

#### THE POLITICS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR A COURSE IN GAME THEORY AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

The Great War is an immense, confusing, and overwhelming historical conflict – the ideal case study for teaching game theory and international security.

Using thirteen historical puzzles, from the outbreak of the war and the stability of attrition, to unrestricted submarine warfare and American entry into the war, this book provides students with a rigorous yet accessible training in game theory. Each chapter shows, through guided exercises, how game-theoretical models can explain otherwise challenging strategic puzzles, shedding light on the role of individual leaders in world politics, cooperation between coalition partners, the effectiveness of international law, the termination of conflict, and the challenges of making peace. Its analytical history the First World War also surveys cutting-edge political science research on international relations and the causes of war.

Written by a leading game theorist known for his expertise regarding the war, this textbook includes useful student features such as chapter key terms, contemporary maps, a timeline of events, a list of key characters, and additional end-of-chapter game-theoretic exercises.

Scott Wolford is Associate Professor at The University of Texas at Austin. He published his first book, *The Politics of Military Coalitions*, in 2015, and has published articles in the *American Journal of Political Science*, the Journal of Politics, International Organization, the Journal of Conflict Resolution, and International Studies Quarterly, among others. He is a fellow of the Frank C. Irwin Chair in Government (2011–18), a recipient of the Best Paper in International Relations Award from the Midwest Political Science Association (2009), and a former associate editor for International Studies Quarterly.





## THE POLITICS OF

# The First World War

A Course in Game Theory and International Security

#### **Scott Wolford**

The University of Texas at Austin





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## **Preface**

For years, I'd been frustrated at the lack of options for teaching undergraduate international security in the way that I conduct my own research on the topic: through the construction and analysis of game-theoretic models. Students could take a game theory course, and they could take numerous courses on international security, but despite game-theoretic work's prominence in recent theoretical advances in the field, no course taught both in an integrated way. Students taking my security course, for example, got an unrepresentative look at the why and the how of social-scientific inquiry. That's especially problematic for those who go on to grad school and learn that what they consumed as an undergraduate was produced with methods that are basically alien to them. So I took advantage of the centennial of the First World War to try something new, using history to teach both international security and game theory. I designed a course that followed events in the war in "real time," tracking as closely as possible to the day, week, or month the events in the war one hundred years later, using the tools of game theory to understand one of the most consequential conflicts in world history. Then, I structured lectures around identifying and resolving puzzles raised by the war, beginning with a question - e.g., if strategies of attrition were so futile, why were they so stable? - and peeling back its layers analytically before settling on a simple theoretical model that can provide insight into the why and how of the outbreak, course, and end of the first truly global war. I decided that my students would encounter the historical-empirical record by focusing on a single conflict, get puzzled by it, and then learn how to resolve those puzzles in the classroom. Students, I hoped, would learn the game-theoretic analysis of politics by doing it and by seeing it done; they'd learn both game theory and the state of the art in the study of international security, all through the endlessly fascinating lens of the First World War. Engaging history in a political science course can be challenging, just like teaching game theory

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in a political science course; but it turns out that combining these two goals makes each task easier. After separating the wheat from the chaff (I hope), this volume collects those lectures, presenting what I believe is a unique course on the First World War, modern theories of international relations, and the development and use of game-theoretic models to analyze politics.

#### The "Real-Time" Approach

This book's most distinctive feature is its focus on analyzing politics in "real time." Thinking in real time means taking seriously the options and information available to the characters in our story when they acted: the possible futures they envisioned, feared, and tried to shape, free of the decades of accumulated hindsight that can blind us to the very real, contingent, often agonizing choices that defined the outbreak, course, prosecution, and termination of the First World War. Decisions that look inevitable in hindsight look very different when studied and explained in real time, when we as analysts try to see what the characters in our story saw, looking into what was for them an uncertain, often frightening future. The realtime approach also works well as an organizing device for studying the First World War in particular. This book works from a simple temporal narrative, identifying and solving puzzles about events before, during, and after the war that illustrate both important ideas in the study of international politics and the concepts of game-theoretic analysis, the second primary feature of this book's approach. Each chapter poses questions from the vantage of the early twenty-first century, but it answers them by building and analyzing models in the present tense of the early twentieth

