

Whose Fault was the First World War

2. Who Struck the Match?



Alliances

- The Dual Alliance was a defensive alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary, which was created by treaty on October 7, 1879, as part of Germany's Otto von Bismarck's system of alliances to prevent or limit war.
- The two powers promised each other support in case of attack by Russia.
- Also, each state promised benevolent neutrality to the other if one of them was attacked by another European power (generally taken to be France, even more so after the Franco-Russian Alliance of 1894).
- It was one of the more surprising alliances of its time. Though both shared the German language and a similar culture, Austria-Hungary and Germany were often driven apart, most notably during the recent Austro-Prussian War. Additionally, the Habsburg rulers believed that the promotion of nationalism, which was favoured by Germany, would destroy their multinational empire. However, their common distrust of Russia brought both empires together for a common cause.
- In 1881, Italy lost in the competition with France to establish a colony in Tunis (now Tunisia). To enlist diplomatic support, Italy joined Germany and Austria-Hungary to form the Triple Alliance in 1882.



Alliances

- The Franco-Russian Alliance, also known as the Dual Entente or Russo-French Rapprochement, was an alliance formed by the agreements of 1891–94.
- The strengthening of the German Empire, the creation of the Triple Alliance of 1882, and the exacerbation of Franco-German and Russo-German tensions at the end of the 1880s led to a common foreign policy and mutual strategic military interests between France and Russia.
- The development of financial ties between the two countries created the economic prerequisites for the Russo-French Alliance.
- The representatives of the Russian and French general staffs signed a military convention on August 17 (August 5 in Russian calendar), 1892, which provided for mutual military aid in the event of a German attack.



Alliances

- Britain abandoned its policy of splendid isolation in the 1900s, after it had been isolated during the Second Boer War.
- The Triple Entente describes the informal understanding between the Russian Empire, the French Third Republic, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.
- It was built upon the Franco-Russian Alliance of 1894, the Entente Cordiale of 1904 between France and Britain, and the Anglo-Russian Entente of 1907.
- The Triple Entente, unlike the Triple Alliance or the Franco-Russian Alliance itself, was not an alliance of mutual defence.



Alliances

- Throughout the 1890s and the 1900s, the French and the Russians made clear the limits of the alliance did not extend to provocations caused by each other's adventurous foreign policy.
- That changed at the end of 1911, particularly during the Balkan Wars in 1912–1913, the French view changed to accept the importance of the Balkans to Russia.
- Moreover, France clearly stated that if, as a result of a conflict in the Balkans, war broke out between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, France would stand by Russia.
- The Russian ambassador conveyed Poincaré's message as saying that "if Russia wages war, France also wages war."
- But France has no land frontier where it could intervene directly in a war between Russia and Austria.



Alliances

- Russia had no formal treaty obligation to Serbia, it emphasized its interest in controlling the Balkans, viewing it as a long-term strategic goal to gain a military advantage over Germany and Austria-Hungary.
- In 1908, Austria-Hungary annexed the former Ottoman province of Bosnia and Herzegovina, leading to the Russian-backed formation of the Balkan League aimed at preventing further Austrian expansion.
- Although there was no formal alliance between Russia and Serbia, their close bilateral ties provided Russia with a pathway into the weakening Ottoman Empire and provided the opportunity for a second front in a Russo-Austrian war.
- The Pan Slav movement and the Orthodox religion strengthened links.
- The Second Balkan War transformed Bulgaria into a resentful regional power, setting the stage for renewed attempts to achieve its national goals.
- As a result, Serbia emerged as the primary Russian ally in the region.



War Plans

- Moltke (the younger)(photo), Joffre, Conrad, and other military commanders held that seizing the initiative was extremely important. That theory encouraged all belligerents to devise war plans to strike first to gain the advantage.
- The war plans all included complex plans for mobilization of the armed forces, either as a prelude to war or as a deterrent.
- The continental Great Powers' mobilization plans included arming and transporting millions of men and their equipment, typically by rail and to strict schedules,
- The mobilization plans limited the scope of diplomacy, as military planners wanted to begin mobilisation as early as possible to avoid being caught on the defensive. They also put pressure on policymakers to begin their own mobilization once it was discovered that other nations had begun to mobilize.
- In 1969, A. J. P. Taylor wrote that mobilization schedules were so rigid that once they were begun, they could not be cancelled without massive disruption of the country and military disorganisation, and they could not proceed without physical invasion (of Belgium by Germany). Thus, diplomatic overtures conducted after the mobilizations had begun were ignored.



Austria Hungary

- Between 1867 and 1918 Austria-Hungary was a military and diplomatic alliance of two sovereign states with a single monarch who was titled both Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary.
- It was formed with the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 in the aftermath of the Austro-Prussian War.
- Following the 1867 reforms, the Austrian and Hungarian states were co-equal in power. The Hungarian government consisted of a prime minister and cabinet appointed by the emperor but responsible to the Diet of Hungary, a bicameral parliament elected by a narrow franchise. The Diet was convened by the Minister-President.
- Joint Austro-Hungarian affairs were managed through "common" ministries of foreign affairs, defence, and finance. The respective ministers were responsible to delegations representing separate Austrian and Hungarian parliaments. But all decisions of the delegations had to be ratified by the Imperial council in Vienna and by the Hungarian parliament in Budapest.
- Although the "common" ministry of defence administered the imperial and royal armies, the emperor acted as their commander in chief.



The Lands of the Crown of Saint Stephen consisted of the territories of the Kingdom of Hungary (16) and the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia (17).

Austria Hungary

- The Austrian Reichsrat, a bicameral legislature was elected by direct, secret and universal suffrage—for men from 1907.
- In this Lower House (with 516 members in 1907), at first German-speaking deputies dominated, but with the extension of the suffrage the Slavs gained a majority.
- An ethnic nationalist struggle between German-speaking and Slavic deputies, especially in the context of the Czech National Revival, was played out.
- The Czechs were antagonized by radical German nationalists led by Georg von Schönerer, demanding the dissolution of the Monarchy and the unification of the "German Austrian" lands with the German Empire.
- When Czech obstruction at the Reichsrat prevented the parliament from working, the emperor went on to rule autocratically through imperial decrees submitted by his government.
- The Reichsrat was prorogued in March 1914 at the behest of Minister-President Count Karl von Stürgkh and was not reconvened until May 1917.



Serbia



- The principal aims of Serbian policy were to consolidate the Russian-backed expansion of Serbia in the Balkan Wars and to achieve dreams of a Greater Serbia, which included the unification of lands with large ethnic Serb populations in Austria-Hungary, including Bosnia.
- Underlying that was a culture of extreme nationalism and a cult of assassination, which romanticized the slaying of the Ottoman Sultan Murad I as the heroic epilogue to the otherwise-disastrous Battle of Kosovo on 28 June 1389.
- Serbian policy was complicated by the fact that the main actors in 1914 were both the official Serb government, led by Nikola Pašić (photo L), and the "Black Hand" terrorists, led by the head of Serb military intelligence, known as Apis (photo R). The Black Hand believed that a Greater Serbia would be achieved by provoking a war with Austria-Hungary by an act of terror. The war would be won with Russian backing.
- The official government position was to focus on consolidating the gains made during the exhausting Balkan War and to avoid further conflicts. That official policy was temporized by the political necessity of simultaneously and clandestinely supporting dreams of a Greater Serbian state in the long term.
- "Serbian authorities were partly unwilling and partly unable to suppress the irredentist activity that had given rise to the assassinations in the first place".



Arms Race

- By the 1870s to 1880s, all the major powers were preparing for a large-scale war - although none expected one.
- Britain neglected its small army but focused on building up the Royal Navy, which was already stronger than the next two largest navies combined.
- Germany, France, Austria, Italy, Russia, and some smaller countries set up conscription systems in which young men would serve from one to three years in the army and then spend the next twenty years or so in the reserves, with annual summer training. Each country devised a mobilization system to call up reserves quickly and send them to key points by rail.
- Every year, general staffs updated and expanded their plans in terms of complexity. Each country stockpiled arms and supplies for an army that ran into the millions. Germany in 1874 had a regular professional army of 420,000 with an additional 1.3 million reserves. By 1897, the regular army was 545,000 strong and the reserves 3.4 million.
- The French in 1897 had 3.4 million reservists, Austria 2.6 million, and Russia 4.0 million. Conscription-law changes in France in 1913, driven by Poincaré, boosted numbers in the French military even further.
- The various national war-plans had been perfected by 1914, but with Russia and Austria trailing in effectiveness.
- Recent wars since the American Civil War, 1861-1865 had typically been short: a matter of months.
- All war-plans called for a decisive opening and assumed victory would come after a short war.



The Queen Elizabeth-class battleships were a group of five super-dreadnoughts built for the Royal Navy during the 1910s. These battleships were superior in firepower, protection and speed to their Royal Navy predecessors of the Iron Duke class as well as preceding German classes such as the König class. The corresponding Bayern-class ships were generally considered competitive, although the Queen Elizabeth class were 2 knots (3.7 km/h) faster and outnumbered the German class 5:2.

1910

- A Serbian nationalist society Narodna Odbrana, was formed in Belgrade on 8 October 1908 under the initiative of Milovan Milovanović. Under the guise of cultural activities, it operated to undermine the loyalty of Bosnian Serbs to the Habsburg regime.
- In Bosnia-Herzegovina existed an aggregation of local revolutionary groups that became known as Young Bosnia, their goal was the end of Austria-Hungarian colonial rule in Bosnia and the unification of all South Slavs.
- In May 1911, the Black Hand, a secret society dedicated to creating a Greater Serbia through "terrorist action", was established by key members of the Narodna Odbrana including Dimitrijević (aka Apis)(photo) and Tankosić.
- Dragutin Dimitrijević better known by his nickname Apis, was a Serbian army officer and chief of the military intelligence section of the general staff in 1913. He is best known as the most prominent member of the Black Hand, a secret military society and for organising the 1903 overthrow of the Serbian government and assassination of King Alexander I of Serbia and Queen Draga.
- On 3 June 1910, Bogdan Žerajić, a young revolutionary loosely connected to Young Bosnia, attempted to kill the Austrian governor of Bosnia-Herzegovina, General Marijan Varešanin. Žerajić was a 22-year-old Bosnian Serb from Nevesinje, Herzegovina, who was a student at the University of Zagreb. The five bullets Žerajić fired at Varešanin and the fatal bullet he put in his own brain made Žerajić an inspiration to would be future assassins,



Драгутин Т. Димитријевић-Апис

1913

- In 1913, Emperor Franz Joseph commanded Archduke Franz Ferdinand (photo), heir presumptive to the Austro-Hungarian throne, to observe the military maneuvers in Bosnia scheduled for June 1914.
- Following the maneuvers, Ferdinand and his wife planned to visit Sarajevo to open the state museum in its new premises there.
- Duchess Sophie, although of high aristocratic birth, was not from a dynastic family, her union with the Habsburg heir could only be a morganatic marriage. Emperor Franz Joseph had only consented to their marriage on the condition that their descendants would never ascend the throne.
- [Sophie] could never share [Franz Ferdinand's] rank ... could never share his splendours, could never even sit by his side on any public occasion. There was one loophole ... his wife could enjoy the recognition of his rank when he was acting in a military capacity. Hence, he decided, in 1914, to inspect the army in Bosnia. There, at its capital Sarajevo, the Archduke and his wife could ride in an open carriage side by side



1914

- Gavrilo Princip was part of a group of six Bosnian would be assassins aiming to kill the Archduke together with Muhamed Mehmedbašić, Vaso Čubrilović, Nedeljko Čabrinović, Cvjetko Popović and Trifko Grabež coordinated by Danilo Ilić.
- All but one were Bosnian Serbs and members of a student revolutionary group that later became known as Young Bosnia.
- The political objective of the assassination was to free Bosnia and Herzegovina of Austria-Hungarian rule and establish a common South Slav ("Yugoslav") state.



Gavrilo Princip outside the courthouse

28 May 1914

- Major Tankosić gave the assassins one FN Model 1910 pistol. They practised shooting a few rounds of scarce and expensive .380 ACP pistol ammunition in a park near Belgrade.
- On **28 May** Tankosić, directly and through Ciganović, not only provided six hand grenades and four new Browning FN Model 1910 automatic pistols with .380 ACP ammunition, but also money and suicide pills.
- Tankosić also provided a special map with the location of gendarmes marked, knowledge of contacts on a clandestine "tunnel" used to infiltrate agents and arms into Austria-Hungary, and a small card authorizing the use of that tunnel.



Princip's FN Model 1910 pistol, displayed at the Museum of Military History, Vienna, 2009

3 June

- Princip, Grabež, and Čabrinović left Belgrade by boat on 28 May and traveled along the Sava river to Šabac where they handed the small card to Captain Popović of the Serbian Border Guard. Popović, in turn, provided them with a letter to Serbian Captain Prvanović.
- Princip, Grabež, and Čabrinović reached Loznica by train on 29 May, where Captain Prvanović summoned three of his revenue sergeants to discuss the best way to cross the border undetected.
- Princip and Grabež then had a falling out with Čabrinović over his repeated violations of operational security.
- Čabrinović handed over the weapons he was carrying to Princip and Grabež. Princip told Čabrinović to go alone to Zvornik, make an official crossing there using Grabež's ID card and then go on to Tuzla and link back up.
- Sergeant Budivoj Grbić accepted the task and led Princip and Grabež by foot to Isaković's Island, a small island in the middle of the Drina river that separated Serbia from Bosnia.
- They and their weapons reached the island on 31 May. Grbić passed the terrorists and their weapons to the agents of the Serbian Narodna Odbrana for transport into Austro-Hungarian territory and from safe-house to safe-house.
- Princip and Grabež crossed into Austria-Hungary on the evening of 1 June. They and the weapons were then passed from agent to agent until on 3 June they arrived in Tuzla. They left the weapons in the hands of the Narodna Odbrana agent Miško Jovanović and rejoined Čabrinović.



Route of the assassins from Belgrade to Sarajevo

Say 15th June?

- The Narodna Odbrana agents reported their activities to the Narodna Odbrana President, Božidar Janković, who in turn reported to the then Serbian Caretaker Prime Minister Nikola Pašić (photo).
- Nikola Pašić was a Serbian politician and diplomat. He served five times as prime minister of Serbia.
- After the First and second Balkan Wars (1912–13) which almost doubled the size of Serbia with the territories of what was at the time considered Old Serbia (Kosovo, Metohija and Vardar Macedonia), retaken from the Ottomans after five centuries Pašić clashed with some military structures about the handling of the newly acquired territories.
- Pašić believed the area should be included into the Serbian political and administrative system through democratic elections, while the Royal Serbian Army sought to keep the areas under the military control.



