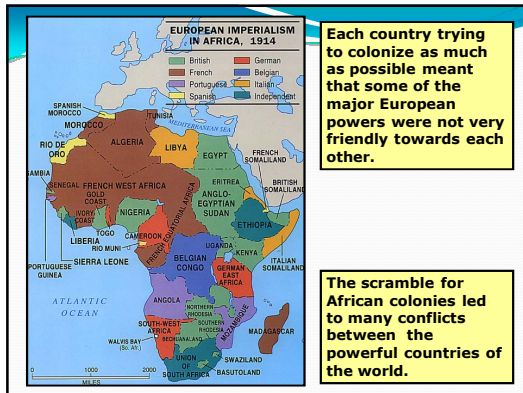
As one country increased its army, all others felt obliged to increase their armies to keep the 'balance of power'.

IMPERIALISM



The practice of extending the power and wealth of a country by acquiring new territories (colonies) throughout the world.

This led to much competition, mistrust and conflict.



ALLIANCES



Before 1914 Europe's main powers were divided into two armed camps by a series of alliances:

- Triple Alliance: Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy
- Triple Entente: Britain, Russia, France

Although these alliances were defensive, any conflict between two countries was bound to involve the other countries.



BRITAIN, FRANCE, RUSSIA, GERMANY, AUSTRO-HUNGARY, ITALY

■ Triple Entente ■ Triple Alliance

"The alliances created an excessively rigid diplomatic framework, within which relatively small detonators could produce huge explosions" (A.J.P. Taylor)

Eventually, alliances and friendships between countries made the war a true world war.

■ Allies ■ Central Powers ■ Neutral

UNREST IN THE BALKANS

The Balkans refers to Southeastern Europe - Bosnia and Herzegovina (controlled by Austria Hungary), Serbia.

... and the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand by The Black Hand, a Serbian nationalist organization.

- Jun 28: Gavrilo Princip (member of the Black Hand, a Serbian, anti-Austrian group) assassinates Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Serbia
- Austria-Hungary demands the right to enter Serbia to investigate the assassination, but Serbia refuses
- Jul 28: Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia
- Serbia asks "big brother" Russia for help
- Russia starts to mobilize troops towards Austria-Hungary and Germany
- France (Russia's ally) starts to mobilize against Germany
- Aug 1: Germany declares war on Russia
- Aug 3: Germany declares war on France. Invades Belgium on the way to France
- Aug 4: Britain declares war on Germany
- France, England, Russia (Allies) unite in war against Germany, Austria-Hungary (Central Powers)