Thanks to the book's treatment of a single, sprawling, yet popularly unfamiliar event, of which the First World War is an excellent example, students can make use of a shared historical context that's strikingly distant from popular (and partisan) memory. This has two benefits. First, the Great War touches on almost everything that we'd like to cover when we teach international security, and even those trappings of the contemporary world that it lacks (e.g., nuclear weapons) can be explored in the same theoretical frameworks introduced here. Second, focusing on a single historical event with common characters, dynamics, and issues throughout the book makes it easy to spend time teaching students how to use an important – if frustratingly absent from undergraduate training – tool in the study of political science: game theory. Game-theoretic models are uniquely well suited to the real-time approach, because they force us to state clearly our assumptions about the actors in our theories, their goals,



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the actions available to them, and how those actions add up to produce outcomes, including war and peace, alliances and alignments, cooperation and rivalry, international law, and the art of diplomacy. Game-theoretic work is often inaccessible without the requisite training, and this book resolves that dilemma by simply providing the training, combining the goal of explaining the politics of the First World War with a course in how to build, analyze, and interpret game-theoretic models with the express goal of explanation.

Each chapter, from those focused on introducing game-theoretic tools to those dedicated to specific historical events, poses a puzzle like the following:

- Why do countries use war to resolve disagreements when there are less destructive options available?
- Why did the Ottoman Empire abandon an apparently easy neutrality, entering a war that would ultimately destroy the Empire?
- Why did the Entente grant Germany an armistice after speaking for so long of the need for total victory?

After posing a puzzle and describing the relevant historical background, I develop the game-theoretic tools necessary to solve the puzzle, at some times a new game-theoretic solution concept, at others a specific strategic problem. Then, I walk the reader through the process of building an explanation in "real time," letting the characters in our story think and speak and act in the present tense, and comparing it to alternatives before situating each puzzle and the theoretical model that solves it in the broader context of the political science literature, showing how the First World War represents specific instances of more general trends in international politics. By the end of the book, students will have been exposed to the details of an important world-historical event, its place in the social-scientific understanding of international politics, *and* the process of building theories to explain politics.

#### **Coverage and Organization**

The book's historical scope begins with prewar tensions and conflicts between the great powers, including the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905, the Anglo-German naval race of 1906–1912, and several prewar crises from Morocco to the Balkans that saw the great powers step back from the brink of general war. It then continues through the outbreak and expansion of the war, the politics of military strategy and wartime diplomacy, and the network of peace treaties that legally, if not de facto,



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brought the war to an end by the early 1920s. Along the way, I use examples from the Chinese Civil War, the Korean War, the American-led wars against Iraq of the 1990s and 2000s, 1999's Kosovo War, the outbreak of the Second World War in the Pacific, and the contemporary balance of power supported by the United Nations and the American alliance network. Given the setting, the cast of characters is far from diverse. The critical decisions are made by men, often wealthy, generally European or Asian, in the name and at the expense of women and minorities in their own countries and subject peoples in their imperial domains, many of whom are drawn eventually into the war effort. Where possible, I highlight these experiences, but their absence from the story is itself instructive about how politics looked and worked in the early twentieth century and about how much has changed – and how much hasn't.

Two other courses unfold alongside this historical narrative: one in game theory and another in international security. First, the course in game theory begins with the construction and analysis of games in the strategic form, with a special emphasis on Nash Equilibrium in both pure and mixed strategies, as well as Bayesian Nash Equilibrium for strategicform games with imperfect information. Subsequent chapters introduce games in the extensive form, as well as repeated strategic-form games, and their associated solution concepts of Subgame Perfect Equilibrium and Perfect Bayesian Equilibrium. The treatments of game-theoretic tools are rigorous but accessible, never rising above the level of basic algebra. Statements about the existence and characteristics of equilibria are formalized in propositions, which I then prove in the text with extensive descriptions of the relevant mathematics. Propositions and their proofs serve as guided exercises, but several of the more demanding tool-building chapters - those that introduce Bayes' Rule, mixed strategies, Subgame Perfect Equilibrium, and Perfect Bayesian Equilibrium - include additional exercises based on important political science questions. Students learn both the basics of game theory and the value of using it; this is handson research methods training, focused consistently on practical - that is, explanatory - applications.