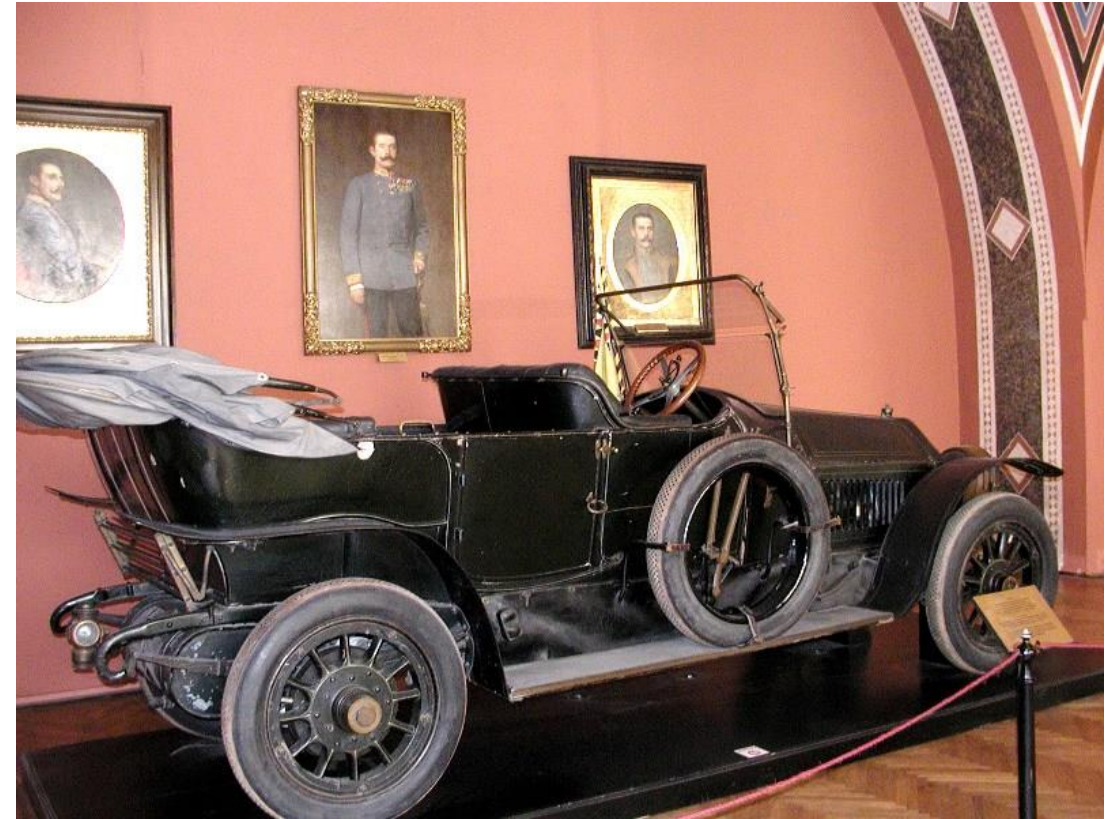
27 June

- The conspirators then waited for 28 June.
- A co-conspirator Danilo Ilić (photo) collected the weapons from Jovanovic in Tuzla on the 15th June.
- Ilić began handing out the weapons on 27 June. Until that day, Ilić had kept the identities of the assassins from Belgrade secret from those he had recruited locally and vice versa.
- Then, that night "On the eve of the outrage Ilić introduced me to Princip in a Sarajevo café with the words 'Mehmedbašić who tomorrow is to be with us.



28 June 1914

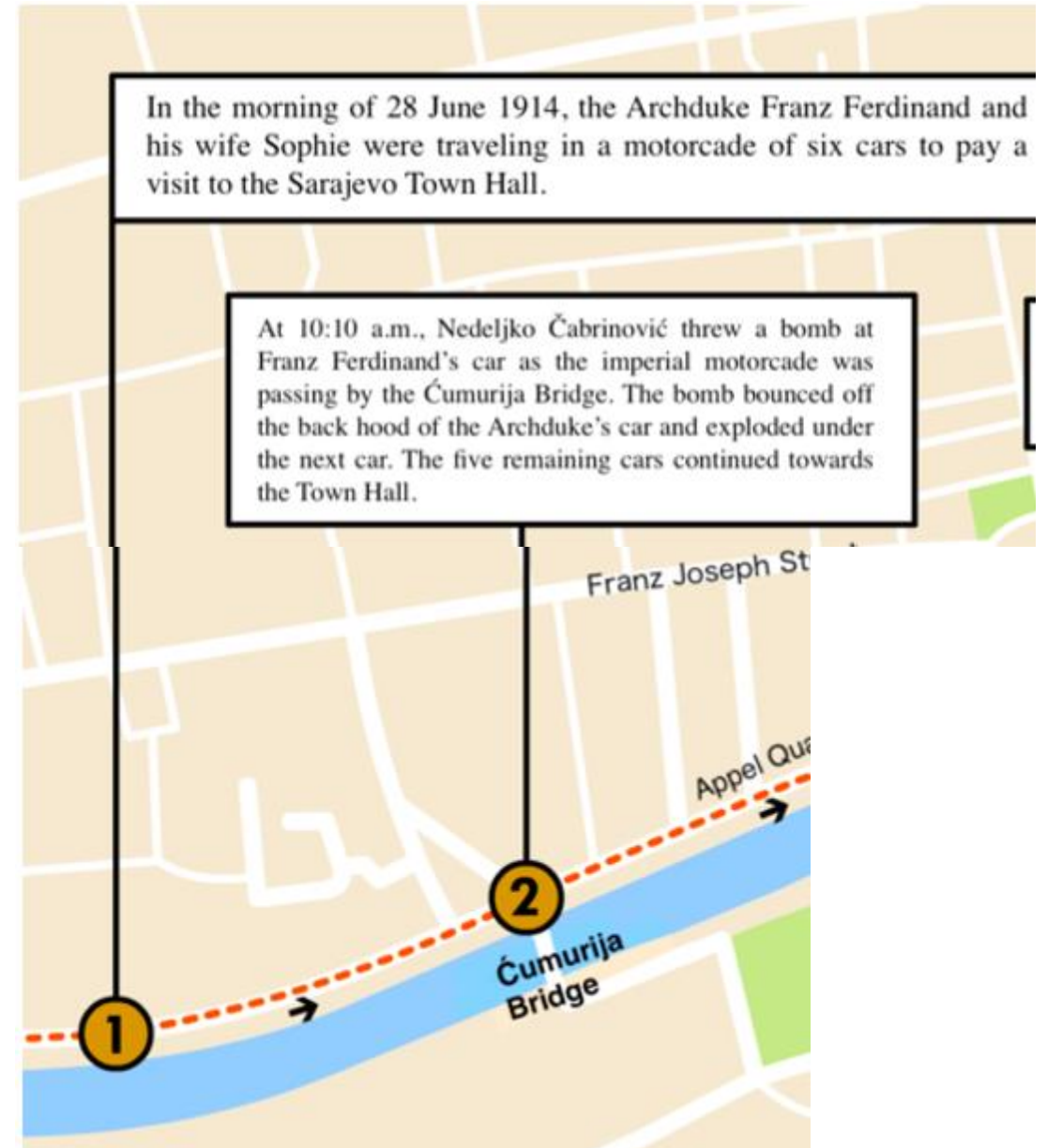
- On the morning of Sunday 28 June 1914, Ilić positioned the six assassins along the motorcade route. Franz Ferdinand and his party arrived in Sarajevo by train.
- Governor Oskar Potiorek met the party at Sarajevo station. Six automobiles were waiting.
- The third car in a six car motorcade was a Gräf & Stift 28/32 PS open sports car with its top folded down. Franz Ferdinand, Sophie, Governor Potiorek, and Lieutenant Colonel Count Franz von Harrach rode in this third car.
- The motorcade's first stop on the preannounced program was for a brief inspection of a military barracks. According to the program, at 10:00 a.m., the motorcade was to leave the barracks for the town hall by way of the Appel Quay.



The 1911 Gräf & Stift 28/32 PS Double Phaeton in which Archduke Franz Ferdinand was riding at the time of his assassination, Museum of Military History, Vienna (2003)

28 June 1914

- The motorcade passed the first assassin, Mehmedbašić. Danilo Ilić had placed him in front of the garden of the Mostar Café and armed him with a bomb. Mehmedbašić failed to act.
- Ilić had placed Vaso Čubrilović next to Mehmedbašić, arming him with a pistol and a bomb. He too failed to act.
- Further along the route, Ilić had placed Nedeljko Čabrinović on the opposite side of the street near the Miljacka river, arming him with a bomb.
- At 10:10 am, Franz Ferdinand's car approached and Čabrinović threw his bomb. The bomb bounced off the folded back convertible cover into the street. The bomb's timed detonator caused it to explode under the next car, putting that car out of action, leaving a 1-foot-diameter, 6.5-inch-deep crater and wounding 16–20 people.
- Čabrinović swallowed his cyanide pill and jumped into the Miljacka river. Čabrinović's suicide attempt failed, as the old cyanide only induced vomiting, and the Miljacka was only 13 cm deep due to the hot, dry summer. Police dragged Čabrinović out of the river, and he was severely beaten by the crowd before being taken into custody.
- The procession sped away towards the Town Hall leaving the disabled car behind. Cvjetko Popović, Gavrilo Princip, and Trifun Grabež failed to act as the motorcade passed them at high speed.



28 June 1914

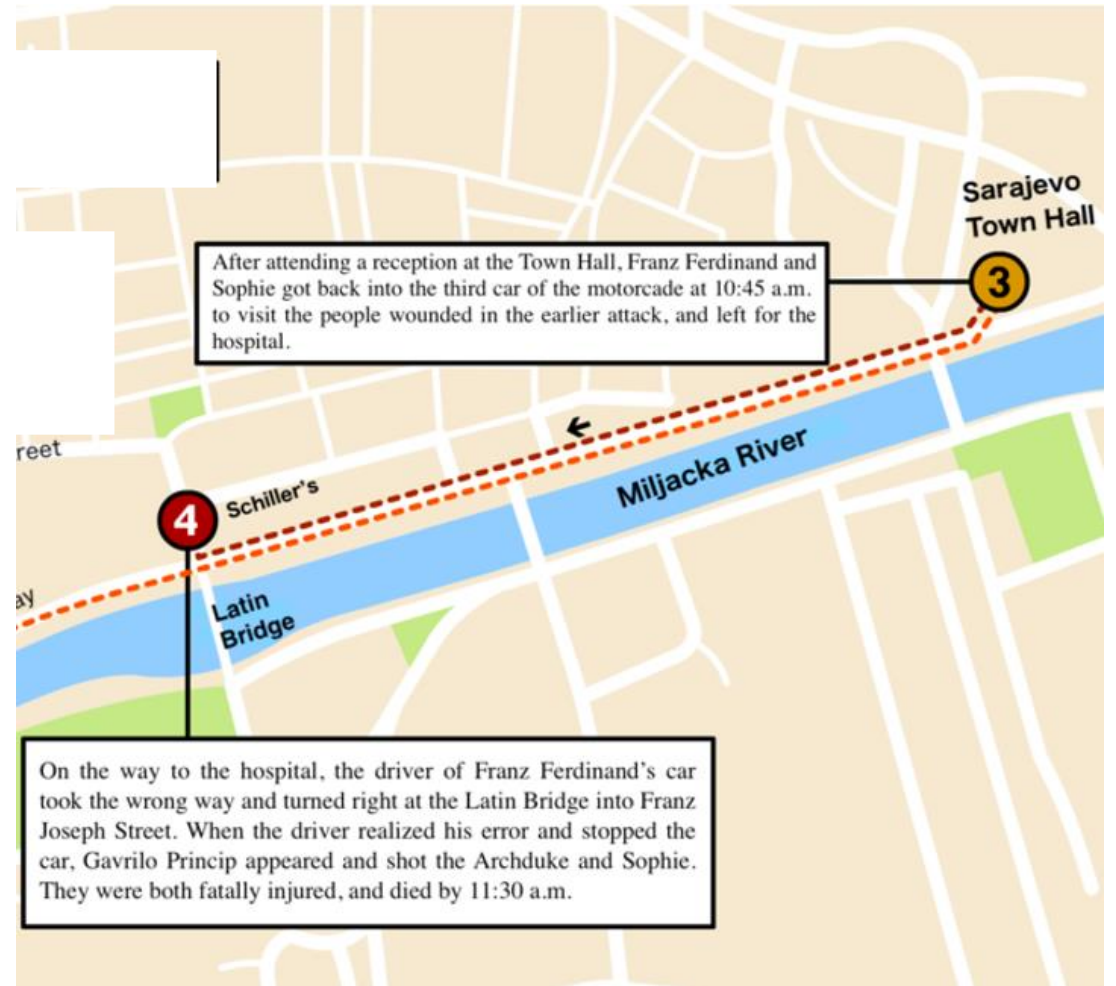
- Arriving at the Town Hall for a scheduled reception, Franz Ferdinand interrupted a prepared speech of welcome to protest: "Mr. Mayor, I came here on a visit and I am greeted with bombs. It is outrageous.
- Franz Ferdinand and Sophie gave up their planned program in favor of visiting the wounded from the bombing, at the hospital.
- General Potiorek had decided that the imperial motorcade should travel straight along the Appel Quay to the Sarajevo Hospital so that they could avoid the crowded city center.



the Archduke and his wife emerging from the Sarajevo Town Hall to board their car at 10.45.

28 June 1914

- However, Potiorek failed to communicate his decision to the drivers.
- After learning that the first assassination attempt had been unsuccessful, Princip thought about a position to assassinate the Archduke on his return journey and decided to move to a position in front of Schiller's delicatessen near the Latin Bridge.
- At this point, the first and second cars of the Archduke's motorcade suddenly turned right into a side street, leaving the Appel Quay.
- When the Archduke's driver followed their route, Governor Potiorek called out to the driver to stop as he was going the wrong way. The driver braked, and when he attempted to put the car into reverse accidentally stalled the engine close to where Princip was standing.
- The assassin stepped up to the footboard of the car, and shot Franz Ferdinand and Sophie at point-blank range



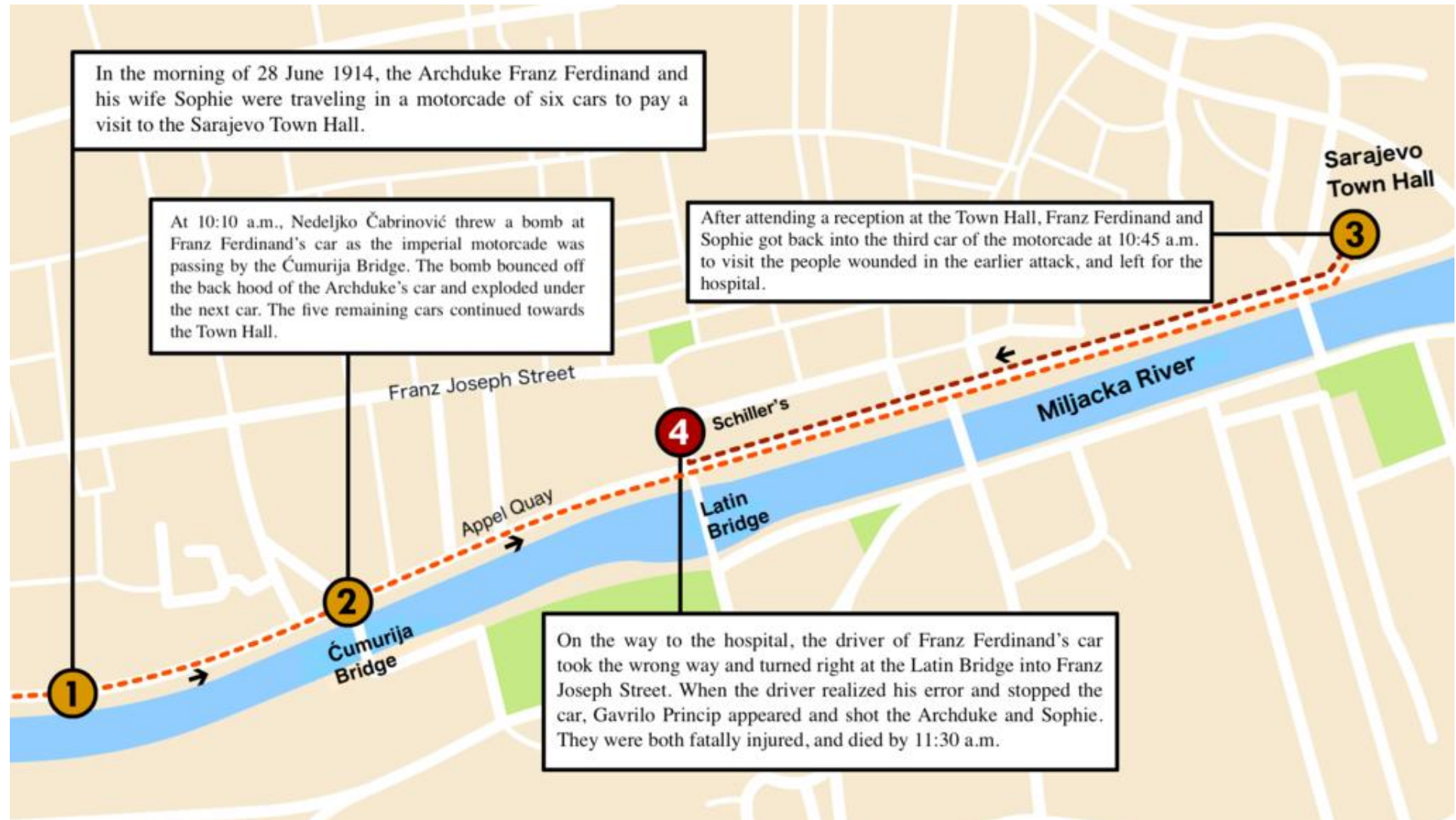
28 June 1914

- "the first bullet wounded the Archduke in the jugular vein, the second inflicted an abdominal wound on the Duchess."
- Princip tried to shoot himself but was immediately seized and arrested.
- At his sentencing, Princip stated that his intention had been to kill Governor Potiorek, rather than Sophie.
- The imperial couple were dead by 11:30 a.m on 28 June 1914; Sophie was dead on arrival at the Governor's residence, and Franz Ferdinand died 10 minutes later.



