

and Montenegro a high-handed policy which the other Powers tolerated for the sake of peace. She had three army corps assembled in Bosnia ready for action, which could only be against Serbia. To review these three army corps the heir apparent, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, went to Sarajevo, where he was joined by his wife. There they were both assassinated by malcontent Bosnians. The Austrian official press instantly laid the blame on the Servian Government before there could have been time for any inquiry.

On July 23, Austria sent an ultimatum to Serbia in such terms as any self-respecting government must reject, requiring its entire acceptance in forty-eight hours, and at the same time announced that no European Government would be permitted to discuss the matter. That was a direct challenge to Russia, an intimation that Russia must look on at the destruction of a free state whose struggles for independence she had mightily helped. The ultimatum had been telegraphed in full to the German emperor before it was sent.

England pleaded for delay, for time for the powers to consider. Russia urged Serbia to humiliate herself to the utmost but not to abdicate her sovereignty. Serbia complied with this advice, but Austria, implacable, declared war against her. Thereupon Russia mobilized her army, for in the circumstances she must either fight or haul down her flag. Thereupon Germany mobilized and France had to follow suit.

The British Government still negotiated. The British people, having made friends with France, felt that they could not desert her. The British Government asked Germany to undertake to respect that Belgian neutrality which all the powers had by treaty guaranteed. The reply was a brutal negative and immediate invasion.