Second, the course in international security takes advantage of the unprecedented scope and scale of the Great War to address a variety of topics central to the modern study of international security. Bargaining and war, arms races, war expansion, signaling resolve and restraint, international law and institutions, economic interdependence, differences between civil and interstate war, building and sustaining cooperation in military coalitions, reassurance, military strategy, limited and total wars, war duration and termination, deterrence, domestic politics and war, and the politics



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of making and sustaining peace – even nuclear weapons and the United Nations – all enter the narrative, with extensive references to the state of the art in political science. The organization of these topics is unconventional, but by virtue of emerging from a single, unifying narrative of the First World War, they're both topical and problem driven. Thus invested in resolving the puzzles that motivate each chapter, students encounter the political science literature as critical background for understanding the object of study, not merely as a collection of citations without a common explanatory thread. This unconventional organizational scheme *works*; it's even changed the ways in which I view and contribute to my own field of inquiry.

#### **Features**

This text integrates three things that no other international security textbook does:

- deep engagement with a single (and very important) historical case;
- a fully realized introductory game theory course;
- a survey of the broader literature on international security.

Other textbooks focus on game theory, international security, and sometimes both, but they lack the common, unifying theme of a single historical case. This book's focus on World War I gives students a shared empirical vocabulary to use throughout the course. Disparities in prior knowledge about the topic of the course are, in effect, smoothed out by this focus on the Great War. There's a lot of content, which makes it a challenging text, but the analytical depth afforded by this scheme is a feature, not a bug.

Instructors will find the book most useful for upper-division undergraduate courses and, in some cases, introductory graduate courses on international security and conflict processes. Facility with algebra is the most important prerequisite, but the mathematical complexity increases slowly, affording students time to reacquaint themselves with mathematical tools they might not have used in a while. The tight focus on the logic of inquiry that guides each chapter – from observation to puzzle to explanation – encourages students to think like social scientists (and prepares those headed to graduate school for what they're likely to encounter once they get there). Political scientists often like to say that we'd like our research to be puzzle focused, and this text embraces that by setting an example of good research practice. Students see puzzles addressed and answered in a transparent, logically sound fashion, which lays bare the trial and error, the educated guesses, even the creativity that goes into crafting and evaluating explanations of the political world.



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As much as possible, the course follows the unfolding narrative of the war in temporal sequence, using successive events in the war to introduce new game-theoretic concepts in the same sequence they emerge in standard game theory courses. When the text builds and analyzes games to resolve key puzzles, it speaks exclusively in the present tense, emphasizing the value of thinking in real time, of taking seriously the choices and the contingencies that defined the era under study. Early chapters take care to introduce new methodological tools slowly, giving students practice with equilibrium reasoning and the methods of solving complete-information games in the strategic form. Not until Chapter 5, for example, does the text introduce imperfect information. Each subsequent chapter that introduces a new game form or solution concept (Chapters 5, 8, 11, and 12) also includes additional exercises, giving students some guided practice and deeper engagement with the tools used in the main body of the chapter. The exercises for Chapter 12, for example, explore pooling equilibria and out-of-equilibrium beliefs to round out the introduction of Perfect Bayesian Equilibrium, because the game used to solve the chapter's puzzle about war termination needed a separating equilibrium. The proofs of propositions and exercises can be skipped, however, if instructors prefer that students only engage the game-theoretic part of the course informally.



# Acknowledgments

Writing this book was superfluously fun, and I'm indebted to a great many people and places for making it possible. The course on which it's based, World War I in Real Time, emerged from a happy hour conversation with Pat McDonald and Rachel Wellhausen at Austin's venerable (and now late) Dog & Duck Pub. I blurted out an idea for a course that tracked events in the First World War in real time, one hundred years removed, keeping a tight focus on what the characters in the story knew and believed when they made their fateful choices. I wasn't sure it would work, but I was locked in. And once I got this unexpectedly popular course up and running, suggestions to make a textbook out of it, from Allison Carnegie, Joe Grieco, Jack Levy, Amy Liu, and Mike Ward, started to sound doable. At Cambridge University Press, Robert Dreesen gave me the push I needed to get the project off the ground; Brianda Reyes, Lisa Pinto, and Melissa Shivers were just the managing editors that this author needed to finish the book. Along the way, numerous people read chapters and/or indulged my overshared enthusiasm. This list includes Phil Arena, Jeff Carter, Terry Chapman, Mike Findley, Hein Goemans, Marc Hutchison, Nate Jensen, Pat McDonald, Dan Morey, Bill Reed, Toby Rider, Emily Ritter, Brian Roberts, Elizabeth Saunders, Jessica Weeks, Thorin Wright, and Amy Yuen, as well as long-suffering graduate students Kevin Galambos, Josh Landry, Hans-Inge Langø, Dan McCormack, Julie Phillips, Andy Rottas, and Cathy Wu. Going back a few years, I learned game theory from Cliff Carrubba at Emory University, and without those courses, which he graciously let me TA after I took them, this book surely would never have come about. My wife, Amy, was far, far more supportive of the time I invested in this project than any reasonable person should have to be; I'm happily in her debt. I wrote Chapters 1–9 before the birth of our son George. I'm sure that the post-George chapters bear his stamp in ways I