Arrest of a suspect in Sarajevo during the aftermath of the assassination.

The route of the Archduke's motorcade 28 June 1914



THE WEATHER.

RECENT FALLS OF RAIN.

CHARLEVILLAS, June 27.

The weather to-day is beautifully fine. All signs of rain have disappeared. The late rains appear to have been general throughout the district.

GATTON, June 28.

Unsettled weather still prevails, light showers having fallen yesterday, and threatened again to-day. The soaking rain of the past week has made the land almost too wet to work.

LONGREACH, June 27.

The weather is keeping fine, although somewhat cloudy and warm, which is conducive to a good growth of herbage, and will freshen up the old grass. Quite a number of holdings had their dams filled in the recent rains. The West Darr is running from Baratria into Evesham, but the flood waters will only reach to about Evesham homestead. The Jundah mail, due yesterday morning, and the Winton mail, due on Thursday morning, are not yet to hand.

STORMS IN AMERICA.

FURTHER EXTENSIVE DAMAGE.

CHICAGO, Saturday.

Large sections of the States of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa have been devastated by a third violent storm within a week. The water ran 2ft. to 4ft. deep in the streets of Lacrosse (Wisconsin), and practically all the railroads experi-

ASSASSINATED!

HEIR TO AUSTRIAN THRONE.

WIFE ALSO KILLED.

LONDON, Sunday, 3.10 p.m.

Reuter's correspondent at Vienna telegraphs that Archduke Francis Ferdinand, a nephew of the Emperor of Austria, and heir to the Austrian throne, and also his wife, were assassinated at Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which is a province administered by Austria-Hungary.

Archduke Francis Ferdinand was born in 1863. He became heir to the throne of Austria through the death of the Crown Prince Rudolph.

Croata-Servians form the largest racial element in the population of Bosnia.

LOCAL OPTION POLLS

A TRAGIC INCIDENT

MAN HANGS HIMSELF IN A CELL.

ROPE IMPROVISED FROM A BLANKET.

WARWICK, June 28.

Cecil Leonard Arthur Tutt was found dead in a police cell at the Yangan lock-up last evening. Tutt was arrested during the afternoon on suspicion of being of unsound mind, and was placed in the lockup by Acting Sergeant Murrin. The acting sergeant, early in the evening, was called to the railway station, and when he returned, after an absence of 15 minutes, he discovered Tutt suspended by the neck from one of the cell window bars to which he had tied a rope composed of strips of his bed blanket. The body was at once taken down, but all efforts at resuscitation proved unavailing. The body was brought to Warwick this morning, and taken to the morgue, where a post-mortem examination was subsequently held. Inspector Toohey, of Toowoomba, arrived by mail train this afternoon, and drove out to Yangan.

The deceased was apparently about 30 years of age, and was a widower. He had not been long at Yangan, and it is not known whether he had any relatives here.

MOTOR CARS COLLIDE.

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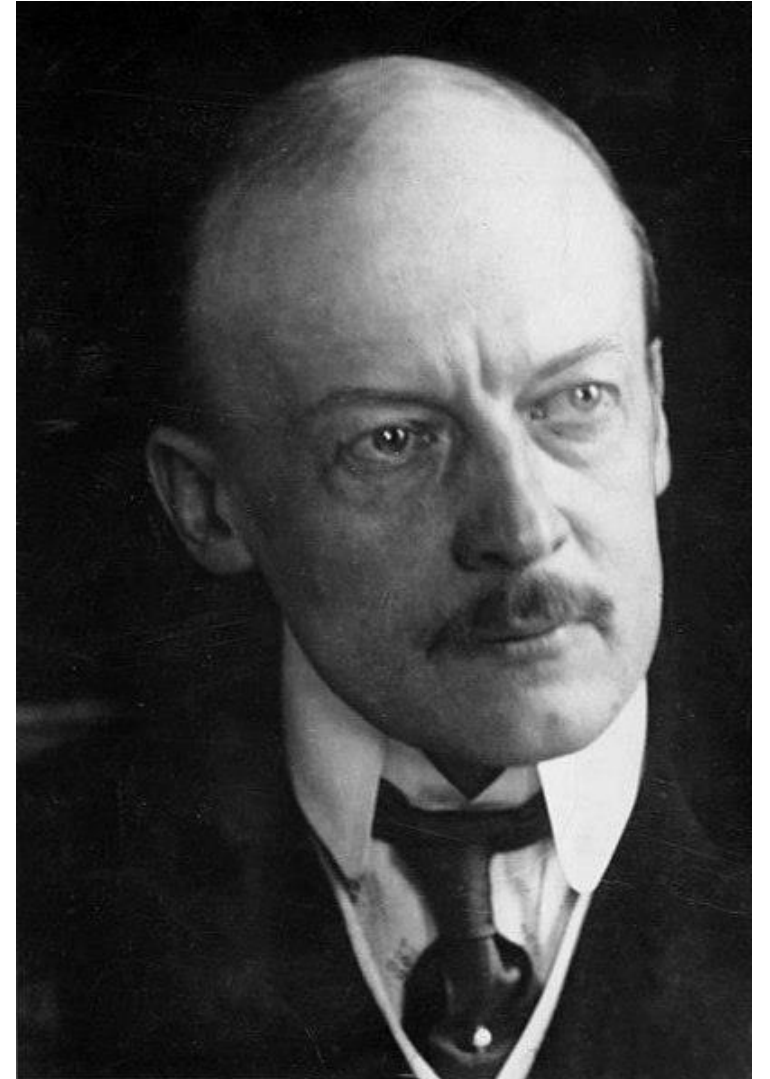
FINALLY ADJOURNED.

When the Senate and the House of Representatives rose on Friday they made their final adjournments of this Parliament. Before the time fixed, as a mere matter of form, for their reassembly they will be prorogued, and in due course dissolved. It is not yet definitely fixed when the latter event is to take place, but there seems to be no reason to doubt that it will be upon a date which will permit of polling on Saturday, September 5. That leaves less than ten weeks for the campaign, and for the making of the necessary party arrangements. So far as the Liberal party in most of the States

- 11.30am Sarajevo on Sunday is 8.30pm Sunday in Brisbane.
- 3.10pm London on Sunday is 1.10am Monday in Brisbane.

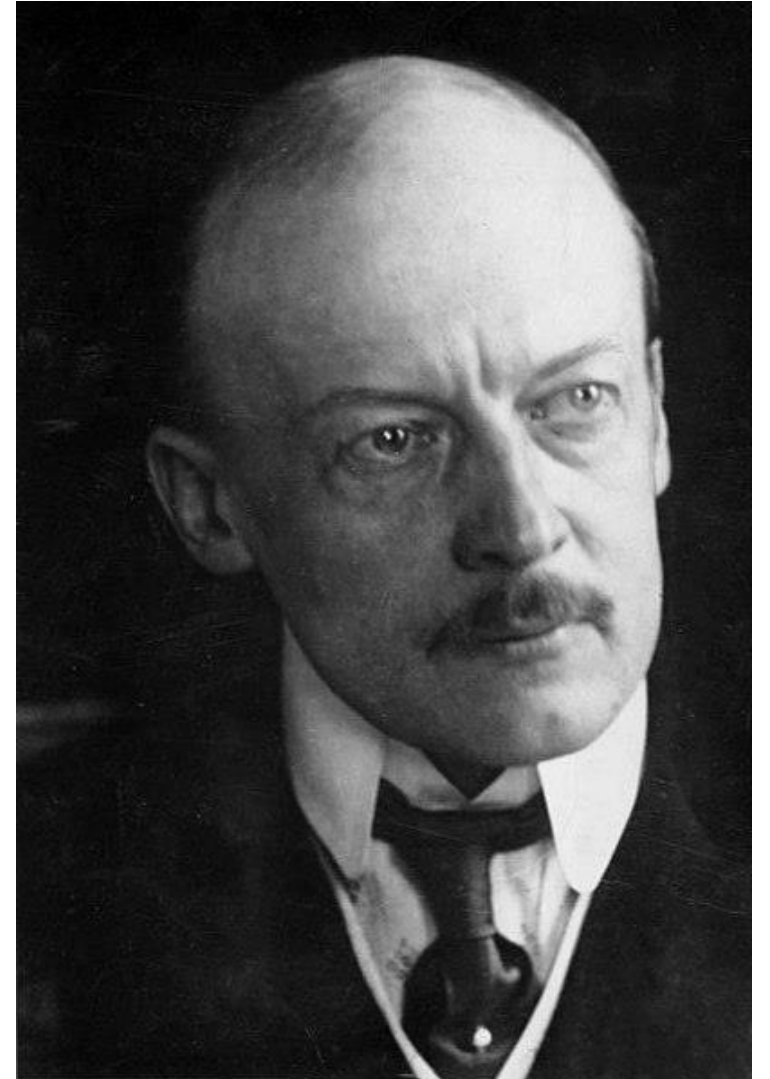
28 June 1914

- Leopold Graf Berchtold (photo) (18 April 1863 – 21 November 1942) was an Austro-Hungarian politician, diplomat and statesman who served as Imperial Foreign Minister at the time of the assassination.
- He focused almost exclusively on the Balkans where his foreign policy aims were to maintain peace, stick to the principle of non-intervention and preserve the territorial status quo.
- At the outset of the Balkan Wars, Count Berchtold pursued a hard-line policy and flirted with the idea of war against Serbia, but vacillated and pulled back from intervention at the last moment. Although he managed to prevent Serbia from securing an outlet to the Adriatic Sea by support given to the creation of Albania, the Balkan Wars resulted in a failure to thwart Serbian ambitions for a united Yugoslav state and to contain the rising Russian influence in the Balkans.
- It was perceived as a diplomatic defeat for Austria-Hungary and led to a reputation of being weak and indecisive for Count Berchtold.
- Berchtold's focus on Serbia was grown out of a fear of Serbian territorial expansion in the Balkans and a concern that the example of Serb nationalism within the multinational Dual Monarchy would eventually result in the dissolution of the empire itself.



28 June 1914

- During the first cabinet meeting following the Sarajevo outrage the picture beginning to emerge in reports from Sarajevo was disturbing but also clarifying: there had been multiple assassins on the Appelquai, all of them it seemed, Bosnian Serbs with murky ties to secret societies inside Serbia.
- While it was not clear yet whether there was any *official* Serbian involvement in plotting the assassination of the Hapsburg heir, strong evidence suggested that “threads of the conspiracy ... come together in Belgrade” as Berchtold told Germany's ambassador Heinrich von Tschirschky in a phrase he would repeat over and over in the coming weeks.
- Tschirschky sympathised with Berchtold's concerns but, lacking clear instructions from Berlin, strongly urged caution.



29 June

- General Conrad was the first and most vehement proponent of war against the Kingdom of Serbia in response to the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand.
- Conrad had been consistently urging his colleagues to solve the Serbian question once and for all since the first Bosnian crisis of 1908-1909.
- Conrad assumed the war would result in victory in six weeks.
- Conrad's previous suggestion in 1911 of a preventive war with Italy, an ally of Austria-Hungary at that time, had led to his temporary dismissal as Chief of Staff.
- On Monday 29th June Conrad proposed that Austria-Hungary mobilise against Serbia starting on 1st of July.



Franz Graf Conrad von Hötzendorf, Austro-Hungarian general, Chief of the General Staff of the Austro-Hungarian Army at the map table, 1914.

29 June

- Giving Hungary equal status in the empire had been, to Conrad's way of thinking - a view shared prominently by the slain Franz Ferdinand - a gross political error, inviting Hungary's persecution of its minorities, such that all the empire's other national groups were jealous for autonomy they could use to persecute their enemies, too.
- Austria's failure to intervene during the Balkan wars had left an 'impression of impotence' Conrad believed, encouraging irredentists of all national stripes and calling forth the Sarajevo outrage, as clearly as night followed day.
- The assassination of the Hapsburg heir presented the empire with a final test of strength. Would Austria fight to preserve the unity of the Hapsburg empire or would it allow the Serbs to pry Bosnia-Herzegovina loose, thus signalling the empire's final dissolution into a seething morass of jealous nation-states.



Franz Graf Conrad von Hötzendorf, Austro-Hungarian general, Chief of the General Staff of the Austro-Hungarian Army at the map table, 1914.

30 June

- On 30th June the foreign minister reassured his sovereign that he would not act hastily.
- Not until he had reliable information confirming Serbian involvement in the crime.
- Once a guilty verdict was in Berchtold wanted to prepare a clear plan of action against Serbia.
- The Emperor, then approaching his 84th birthday, was agreed that Berchtold should wait but his own primary concern was not the investigation into the crime but rather the need for imperial unity.
- Any policy Berchtold wished to pursue, the Emperor insisted, must have Tisza's and thus Hungary's full backing.



1 July

- István Tisza (photo) was Prime Minister of Hungary from 1913 after a previous term from 1903 to 1905.
- After the assassination he was against going to war against Serbia, a rare view in Austria-Hungary. He knew the army's strength, and he was afraid that with the increase of more Slavic territories the equilibrium inside the monarchy would be upset. Moreover, he was afraid that Romania would seize Transylvania.
- Tisza wrote to the Emperor on 1 July warning that Austria Hungary would appear to the world as the aggressor if they attacked Serbia without proof of government involvement with the plot.
- As Prime Minister of Hungary Tisza had a constitutional veto over decisions on foreign policy and war.



1 July

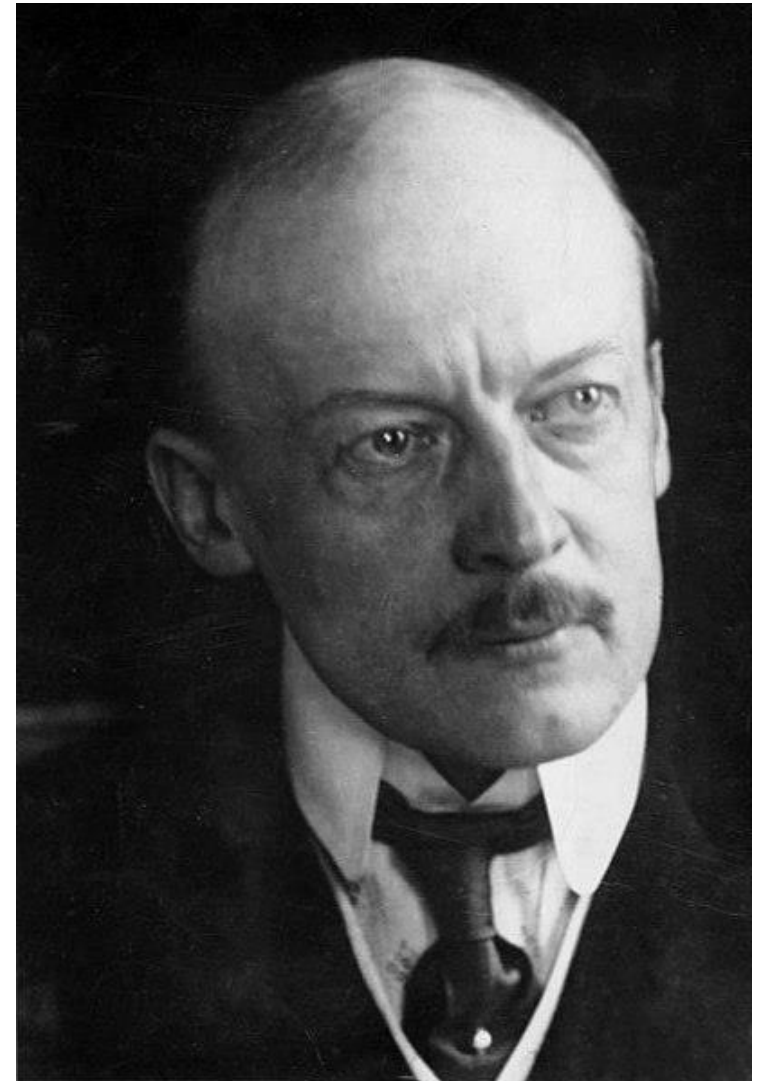
- On Wednesday 1st of July a prominent German journalist named Victor Naumann turned up in Vienna saying that he had urgent business to discuss. The man he wanted to talk to was the foreign minister's chief of staff Count Alexander Hoyos (photo).
- Naumann for his part was known to be well connected in Berlin, the trusted confidant of high ranking military and naval officers. He was also good friends with the state secretary Jagow, and with Wilhelm von Stumm, the political director of the German Foreign Office, who ran its day-to-day affairs.
- Naumann said that the Russian army's Great Programme was viewed with growing alarm and her planned test mobilisation for fall 1914 seemed an ominous portent of a shift in the strategic balance. The idea of fighting a preventive war against Russia before the Great Programme was complete had long been seriously discussed in the army command. Now Naumann told Hoyos this idea was gaining influence even at the Wilhelmstrasse.
- The German naval command meanwhile although still viewing itself as overmatched by Britain was feeling increasingly sanguine about the risk of war, owing to the success of Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg's rapprochement with England as manifested recently at the naval week at Kiel. For this reason Naumann informed Hoyos that there was believed to be the certainty that England would not intervene in a European war.



1 July

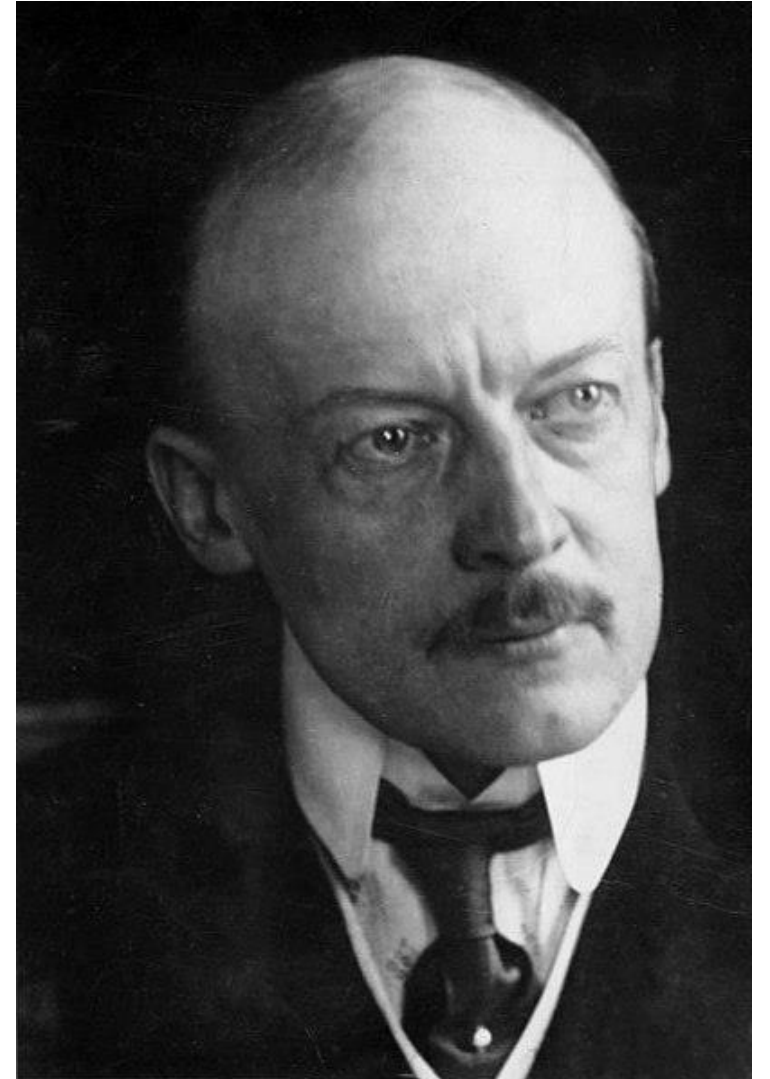
- Pushed by the so-called Young Rebels at the Ballhausplatz led by Count Hoyos, his chef de cabinet, Count Berchtold seized the opportunity to launch punitive action against Serbia and deal the country a mortal blow.
- While most of the dual monarchy's political and military leaders were keen to take action against Serbia, the military, particularly Conrad, were convinced that such action would be impossible without the support of Germany; aware of the possibility of Russian armed intervention in the crisis, they knew that the common army was incapable of facing a war on two fronts on its own: in the Balkans, against Serbia and its Montenegrin ally, and in Galicia, against Russia.
- Wilhelm II and his ministers evaded all specific questions raised by Austro-Hungarian politicians until July 1st,. So, while Wilhelm II and members of the imperial government remained evasive, Count Berchtold nonetheless obtained assurances from the German ambassador in Vienna, Heinrich von Tschirschky, a personal friend of Alexander Hoyos, that the German government would support the dual monarchy in the current crisis.

Jerry McBrien 2024



4 July

- Nevertheless, the Austro-Hungarians could not determine whether the ambassador was expressing his own position or that of the Reich government.
- Not wishing to commit the Dual Monarchy to a confrontation with Serbia and Russia on its own Berchtold dispatched Count Hoyos on a mission to Berlin on 4 July to secure German support for Austria-Hungary's future actions.
- Berchtold composed letter to the Kaiser for Franz Joseph to sign, informing Wilhelm that the “crime of Sarajevo is not the deed of a single individual but the result of a well arranged plot whose threads reached to Belgrade.” So long as the “source of criminal agitation in Belgrade lives on unpunished” Berchtold’s royal letter continued with an eye to the Kaiser’s strong feelings on the monarchical principle “the peace policy of all European monarchs is threatened.” The danger the letter concluded would only pass “when Serbia is eliminated as a political power factor in the Balkans.”
- While careful not to let slip the word “war” lest Tisza object, Berchtold wanted to leave the Germans in little doubt as to what Austrian really intended to do.



4 July

- In June Tisza had proposed a plan to recruit Romania and Bulgaria to the Triple Alliance in the expectation that this would make the Alliance strong enough to deter war.
- Berchtold decided to write a postscript to Tisza's text informing the Germans that "the above memorandum had only just been completed when the terrible events at Sarajevo happened." Offering the murders as proof "that the gulf between the monarchy and Serbia was beyond bridging over," Berchtold concluded that Austria must "tear asunder with a determined hand the threads which its enemies are weaving into a net over its head."



4 July

- Hoyos was sent to Berlin with both documents and verbal instructions that “We must obtain from the government in Belgrade specific guarantees for the future, the refusal of which will result in military action. The “task is to see if such a course of action [by Austria] would be supported ... by official circles in Berlin.”
- Hoyos briefed Szógyény, the Austrian ambassador and gave him the two documents.
- Subsequently, Hoyos met Arthur Zimmermann, the Reich's Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a supporter of retaliatory action against Serbia.



5 July

- On Sunday afternoon 5 July Conrad was making the case for war to the Emperor.
- “How though will you fight this war”, the Emperor asked, “if everyone takes up against us especially Russia?”
- Conrad replied with a question of his own. “Do we have Germany's backing?”
- The Emperor said he was not sure.
- “If the answer is that Germany stands by our side”, Conrad asked, “do we then make war on Serbia?”
- In that case, the Emperor replied, “yes”.
- Sunday also produced the first real smoking gun from the interrogation of the conspirators, confirming the involvement of Serbian army Major Tankositch (photo) in training the three principle assassins in Belgrade.
- This confession would make it harder for Tisza to make his case opposing war with Serbia especially now that the emperor was conditionally on board.



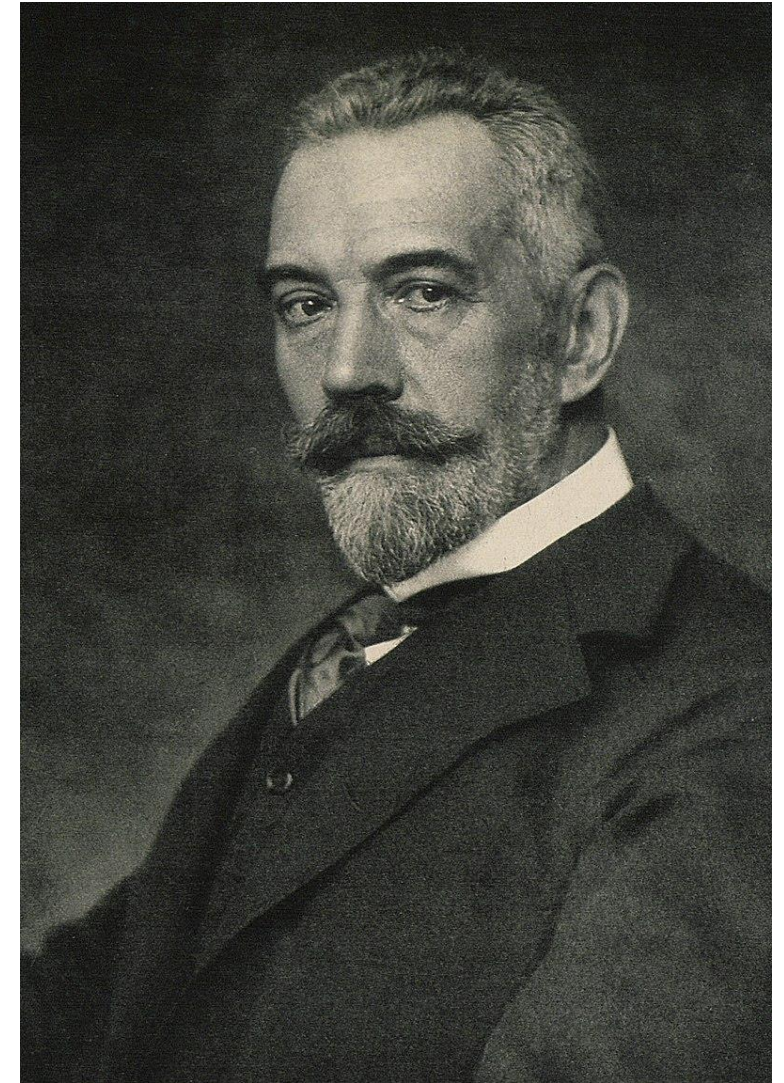
5 July

- Wilhelm was a friend of Franz Ferdinand and his wife and had visited them at their estate only two weekends previously.
- He was deeply saddened by their assassination.
- Austrian-Hungarian Ambassador Szögyény was received for lunch by Wilhelm II at the Neue Palais in Potsdam on July 5th.
- After receiving the documents, the German monarch read them then said he must consult his Chancellor and said he must say no more.
- Then he did say more:
- It was his opinion that our action against Serbia . . . must not be delayed. Russia's attitude would no doubt be hostile, but to this he had been for years prepared, and should a war between Austria Hungary and Russia be unavoidable, we might be convinced that Germany, our old faithful ally, would stand at our side. Russia at the present time was in no way prepared for war and would think twice before it appealed to arms.



6 July

- Wilhelm consulted Erich von Falkenhayn, the Prussian War Minister, Hans von Plessen, aide-de-camp to the German Emperor, and Moritz von Lyncker, head of the military cabinet.
- A second meeting chaired by the Emperor brought together the Reich's political leaders, Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg (photo), his Under-Secretary of State Arthur Zimmermann and Minister Erich von Falkenhayn.
- No records were kept of these meetings.
- German support was verbally confirmed to the Austro-Hungarians by Reich Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg the very next day.
- "With regard to our relations towards Serbia" Szögyény reported "the German government is of the opinion that we must judge for ourselves what is to be done . . . Whatever we decide we may reckon with certainty that Germany will stand by our side as our ally." and
- that Bethman "like the Kaiser believes that immediate action on our part against Serbia offers the best and most decisive solution to our difficulties in the Balkans." From the "international standpoint" - that is, the prospect of a European war Bethman also "considers the present moment as more favourable than some later time."
- Questioned in 1920 by the Reichstag parliamentary committee of inquiry, Bethmann-Hollweg, Falkenhayn and von Plessen all insisted on their emperor's readiness to act as quickly as possible against Serbia, as Wilhelm II wished to "get it over with as soon as possible", as he noted in the margin of a telegram from the German ambassador in Vienna, Heinrich von Tschirschky.