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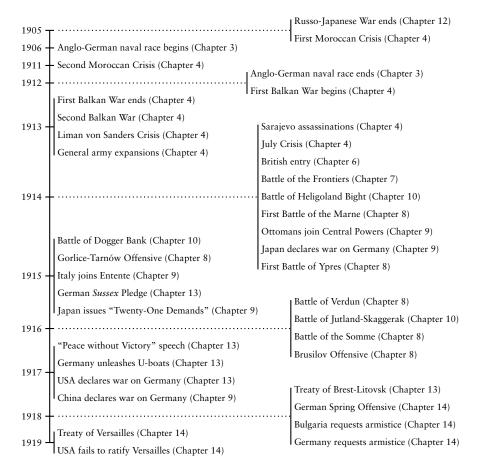
#### xxii Acknowledgments

don't yet fully appreciate, but I reserve the right to blame any errors in said chapters on the attendant disruptions to my sleep schedule.

Finally, I'm a better writer outside the office than I am in it, and the following establishments provided welcoming and often inspiring work environments: Black Turtle Pub and Milagro in Belgrade; Drukarnia and Ministerstwo Browaru in Poznań; La 100 de Beri and James Joyce Pub in Bucharest; O'Rourke's Public House in South Bend; orgAsmo and Zhang Men Brewing in Taichung; José Ramon 227 in Santiago; Old Stove Brewing and Elysian Brewing in Seattle; Beer Hive Pub, Squatters Pub, and Copper Canyon in Salt Lake City; and Workhorse Bar, Gabriel's Café, Hole in the Wall, Home Slice Pizza, Crown & Anchor Pub, Dog & Duck Pub, Flying Saucer Draft Emporium, Pinthouse Pizza, Thunderbird Café and Tap Room, Spider House Café, Taco Flats, Fara Café, Ray Benson's Road House, Schoolhouse Pub, Growler USA, and Draft Pick in Austin.



## **Timeline of Key Events**



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### **Dramatis Personae**

- Albert I. King of Belgium, 1909–1934. He famously rejected the German ultimatum in August 1914 and took command of the Belgian Army as it managed a fighting retreat to Antwerp and across the Yser River.
- Asquith, Herbert Henry. British Prime Minister, 1908–1916. He was beset by the question of Irish Home Rule, and whether it would lead to civil war, when the July Crisis erupted in 1914.
- von Baden, Maximilian "Max." German Chancellor, October–November 1918. He was tasked with putting his country on the path to democracy and armistice.
- Barthas, Louis. French Corporal, 1914–1918. Mobilized at the war's outbreak, he returned to barrel making and socialist activism at its end. His compiled diaries and letters were published posthumously in 1978.
- Beatty, David. British Admiral, later First Sea Lord, 1919–1927. He commanded the First Battle Cruiser Squadron in the Battles of Heligoland Bight, Dogger Bank, and Jutland-Skaggerak. Named First Sea Lord in 1919, in which role he helped negotiate the Washington Naval Treaty in 1922.
- von Bethmann-Hollweg, Theobald. German Chancellor, 1909–1917. Keen to observe legalities in ordering mobilization, he also promulgated the *Septemberprogramm* statement of expansive war aims. Later ousted for opposing unrestricted submarine warfare.
- von Bismarck, Otto. Prussian Minister-President, 1862–1890 (with a short break in 1873), and German Chancellor, 1871–1890. Responsible for overseeing Germany's unification and rise to great power status, he was sacked by Kaiser Wilhelm II, who rejected Bismarck's conservative foreign policy in favor of imperial expansion.
- Brusilov, Aleksei. Russian General, 1902–1917, later Commander-in-Chief, 1917. A cavalry officer best known for the 1916 offensive that

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bears his name, he later appealed to former Tsarist soldiers to join the Red Army as their patriotic duty to Russia.