6 July

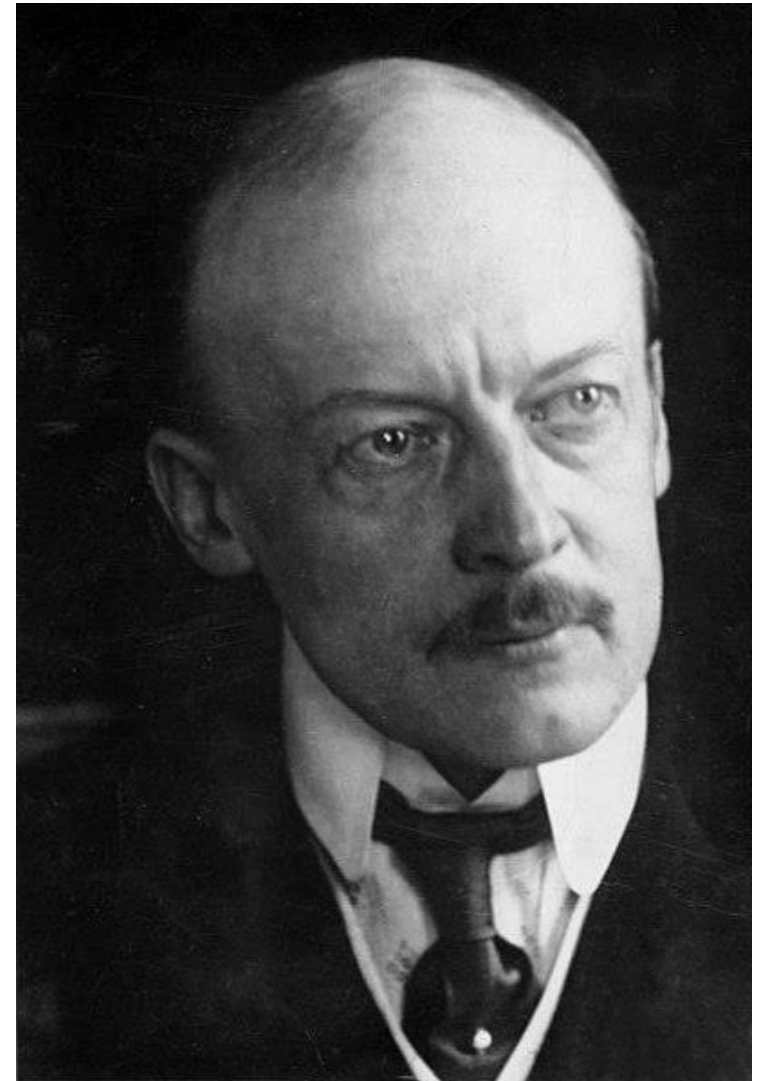
- Some kind of delay was all but mandated by the Austrian army's recent institution of summer harvest leave for troops from rural areas.
- Conrad the chief of staff had signed off on the policy although reluctantly in order to appease powerful land owners in the dual monarchy.
- On Monday 6th July Conrad discovered to his horror that seven of his 16 Army Corps had just been furloughed for harvest leave.
- Of these five would return to active duty on the 19th of July and the final two on the 25th of July.



Franz Graf Conrad von Hötzendorf, Austro-Hungarian general, Chief of the General Staff of the Austro-Hungarian Army at the map table, 1914.

7 July

- After hearing Hoyos verbal report, on his return from Berlin, Berchtold became the leading spokesman, together with Conrad for war against Serbia during the meeting of the Imperial Crown Council on 7 July.
- Through the determined moderating influence of the Hungarian Minister-President Count István Tisza, who had reservations on the use of force against Serbia, it was decided to present Serbia with an ultimatum before resorting to military action.
- If Austria attacked without sufficient diplomatic cause, Tisza warned, she must count on the enmity of the entire Balkans. Tisza proposed a careful diplomatic strategy to proceed any war against Serbia first the Dual Monarchy must draw up unequivocal demands on Serbia if she rejects them an ultimatum could be prepared with the threat of armed intervention.
- Tisza also warned that Russia would regard the full annihilation of Serbia is a struggle of life and death.
- Unless Conrad wanted to telegraph Austria's warlike intentions to Europe he could not cancel harvest leave early therefore the army would require two weeks to pass before mobilisation was possible. Two weeks was far too slow for the Germans but it might be enough to satisfy Tisza's conditions.



8 July

- In Conrad's first meeting with Berchtold after the Tuesday war council at 6:00 PM on Wednesday the 8th the chief of staff insisted firmly that an ultimatum to Serbia be dispatched with a 24 or 48 hour time limit so as not to give the Serbs time to mobilise while Austria waited for the expected refusal which would be the signal for war.
- In view of the harvest leave issue and the need to convert Tisza most men agreed that the ultimatum could not be dispatched until the 22nd of July at the earliest it would be up to the foreign minister to win over Tisza in time to send a note to Belgrade by that date.



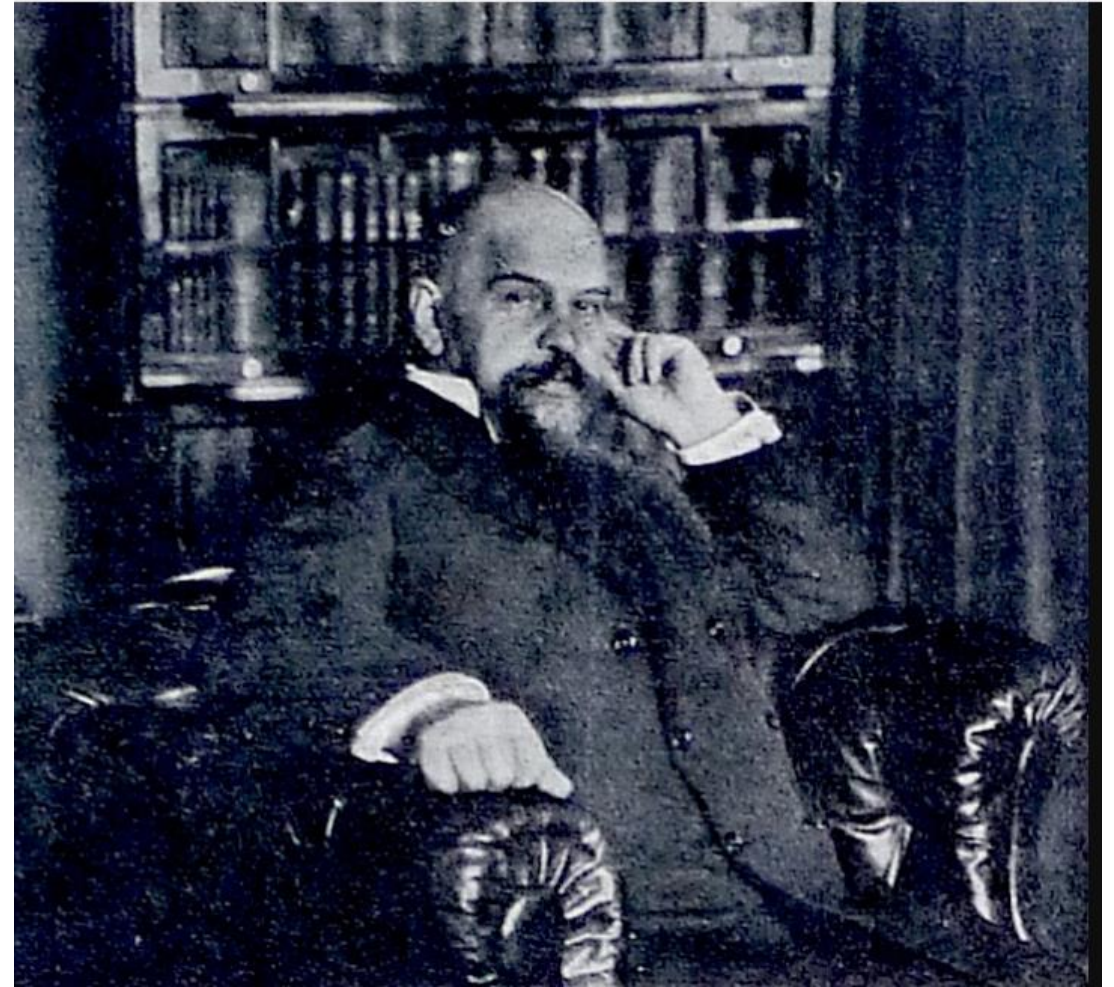
9 July

- Berchtold met with Franz Joseph (photo,) on Thursday 9th of July. Together they read over Tisza's memorandum. Although it presented on the surface a roadblock to immediate action they gradually began to see some room for manoeuvre.
- Tisza was obviously expecting to make severe demands on Serbia. Why could Berchtold not simply go ahead and draw up an ultimatum?
- It would take time to win Tisza's approval but so long as he took Conrad's advice and gave a strict time limit of 48 hours or less it would increase the chance of the desired rejection by Serbia.
- While Berchtold and Franz Joseph understood the need to keep Tisza on board they were now agreed on the need to levy concrete demands on Serbia. More fundamentally the Emperor decided that the time had come for a reckoning with Serbia, saying that there was no going back.
- Based on this informal verbal mandate from the Emperor Berchtold ordered his staff to begin preparing an ultimatum to Serbia
- Moving straight to an ultimatum with a 48 hour time limit would restrict the time available for the other European powers to intervene diplomatically in an attempt to prevent war.



10 July

- Russia's pan-slavist minister to Belgrade Nikolai Hartwig (photo) had all but single handedly organised the Balkan league of Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece and Montenegro which declared war on the Ottoman Empire in October 1912 launching the first Balkan war
- Emperor Franz Joseph believed the Serbs did nothing without consulting Nikolai Hartwig
- The tsarist legation in Belgrade declined to fly its flag at half mast even during the official funeral requiem for Franz Ferdinand as if intentionally to insult the memory of the slain heir. This calculated insult was almost certainly the work of Nikolai Hartwig
- On 10th of July Austria's minister to Serbia, Baron von Gieslingen, had returned to town after a long sojourn in Vienna. Hartwig therefore visited the Austrian legation to clear the air. Arriving at 9:00 PM Hartwig expressed his personal and sincere condolences for the atrocious outrage and then denied having held a bridge party the evening of the murder and claimed it was untrue that he had refused to fly the flag at half mast during the archdukes memorial service.



10 July

- Anxious to believe in the Russians good intention von Gieslingen (photo) accepted these assertions, a reconciliation of sorts was thus affected between Austria and Russia but it was not of long duration.
- At 9:20 PM Hartwig collapsed of a heart attack in the Austrian legation. Within minutes he was dead.
- When a Serbian policeman showed up to investigate he was turned away on the grounds of extra territorial diplomatic immunity as was perfectly legal and normal.
- This denial of access to local police led most Serbs to believe that the Austrians were hiding something and the Serbian press had a field day.
- Hartwig already a hero to Serbian nationalists for his support during the Balkan wars was now celebrated as a martyr against Austrian tyranny. He was given a magnificent funeral worthy of a head of state. A prominent Belgrade street was named after him and sculptors began work on a monument in his honour to be erected in the centre of town.
- On Sunday the 12th of July anti Austrian demonstrations were organised all over Belgrade to capitalise on popular rage over Hartwig's demise.



Baron Wladimir Giesl von Gieslingen (1860–1936)

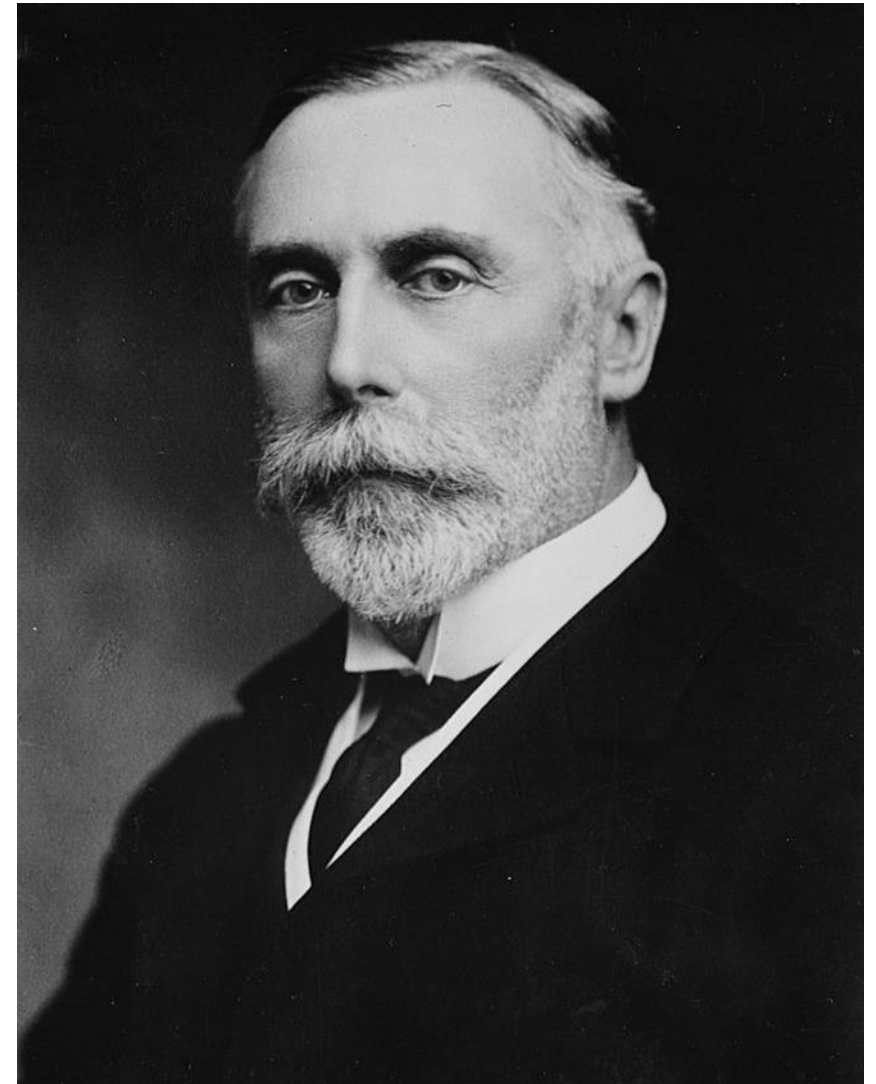
12 July

- On Sunday the 12th ambassador Szogyeny reiterated that the Germans wanted Austria to move quickly against Serbia.
- This time though he was more explicit saying that “both HM Kaiser Wilhelm (photo) and all other responsible personages” wanted Austria to “make a clean sweep of the revolutionary conspirators” nest (in Serbia) once and for all.
- The Germans wanted Vienna to realise that “it is by no means certain that ... Russia would resort to arms” in support of Serbia and more significantly that the German government further believes it has sure indications that England at the present moment would not join in a war over a Balkan country even should this lead to a passage of arms with Russia and eventually even with France.



13 – 16 July

- On Monday 13 July the foreign minister had invited an old friend count Heinrich von Lutzow to sit in on his discussions with German ambassador Tschirschky. The foreign minister treated the retired Lutzow as a kind of “wise man” elder.
- During the Monday audience Lutzow had warned Berchtold the idea of localising a conflict with Serbia was a fantasy.
- So concerned was Lutzow by what he had heard that he resolved to tell someone about it. One of his closest neighbours was Britain's ambassador to Vienna, Sir Maurice de Bunsen (photo). Over lunch on Wednesday 15th of July Lutzow recounted for his British friend the conversation he had just had with Berchtold regarding the Balkan crisis.
- The dual monarchy is not going to stand Serbian insolence any longer. A note was being drawn up and will be completed when the Sarajevo inquiry was finished. No futile discussion would be tolerated. If Serbia did not at once cave in, force would be used to compel her.
- On Thursday 16th the British ambassador reported to the foreign secretary Sir Edward Grey that Austria-Hungarian government are in no mood to parley but will insist on immediate compliance, failing which force will be used.



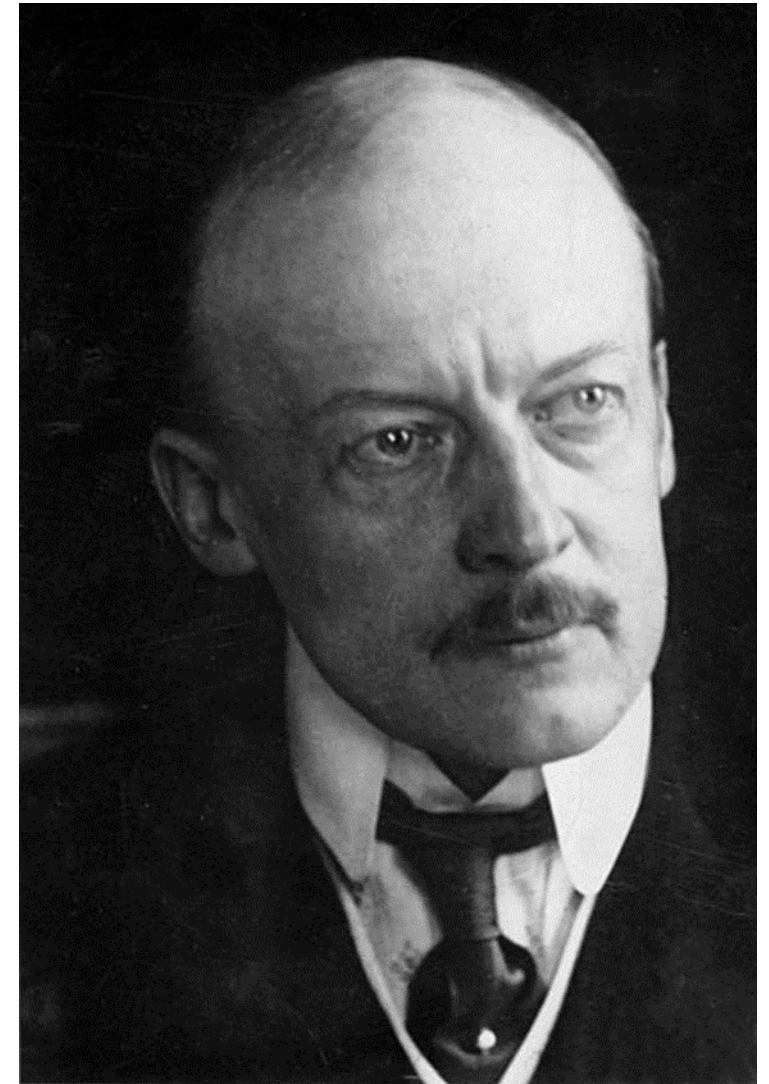


- On Wednesday 15th July French President Poincare (photo left) would embark at sea aboard the France on route for a summit with Tsar Nicholas II (photo right) in St Petersburg.



14 July

- The British ambassador passed on to Russian ambassador Shebeko the gist of Lutzow's story.
- Shebeko passed this information on to the Russian foreign ministry.
- Berchtold (photo) had been careful to forbid the sending of cables to St Petersburg mentioning the ultimatum itself but he had been less careful regarding its timing.
- On Tuesday the 14th of July Berchtold had wired directly to the Austro-Hungarian embassy in Petersburg demanding to know when the French delegation would leave town.
- This suspicious telegram had been decoded by Russian cryptographers by Tuesday evening.
- The Russians then intercepted 2 more reply telegrams on Thursday and Friday which informed Berchtold that Poincare would embark on his return voyage to France on the evening of Thursday the 23rd of July.
- From Shebeko via de Bunsen the Russian foreign ministry was able to learn - roughly at least - what Berchtold intended to do. From their own cryptographers the Russians learned exactly when he planned to do it.



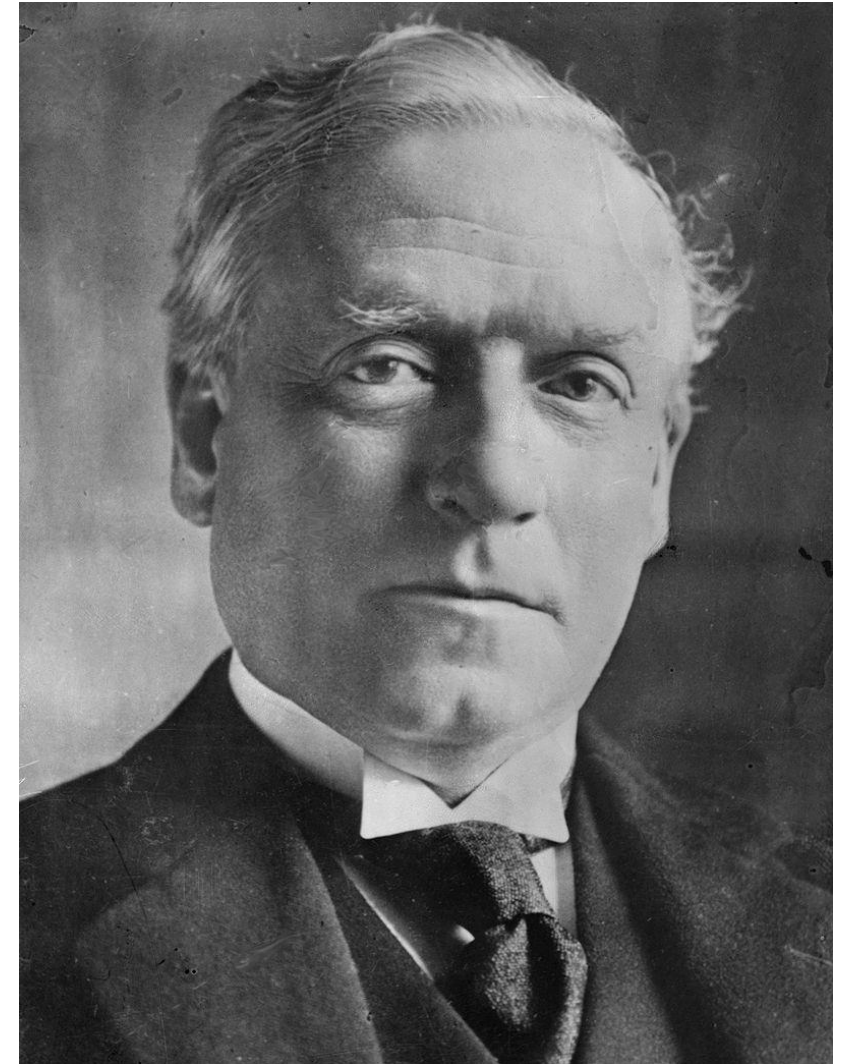
14 July

- On Tuesday 14th of July his resistance worn down by the constant pressure coming at him from all sides Tisza conceded that the anti Austrian attacks in the Serbian press had become intolerable.
- Austria Hungary must put an end to the unendurable state of affairs in the southeast (a euphemism for Serbia).
- But he insisted that the ultimatum must be reviewed at a full ministerial council which could not convene before Sunday 19th, the ultimatum could therefore be dispatched at the earliest on the evening of the 19th of July.
- The last thing Berchtold wanted was for the ultimatum to be delivered while France's president was in St Petersburg. Poincare and the Tsar could then coordinate a military response to Austria's action in the heat of the moment. Quite possibly while toasting each other's health at an official banquet.
- The new plan was thus to wait until the night the French delegation would leave St Petersburg expected (incorrectly) to be Saturday 25th of July nearly a month after Sarajevo and three days after the date that he and Conrad had agreed to, owing to the harvest leave issue.



16 July

- Grey did not press his ambassador for any more information on the matter.
- The British Cabinet were preoccupied with the crisis in Ulster, and Grey failed to realize the urgency of the situation and chose to await further developments.
 - The Asquith (photo) Liberal government were trying to establish Home Rule for Ireland in the teeth of furious opposition from Ulster and by the Conservative opposition. The Ulster Volunteer Force was importing guns and ammunition. Troops were deployed into Ulster and threatening language was used by Churchill and the Secretary of State for War, John Seely.
 - In the so-called Curragh incident in April 1914 around sixty British Army officers, led by Brigadier-General Hubert Gough, announced that they would rather be dismissed from the service than obey orders to suppress the UVF. With unrest spreading to army officers in England, the Cabinet acted to placate the officers with a statement written by Asquith reiterating the duty of officers to obey lawful orders but claiming that the incident had been a misunderstanding.
 - Seely then added an unauthorised assurance, countersigned by Sir John French (the professional head of the army), that the government had no intention of using force against Ulster. Asquith repudiated the addition, and required Seely and French to resign, taking on the War Office himself.
 - Asquith announced that he would secure Home Rule's third passage through the Commons (accomplished on 25 May), but that there would be an amending bill with it, making special provision for Ulster. But the Conservative controlled Lords made changes to the amending bill unacceptable to Asquith.
 - With no way to invoke the Parliament Act on the amending bill, Asquith agreed to meet other leaders at an all-party conference on 21 July at Buckingham Palace, chaired by the King.



17 July

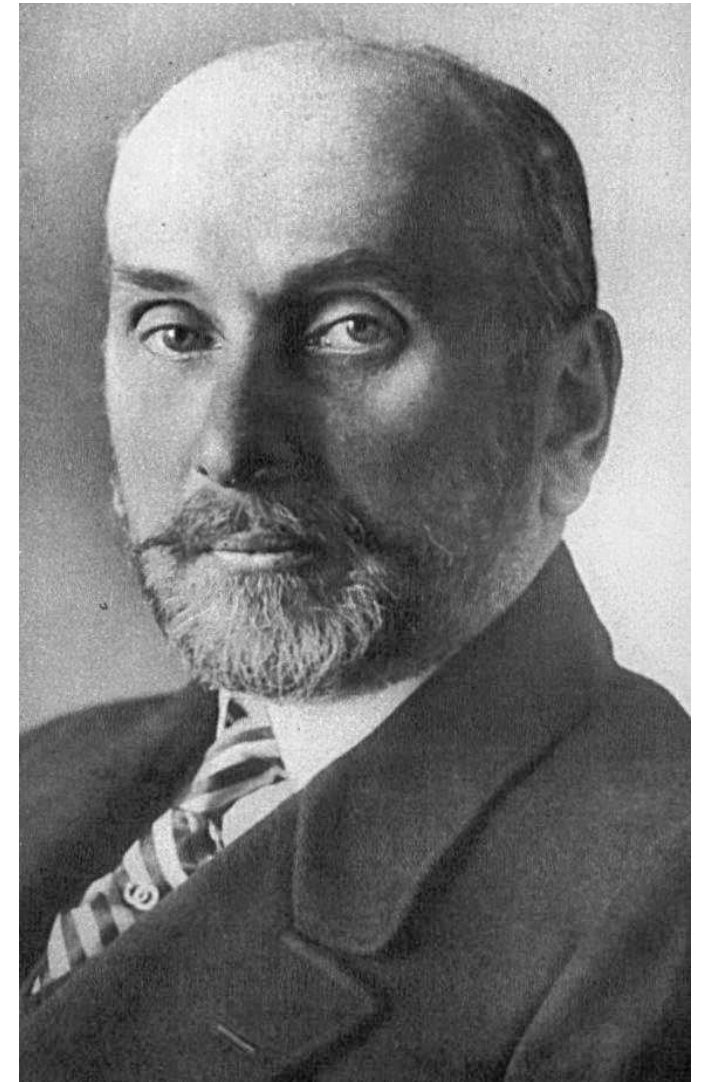
- On Friday 17 July the Serbian minister in London informed his government that the way is being prepared for diplomatic pressure upon Serbia which may develop into an armed attack.
- Prime Minister Pasic was sufficiently alarmed by this news that later in the day he had informed the Austrian minister Giesl in unofficial conversation that the Serbian government are prepared to comply at once with any request for police investigation and to take any other measure compatible with dignity and independence of state.



Baron Wladimir Giesl von
Gieslingen (1860–1936)

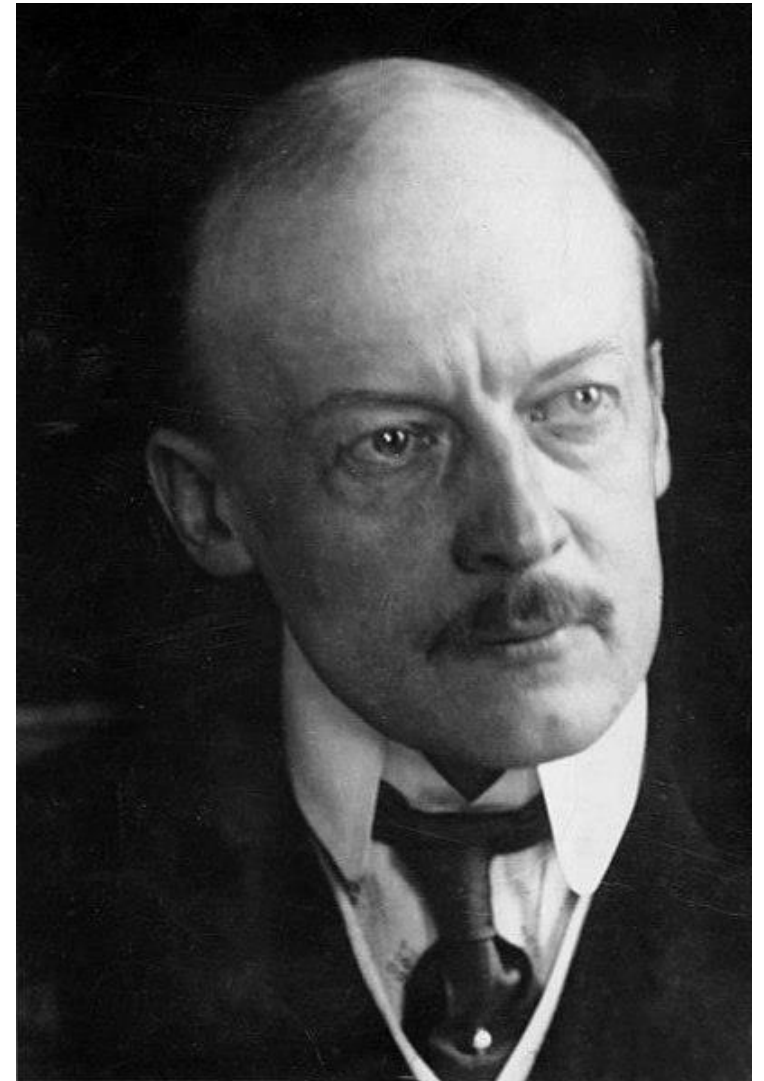
17-18-19 July

- The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador requested a meeting with Sergey Sazonov (photo), Russian Foreign Minister, on 17th July.
- A meeting was arranged for the morning of the 18th when Sazonov had returned to St Petersburg.
- Sazonov was briefed on the Shebeko dispatch and the decrypts and had apparently decided on the need to warn against any attempts against the independence of Serbia.
- However at the meeting with the ambassador he did not raise the subject of Austria's relations with Serbia.
- Sazonov did warn that the latest news from Vienna had disquieted him, but without spelling out what news he was talking about.
- Sazonov briefed the Tsar on the Shebeko dispatch on the 19th.
- The Tsar scribbled on the dispatch: "in my opinion a state should not present any sort of demands to another, unless of course, it is bent on war."