- Chotek, Sophie. Duchess of Hohenberg, assassinated with her husband Archduke Franz Ferdinand on June 28, 1914. Thanks to a birth that was noble but not dynastic, she was denied the rank of Empress Consort, and her children were legally barred from inheriting the throne slated to be their father's.
- Churchill, Winston. British First Lord of the Admiralty, 1911–1915, officer on the Western Front, 1915–1916, then Minister of Munitions, 1917–1919. He lost political standing after advocating the disastrous Gallipoli Campaign to force the Turkish Straits in 1915.
- von Clausewitz, Carl. Prussian (and briefly Russian) General, 1782–1831. A witness to Prussia's defeat in the Napoleonic Wars and to Napoleon's ultimate defeat, his magnum opus *On War*, unfinished at his death, remains a foundational text in the theory of war.
- Conrad von Hötzendorf, Franz. Chief of the Austro-Hungarian General Staff, 1906–1917. An ardent advocate of preventive war against Serbia, his decision to divide forces against Serbia and Russia would contribute to the rapid collapse of the Hapsburg Empire as an independent military force.
- Crowe, Eyre. British diplomat known for his distrust of German intentions in the prewar years and leadership in the founding of the Ministry of Blockade during the war. The son of a diplomat, he was born in Germany and even in adulthood cursed with a German accent.
- von Falkenhayn, Erich. Prussian Minister of War, 1913–1914, then Chief of the German General Staff, 1914–1916. Appointed to replace Moltke the Younger after the Battle of the Marne, he was later demoted after the failure of the Verdun Offensive. He went on to lead the conquest of Romania in 1916.
- Foch, Ferdinand. French General, then Marshal, 1914–1923, later Commander-in-Chief of Allied Forces, 1918. He commanded the French 9th Army at the First Battle of the Marne and was tasked eventually with coordinating all Entente and Associated forces on the Western Front.
- Franz Josef I. Hapsburg Emperor of the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, 1848–1916. He saw his empire reduced to secondary status in the Germanic world after defeat at Prussian hands in 1866, then assented to plans for a preventive war on Serbia during the July Crisis.
- French, John. Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force, 1914–1916, later Commander-in-Chief, Home Forces, 1916–1918. He ended a career in the Royal Navy after discovering that he suffered from



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seasickness, then served in Sudan, India, and the Boer War before rising to command of the British Expeditionary Force.

- Goschen, Edward. British Ambassador to Germany, 1908–1914. His post was suspended at the outbreak of war in 1914, but previous postings included Washington, DC, St. Petersburg, Belgrade, Copenhagen, and Vienna.
- Grey, Edward. British Foreign Minister, 1905–1916. Famously cagey in 1914 about the content of the British commitment to France, he oversaw British entry into the war and, in the last year of his ministry, signed the Sykes-Picot agreement dividing former Ottoman lands in the Middle East between Britain and France.
- Groener, Wilhelm. German General, 1915–1919. Known for his talents as a logistician, he feuded with Ludendorff throughout the war but ended his career as Minister of Defense in the Weimar Republic.
- Haig, Douglas. Marshal, British Expeditionary Force, 1914–1918. Succeeding John French's command of the British Expeditionary Force, he oversaw both the costly Somme Offensive and the successful "Hundred Days" that brought Germany to heel. The creation of the Royal Army Dental Corps after the war followed his positive experiences with a Parisian dentist that treated him for a toothache.
- von Hapsburg-Lorraine, Franz Ferdinand. Heir-apparent to the throne of the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, his assassination on July 28, 1914, sparked the July Crisis. Loathed in Vienna and by his assassins, he was one of the few prewar advocates for peace in the Balkans.
- von Hindenburg, Paul. German General, Field Marshal, then Chief of the General Staff, 1916–1919. Recalled from retirement in August 1914, after victory at Tannenberg, he succeeded Moltke as Chief of Staff in 1916. Led what amounted to a military dictatorship in the waning years of the war, then appointed Adolf Hitler to the chancellorship in 1933.
- von Holtzendorff, Henning. German Admiral and Chief of the Admiralty Staff, 1915–1918. Like Hindenburg, he was called out of retirement by the war, though clashes with the army led him to retire a second time in August 1918.
- House, Edward "Colonel." Advisor, confidante, and occasional envoy for President Woodrow Wilson. A powerbroker from Texas who worked on Wilson's 1912 campaign, he turned down a cabinet appointment to be an informal advisor and diplomatic envoy.
- Jellicoe, John. British Admiral, 1914–1919, later First Sea Lord, 1917–1919. He commanded the Grand Fleet and made the fateful decision not to pursue German ships at Jutland-Skaggerak, then oversaw (skeptically) implementation of the convoy system as First Sea Lord in 1917.