19-20-21 July

- Berchtold and the war party then included a list of itemized demands with which it was virtually certain Serbia would be unable or unwilling to comply, thus serving as a "legal basis for war".
- The previous night, according to his wife Nadine, Count Berchtold spent a sleepless night, altering the ultimatum and adding clauses, as he was very worried the Serbs could accept it.
- Not a single minister of Austria Hungary's imperial government, nor her sovereign nor the ambassador of her only real ally, signed off on Berchtold's text before he sent it off, under seal to Minister Giesl in Belgrade on Monday the 20th of July under seal with strict instructions not to be opened until Thursday 23rd July.
- The ten-point ultimatum was presented to Emperor Franz Joseph on 21 July .



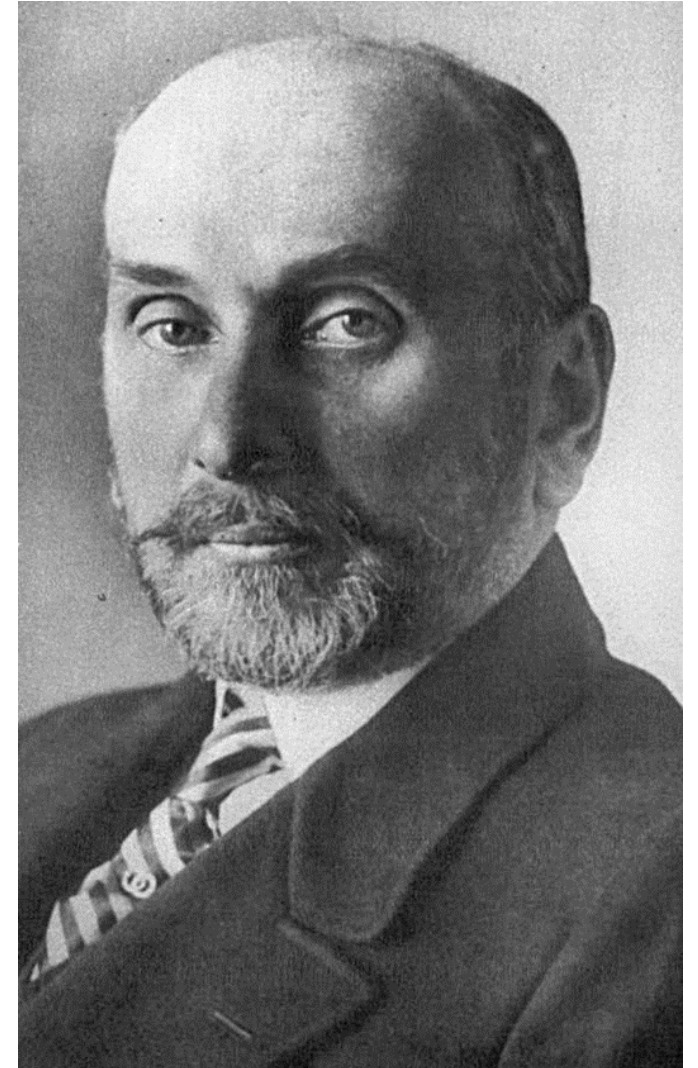
21 July

- At 4.00 pm on 21st July the Diplomatic community in St Petersburg greeted Poincare. He spoke to each ambassador in turn.
- The British ambassador has gathered, Poincare recalled learning, from the Serbian minister that some violent Austrian note may be sent to Belgrade.
- Next came the Hapsburg ambassador. Szapary said “Monsieur le President we cannot suffer a foreign government to allow murderous attacks against our sovereignty to be prepared on its territory.”
- Poincare responded by gently warning the Hungarian that in the present state of public feeling in Europe every government should be twice as cautious as usual.
- Poincare had received a report during the day that France’s minister to Serbia had suffered a mental breakdown nearly a week ago on the 15th of July. While insignificant in itself this meant that Paris had no up-to-date reports on Serbia.



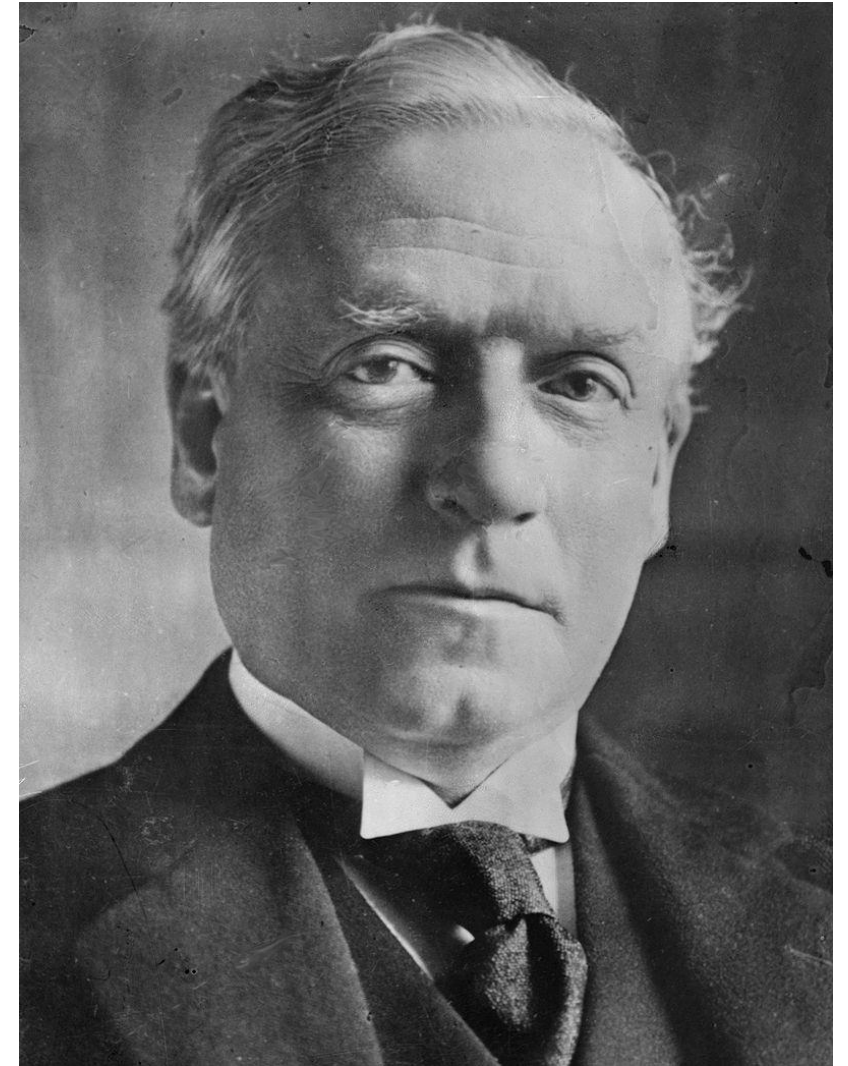
21 July

- Sazonov had a meeting with the German ambassador, Pourtales, on Tuesday night the 21st.
- He began by reminding Pourtales of Russia's position on the Sarajevo outrage. It was an isolated deed of a few individuals for which an entire state – Serbia - could not be made responsible.
- Even the greater Serbia propaganda emanating from Belgrade Sazonov argued was Austria's own fault because of the way it misgoverned the Serbs.
- Clearly the Russian had got wind of Austria's intentions for he was now talking not only about the issue of responsibility for the murders but also about actions he expected Vienna to take.
- If Austria Hungary was determined to break the peace Sazonov warned Pourtales she should realise that this time she would have to reckon with Europe.
- To ensure that Pourtales and through him Berlin and Vienna got the message Sazonov now issued a threat of his own to Vienna: “whatever happens there must be no talk of an ultimatum”
- Pourtales’ report on this meeting to Berlin was sent by mail and arrived on 23rd July and was only forwarded to the German embassy in Vienna a week after that.



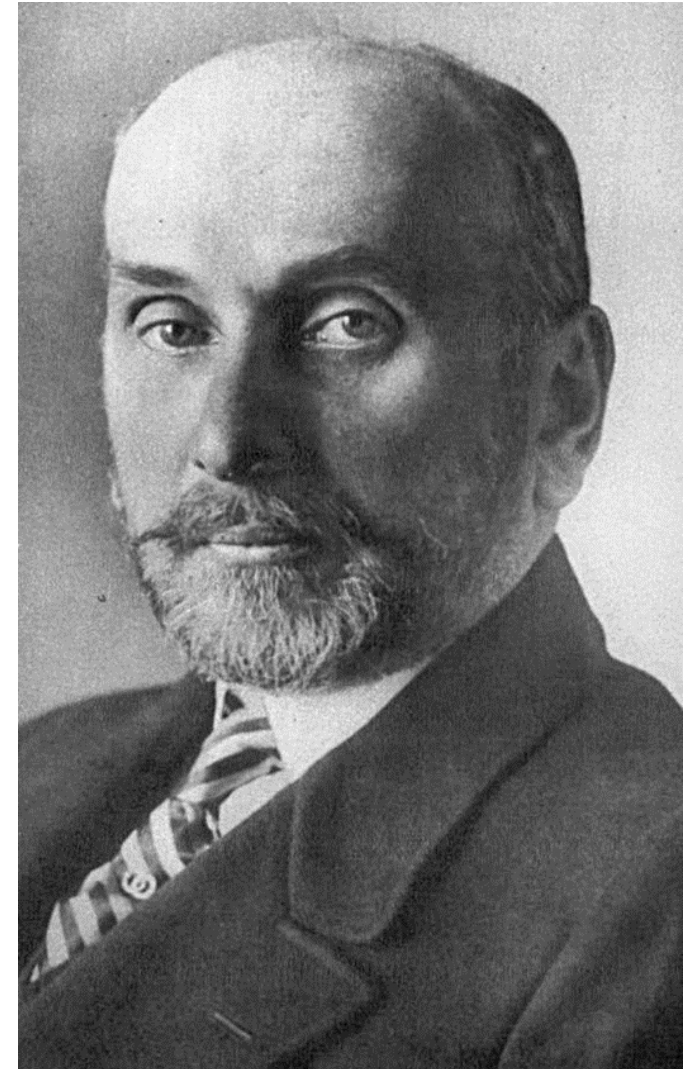
21 July

- No solution could be found at the all-party conference on 21 July at Buckingham Palace, chaired by the King.
- Asquith and his cabinet then planned further concessions to the Ulster Unionists.



23 July

- Sazonov had rushed back to town to send off a strong message to ambassador Shebeko in Vienna wired off at 4:00 AM on Thursday the 23rd of July.
- Sazonov instructed his ambassador to warn Vienna cordially but firmly of the dangerous consequences which must follow any measures incompatible with the dignity of Serbia.
- He informed his ambassador that from my discussions with Poincare it clearly emerges that also France will not tolerate a humiliation of Serbia.
- The French ambassador to Austria, Sazonov told Shebeko, would shortly make an identical warning to Vienna.



23 July

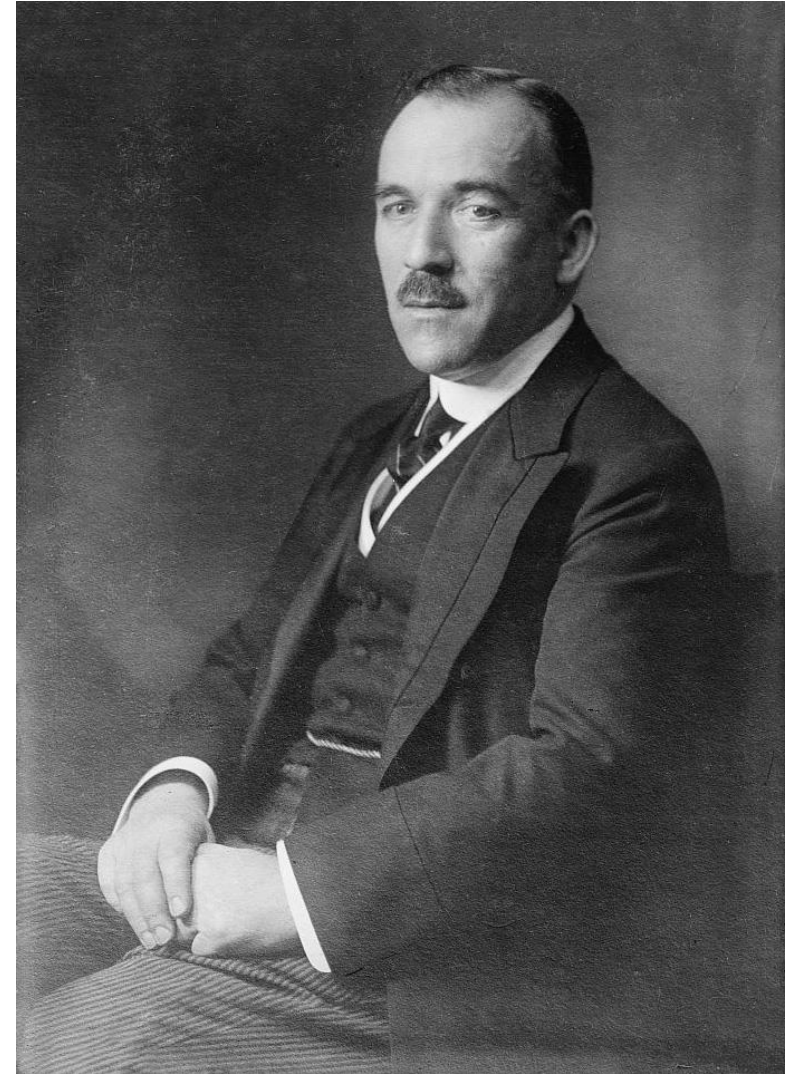
- Sazonov's warning was deciphered by the Russian embassy in Vienna at 3:00 PM on Thursday 23rd of July.
- But not soon enough.
- With Shebeko out of town the Russian charge d'affaires rushed over to the Ballplatz in his stead to present Sasanov's antiultimatum ultimatum to the Austrian foreign minister.
- Berchtold's secretary brushed off the Russian telling him the foreign minister was busy and could not see him that afternoon might the Russian come back at 11 the next morning.
- By 11 Friday morning the ultimatum would have been delivered to Belgrade on schedule on Thursday evening and Europe's governments would have been formally notified of it.
- The plan was to tell them at 10:00 AM on Friday.



Austrian Federal Chancellery at Ballhausplatz

23 July

- On 23 July, Grey made a mediation offer with a promise that his government would attempt to influence Russia to influence Serbia, and Germany to influence Austria-Hungary as the best way of stopping a general war.
- Wilhelm wrote on the margins of Lichnowsky's dispatch containing Grey's offer that Britain's "condescending orders" were to be totally rejected, and Austria-Hungary would not retract any of its "impossible demands" on Serbia.
- Jagow, State Secretary of the German Foreign Office, ordered Lichnowsky to tell Grey of the supposed German ignorance of the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum, and that Germany regarded Austro-Serbian relations as "an internal affair of Austria-Hungary, in which we had no standing to intervene".
- Jagow's statement did much to discredit Germany in British eyes. Lichnowsky reported to Berlin "If we do not join the mediation, all faith here in us and in our love of peace will be shattered.
- At the same time, Grey met with opposition from the Russian ambassador who warned that a conference with Germany, Italy, France, and Britain serving as the mediators between Austria-Hungary and Russia would break apart the informal Triple Entente.
- Sazonov accepted Grey's proposal for a conference despite his reservations about the dangers of splitting the Triple Entente,



23 July

- The plan was for minister Giesl to present the Ultimatum to the Serbian government between 4:00 and 5:00 PM on the 23rd so as to ensure the deadline would expire by 5:00 PM on Saturday the 25th of July, in time to allow Austria to begin mobilisation by midnight.
- Berchtold had learned that the France would not lift anchor until 11:00 PM nearly five hours later than expected. Even given the hour and a half time difference between Petersburg and central Europe this meant that if Giesl turned over the note at 4:30 it was almost certain that news of the demarche in Belgrade would reach St Petersburg before Poincare left Kronstadt at 11 which might allow him to coordinate a response with Sazonov and the Tsar.
- Learning this Berchtold altered the schedule at the last minute sending Giesl an urgent telegram to postpone delivery until 6:00 PM.
- Any later than this and Conrad would be furious that the 48 hour deadline would expire too late on Saturday evening for mobilisation orders to go out overnight.



France, the last of four Courbet-class battleships, the first dreadnoughts built for the French Navy, ferried the President of France to Russia during July 1914 even though she was not officially completed.

23 July

- Giesl on demanding an audience with Pasic (photo) to deliver his ultimatum Thursday evening 23rd July learned that the Prime Minister was not even in town. He was at Nish campaigning for re-election.
- On Wednesday the 22nd of July Pasic had expressly deputised Serbia's little known finance minister Dr Lazar Pacu to act on his behalf while he was away from Belgrade.
- Pacu after receiving Giesl's demand Thursday morning for an urgent audience that night asked the Prime Minister to return to Belgrade
- Pasic refused and ordered the finance minister to "receive him in my place".



23 July

- Giesl arrived at the Serbian foreign ministry shortly before 6:00 PM on Thursday the 23rd of July.
- He was unpleasantly surprised to learn that Pacu, deputised as head of Serbia's government, did not speak a word of French, the language in which the ultimatum was written.
- The Serbian foreign ministry did have at least one man on hand, secretary general Slavko Gruic, who could translate the conversation, if not also provide an instantaneous translation of the note.
- Giesl displayed a copy of the ultimatum, informed the finance minister that the time limit would expire at 6:00 PM on Saturday 25th of July and that if a satisfactory reply were not received by then he would leave Belgrade with the entire staff of his legation.
- Pacu scarcely needed an interpreter to figure out what this meant: war.
- Pacu refused to take the documents in hand.
- The acting Prime Minister protested to Giesl, because there were elections on and many of the ministers were absent he was afraid that it would be physically impossible to convene a full cabinet meeting in time to decide on a matter of such evident importance.
- Pacu simply would not accept the ultimatum.
- Giesl decided to simply to leave it on the table saying that Pacu and Serbia could do what they liked with it.



Baron Wladimir Giesl von
Gieslingen (1860–1936)

24 July

- Poincare also warned Austria.
- France's ambassador to Vienna was instructed that no avenue must be neglected to prevent an Austrian demand for retribution or any set of conditions foisted on Serbia which might be considered a violation of her sovereignty or her independence.
- This warning was dispatched from the switchboard of the France shortly after its departure from Kronstadt in the wee hours of Friday morning (24th July).



Battleship France in Toulon harbour

24 July

- Shortly after 11:00 AM on Friday 24th July Sazanov asked the chief of staff, Yanushkevich (photo), to draw up a partial mobilisation directive against Austria.
- The chief of staff then summoned the chief of the Russian army's mobilisation section general Sergei Dobrorolskii.
- Dobrorolskii was perturbed, mobilising against Austria Hungary alone and not Germany, he told his boss, was folly. The army's current plan 19 required mobilisation against Germany and Austria simultaneously with no variant separating the two.
- Moreover Dobrorolskii explained it was physically impossible to mobilise effectively against Austria without extensively using the Warsaw railway hub.
- Were mobilisation to exclude Poland it would be possible to attack Austria only via a tiny sliver of Galicia or by way of Romania, which was clearly out of the question.
- Deploying against Austria via the Warsaw hub was unavoidable but doing so would inevitably alarm German commanders in east Prussia, defeating the point of partial mobilisation.



24 July

- To make extra sure of France Sazonov visited the French embassy to lunch with Paléologue and Britain's ambassador, Buchanan, who was keen to learn what France and Russia were up to.
- Sazonov declared unequivocally, Buchanan reported, that “the step taken by Austria meant war.”
- Britain, Buchanan declared, had no interests in Serbia and public opinion in England would never sanction a war on her behalf.
- The foreign minister himself, Buchanan reported to Grey, thought that at any rate Russia would have to mobilise.
- Sazonov, Buchanan reported, warned him that if war did break out, we (ie Britain) would sooner or later be dragged into it but if we did not make common cause with France and Russia at the outset we should have rendered war more likely and should not have played a *beau role*.



Maurice Paléologue in 1914.

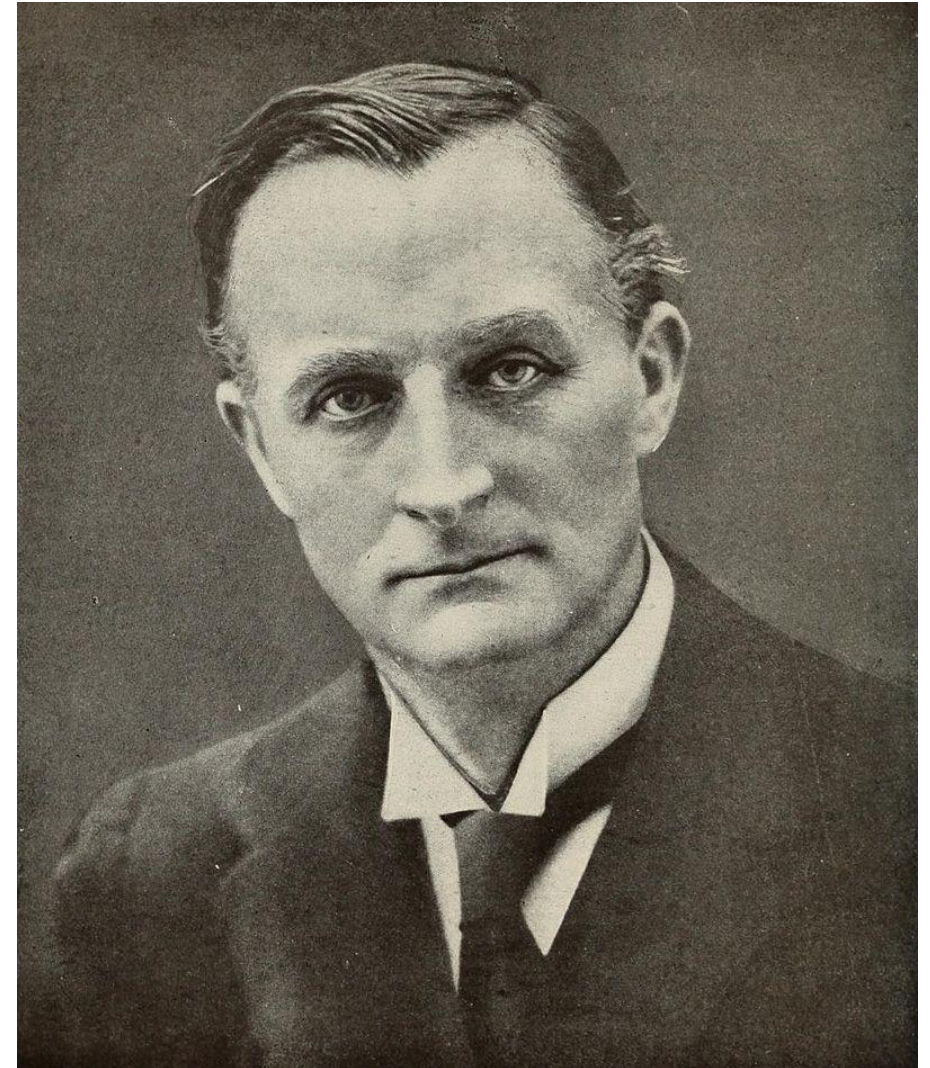
24 July

- At 3:00 PM 24 July the Council of Ministers convened for a special session.
- The ministers approved three policy resolutions drafted by Sazonov (photo:
- one Russia promised to work with the other powers to request that Austria extend the ultimatum deadline
- 2 Russia advised Serbia to announce that she would not resist any Austrian invasion but would rather entrust her fate to the powers
- 3 that the Army & Navy chiefs would ask the Tsar at a formal crown council the next day to approve in principle the mobilisation of the four military districts (a partial mobilisation against Austria alone)



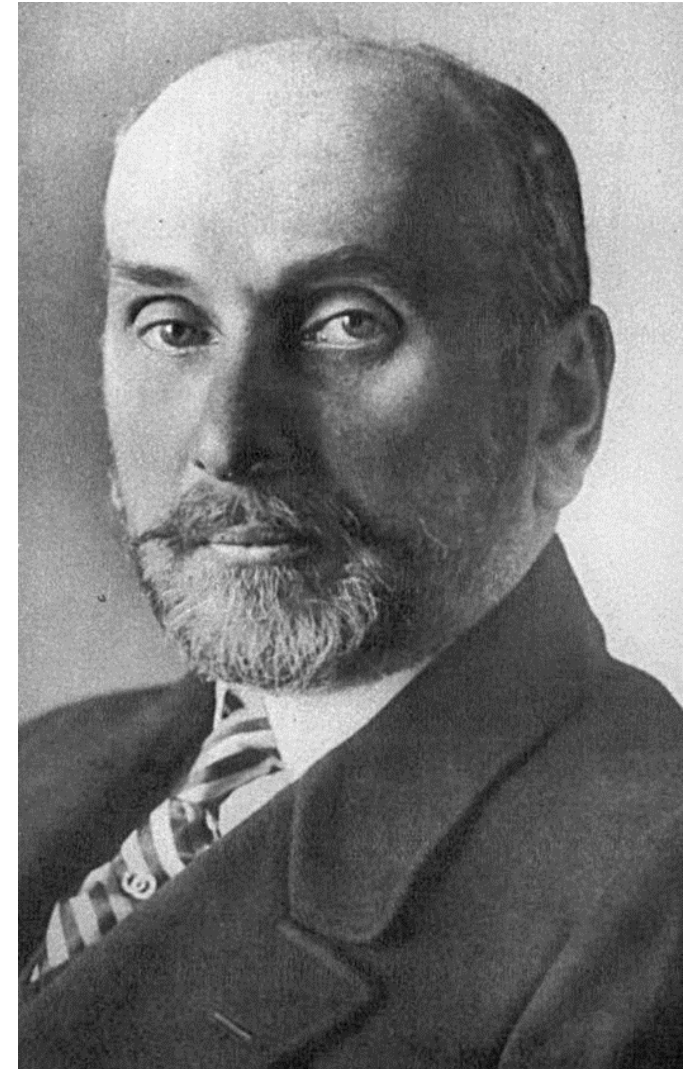
24 July

- Zimmermann sent out a dispatch to all German ambassadors (except for Austria-Hungary) telling them to inform their host governments that Germany had no advance knowledge whatsoever of the ultimatum.
- On 24 July, the French ambassador in London tried to waken Grey (photo) to the realization that once Austrian forces crossed the Serbian border, it would be too late for mediation.
- Grey responded by warning the German ambassador of the dangers of "European war à quatre" (involving Russia, Austria, France and Germany) if Austro-Hungarian troops entered Serbia and urged him to attempt a four-power conference of Britain, France, Italy and Germany at Vienna to mediate between Austria-Hungary and Russia, Serbia's patron, or at least to obtain an extension of the time-limit set by Austria-Hungary.
- Jagow sabotaged Grey's offer by waiting until after the ultimatum had expired to pass on the British offer.



24 July

- Sazonov then told Serbia's minister to Russia not to comply with the ultimatum. As a show of good faith he advised that Serbia declare acceptance of the more inoffensive clauses she must not however except articles 5 and 6.
- He then interviewed the German ambassador, who made the case for "localisation". After some discussions the Russian came to the point.
- He was now firmly convinced he told Pourtales, "that Austria Hungary was looking for a pretext to swallow up Serbia" in that case however he told the German ambassador then Russia will make war on Austria.
- Pourtales tried to reassure the Russian that Austria was far removed from any contemplation of territorial acquisitions: "there would be no swallowing up of Serbia." At this Pourtales reported, "Sazonov shook his head incredulously and spoke of far reaching Austrian plans. First Serbia would be devoured, then it would be Bulgaria's turn and then we shall have them (ie the Austrians) at the Black Sea."
- The only explanation for the use of such extreme language Pourtales believed was Sazonov's "passionate national and especially religious hatred for Austria Hungary," which as a Catholic power he viewed as fundamentally hostile to Orthodox Serbia.
- In a later conversation with the French ambassador Sazonov told Paléologue of the Germans accusation that he "hated" Austria, claiming that he retorted, "No of course we don't like Austria ... why should we like her? she has never done us anything but harm."



24 July

- After Berchtold (photo) met with the Russian chargé d'affaires, furious complaints were prompted from Berlin, warning that Austria-Hungary should not engage in talks with any other powers in case a compromise might be worked out.
- The British ambassador to Austria-Hungary reported to London: "War is thought imminent. Wildest enthusiasm prevails in Vienna."



25 July 1914

- On the morning of the 25th in a session presided over by Nicholas himself resolutions went even further than those taken on Friday.
- First the Tsar approved the previous day's decision in principle to undertake partial mobilisation against Austria alone.
- Second all troops were to return to standing quarters, not just the 1.1 million men who were to be mobilised in the four districts against Austria but the entire army.
- 3rd army cadets were immediately promoted to officers.
- 4th a state of war (that is martial law) was proclaimed in Moscow, St Petersburg, all towns in European Russia containing fortresses and in the frontier sectors facing Austria and Germany.
- Finally and most important the council issued top secret orders to inaugurate the Period Preparatory to War in all lands of the empire, beginning at midnight. This was a pre-mobilisation directive, which immediately preceded mobilisation.



25 July 1914

- By 1:00 PM on Saturday 5 hours before Giesl was to accept Pasich's reply Giesl reported to Vienna that Serbian preparations for war had already begun.
- At 3:00 PM on Saturday Serbian mobilisation against Austria Hungary was ordered.
- When Pasic (photo) arrived at the Austrian legation at around 5.55 PM he handed over the note to Giesl informing him in broken German that "part of your demands we have accepted"
- Giesel then handed Pasic his own note informing Serbia's government that having not received a satisfactory reply he would leave Belgrade that evening along with the entire Austro Hungarian legation.



25 July 1914

- Giesel (photo) was not bluffing, his staffers burned the diplomatic code books in a matter of minutes.
- Giesel his wife and the entire legation staff evacuated the premises by 6:15 aiming to make the 6:30 train to Vienna.
- Giesel made his train which crossed the Austrian frontier at 6:40 PM.
- Giesel later reported that en route he found the streets leading to the station and the station itself occupied by the military.
- Giesel stopped in the border town of Semlin and wired the news immediately en clair. Franz Joseph, anxious all afternoon got the news before 7:00.
- Berchtold and Krobatin, the war minister, were already at Bad Ischl. Together they convinced the Emperor that he must mobilise. The order was dispatched at 9:23 PM.



- Thanks for your attention.
- Next week - Who Caused the Chain Reaction?