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- Joffre, Joseph "Papa." Commander-in-Chief, French Army, 1914–1916. He ordered the famous retreat to reorient Entente forces in the face of Germany's attempted right hook through Belgium, setting up victory at the Battle of the Marine. His star would fade as the war stalemated through 1915.
- Jünger, Ernst. German soldier famous for his war-glorifying memoir In Storms of Steel. He rejected advances from the Nazis to take advantage of his war-hero status and became, in later years, an accepted establishment thinker.
- Kant, Immanuel. Eighteenth-century German philosopher. He is known to political scientists as a forerunner of the democratic peace thesis.
- Katō Takaaki. Japanese Foreign Minister, 1914–1915 (and a few times before). He led the push for Japan's entry into the First World War and issued the infamous "Twenty-One Demands" to China.
- Keynes, John Maynard. English economist. After serving in Britain's delegation to the Versailles peace conference, he wrote a popular critique of the treaty and the heavy reparations imposed on Germany, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*.
- Kitchener, Horatio Herbert. British Secretary of State for War, 1914–1916. He oversaw the creation of Britain's New Army, which he believed critical for a war that he predicted would last years, and made famous the recruitment poster that inspired the American "I Want You" poster featuring Uncle Sam. Died mid-war when the ship carrying him to Russia for coalition negotiations struck a German mine.
- Lansing, Robert. American Secretary of State, 1915–1920. He took office shortly after the sinking of the *Lusitania*, replacing the neutralist William Jennings Bryan, and backed Wilson's threats of war that secured the "Sussex Pledge."
- Lenin, Vladimir Ilyich. Russian communist revolutionary. He began the war in Swiss exile, but in 1917, with German support, made his way to Russia, where he led the Bolshevik seizure of power in the October Revolution before capitulating to Germany.
- Liman von Sanders, Otto. German and Ottoman General, 1913–1918. Head of the military mission to the Ottoman Empire that sparked a crisis in 1913, he organized the defense of the Gallipoli Peninsula in 1915, then led Turkish forces in the Sinai and Palestine later in the war.
- Lloyd George, David. British Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1908–1915, Minister of Munitions, 1915–1916, Secretary of State for War, 1916, and Prime Minister, 1916–1922. In addition to collecting cabinet appointments, he was known for his fiery rhetoric, both on the campaign trail and with regard to the threat posed by Wilhelmine Germany.



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• Ludendorff, Erich. German General, 1914–1918, then Quartermaster-General of the General Staff, 1916–1918. He led the assault on the Belgian fortress at Liège at war's outbreak, then, as Hindenburg's chief of staff, he orchestrated the victory at Tannenberg that would make the duo's reputation. Ran for office as a Nazi in the 1920s.

- Mehmet V. Ottoman Sultan, 1909–1918. After overseeing the loss of European territory in the Balkan Wars, he was largely powerless after the Young Turk coup of 1913.
- von Moltke (the Elder), Helmuth. Chief of the German General Staff, 1871–1888. Leader of Prussian armies in the Austro-Prussian and Franco-Prussian wars, he was the uncle of Moltke the Younger, who served in the same capacity at the outbreak of the First World War.
- von Moltke (the Younger), Helmuth. Chief of the German General Staff, 1906–1914. Nephew of Moltke the Elder, against whom he was frequently and unfavorably compared, he succeeded Schlieffen and unleashed a modified version of his predecessor's war plan.
- Nicholas II. Tsar of the Russian Empire, 1894–1917. The last of the Tsars, he was sidelined for his indecision during the July Crisis. He abdicated during 1917's February Revolution, but he and his family were executed by the Bolsheviks after the October Revolution.
- Pershing, John J. American General and Commander of the American Expeditionary Force, 1917–1918. He led an intervention into the Mexican Civil War to chase Pancho Villa in 1916–1917, then took command of the AEF, ever cautious of "amalgamation" with French and British forces on the Western Front.
- Potiorek, Oskar. Austro-Hungarian General and Governor of Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1911–1914. He survived the attacks that killed Franz Ferdinand and Sophie Chotek, then took command of Austro-Hungarian forces in the Balkans. After failing to bring Serbia to heel, he was removed in December 1914.
- **Princip, Gavrilo.** Bosnian Serb nationalist. He was part of a small group that crossed into Bosnia with help from Serbian intelligence. Princip fired the shots that killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand and Sophie Chotek.
- Riezler, Kurt. German diplomat and personal secretary to Bethmann-Hollweg. He authored the *Septemberprogramm* for the chancellor and negotiated German subsidies to Lenin with the latter's representatives in Berlin.
- Roosevelt, Theodore. Former President of the United States, 1901–1909. A full-throated advocate of intervention on the side of the Entente, he was a prominent critic of Wilson's policy of neutrality in the war's early years.



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- Salandra, Antonio. Italian Prime Minister, 1914–1916. Initially committed to neutrality at the war's outbreak, he later advocated accepting the Entente's offer of territorial gains in return for repudiating the Triple Alliance.
- Sazonov, Sergei. Russian Foreign Minister, 1910–1916. A veteran diplomat, he was one of the figures urging the Tsar to convert partial into full mobilization during the July Crisis.
- Scheer, Reinhard. German Admiral, 1916–1918, then Chief of the Admiralty Staff, 1918. He commanded the High Seas Fleet at the Battle of Jutland-Skaggerak, then ordered a last-ditch sortie in October 1918 that precipitated naval mutinies as the military situation continued to deteriorate.
- von Schlieffen, Alfred. German General and Chief of the General Staff, 1891–1906. Preceding Moltke the Younger in the role that made both of them famous, he drafted the war plan calling for a rapid victory over France before turning to fight Russia. His plan called for far more troops than Germany had in both 1905, when he drafted it, and 1914, when Moltke implemented it.
- von Stürgkh, Karl. Austrian Minister-President, 1911–1916. He refused to convene Parliament from spring 1914, allowing for rule by decree and heavy censorship once war broke out, and was assassinated in 1916 because of it.
- von Tirpitz, Alfred. German Admiral and State Secretary of the Naval Office, 1897–1916. A tireless advocate for turning Germany into a naval power, he found an ally in Wilhelm II for his plans to build a "risk fleet" that could contest Britain in the North Sea.
- Tisza, István. Hungarian Prime Minister, 1913–1917. Initially opposed to war with Serbia, which could undermine ethnic Hungarian power in the Dual Monarchy, he acceded under Vienna's threat to expand the franchise in Hungary.
- Villa, Francisco "Pancho." Mexican revolutionary general. He launched the raid on Columbus, New Mexico, that prompted American intervention. After nine months, when American forces withdrew to focus on Europe, Villa remained at large.
- Wilhelm II. Kaiser of the German Empire and King of Prussia, 1888–1918. Known for his bombast and inconsistency, he dismantled Bismarck's delicate alliance system and set Germany on the path to colonial expansion, in competition with powers like France and Britain.
- Wilson, Henry. British General, 1900–1918, Staff Officer for the British Expeditionary Force 1914–1915, and eventual Chief of the Imperial General Staff, 1918. An important advisor for Sir John French in the



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early months of the war, rocky relations with other generals eventually led to his assignment as a liaison with the French and eventually to the Supreme War Council.

- Wilson, Woodrow. American President, 1913–1921. He began the war years committed to neutrality but eventually opted to join the war after the German implementation of unrestricted submarine warfare in 1917. Enjoyed global popularity for his rhetorical stance on national self-determination.
- Zimmermann, Arthur. German Foreign Minister, 1916–1917. The diplomatic note that bears his name proposed an alliance between Germany, Mexico, and Japan. Intercepted by the British and passed on to the Americans, it created a public sensation, though the most recent evidence suggests that it changed few minds about intervention.

