The Causes of World War I

I. Long-Term Causes

II. Short-Term Causes

III. United States Involvement - 14 Points
I. Long-Term Causes of World War I
I. Long-Term Causes of WWI

A - Assassination
N - Nationalism
I - Imperialism & Industrialism
M - Militarism
E - Entangled Alliances
I. Long-Term Causes of WWI

A. *Militarism
   1. Definition:
      a. The glorification of military power.
      b. Aggressiveness that involves the threat of military force.

B. Militarism led to fear and suspicion as European nations became more willing to use military force to attain national goals.

C. Militarism led to an arms race among European powers where they competed with each other to expand their armies and navies.
   a. The French and German armies had more than doubled between 1870 and 1914

D. One of the fiercest rivalries was between Britain and Germany with special regards to their naval power.
I. Long-Term Causes of WWI

A. *Alliance Systems

1. Definition:
   a. An alliance is an agreement made between two or more countries where they agree to defend each other if attacked by another country.
   b. Once an alliance is signed, those countries become allies.

B. Increased fear and suspicions between European powers led them to form alliances, many of which were “entangled.”

C. Nations felt that these alliances created a “balance of power” or a system of checks and balances.

D. The two most important alliances:
   a. **Triple Alliance** - Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy
   b. **Triple Entente** (on-ton-tay) - Britain, France, and Russia
I. Long-Term Causes of WWI

A. The “entangled” alliances of pre-WWI Europe:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Alliance</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>The Dual Alliance</td>
<td>Germany and Austria-Hungary made an alliance to protect themselves from Russia</td>
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<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>Austro-Serbian Alliance</td>
<td>Austria-Hungary made an alliance with Serbia to stop Russia gaining control of Serbia</td>
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<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>The Triple Alliance</td>
<td>Germany and Austria-Hungary made an alliance with Italy to stop Italy from taking sides with Russia</td>
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<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>Triple Entente (no separate peace)</td>
<td>Britain, Russia and France agreed not to sign for peace separately</td>
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<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>Franco-Russian Alliance</td>
<td>Russia formed an alliance with France to protect herself against Germany and Austria-Hungary</td>
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<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>Triple Entente</td>
<td>This was made between Russia, France and Britain to counter the increasing threat from Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>Anglo-Russian Entente</td>
<td>This was an agreement between Britain and Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>Entente Cordiale</td>
<td>This was an agreement, but not a formal alliance, between France and Britain</td>
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I. Long-Term Causes of WWI

A. Imperialism & Industrialism

1. Through Imperialism, by 1900 the British Empire extended over five continents and France had control of large areas of Africa.

2. With the rise of Industrialism, these countries needed resources and new markets.

B. The amount of lands colonized by Britain and France increased the rivalry with Germany who had entered the scramble to acquire colonies late and only had small areas of Africa.
I. Long-Term Causes of WWI

A. Map showing European claimants to the African continent in 1913
I. Long-Term Causes of WWI

A. Nationalism
   1. Can bring people together.
   2. Can also be a source of conflict.

B. During the early 1900’s in pre-WWI Europe, aggressive Nationalism was another source of tension between countries.

C. Germany and France had one of the greatest nationalist rivalries.
   1. France had lost to Germany in the Franco-Prussian War (1871).
      a. France had to pay $$$ to Germany.
      b. France lost its valuable Alsace-Lorraine provinces.
      c. France lost their place as a major European power, now replaced by Germany, and wanted revenge.
I. Long-Term Causes of WWI

Nationalism CONTINUED...

D. Russia, the largest Slavic country, had encouraged a form of Nationalism in Eastern Europe called Pan-Slavism, which tried to draw together all Slavic peoples across many countries.

1. Many Slavic countries, in a region known as the Balkans, looked to Russia for aid and leadership in their quests to unify.

E. The Austria-Hungarian empire strongly opposed these Slavic Nationalistic movements taking place in the Balkans.

1. This created great tension between the Austria-Hungary empire and Russia.

2. As the Balkan region was the main source of this tension it has been referred to as the “POWDER KEG OF EUROPE” and would eventually lead to the start of World War I.
I. Long-Term Causes of WWI

A - Assassination

N - Nationalism

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II. Short-Term Causes of World War I
II. Short-Term Causes of WWI

A. The Balkan “Powder Keg” Explodes

1. Tensions continue to grow between the Austria-Hungarian Empire and the Slavic country of Serbia (located in the Balkans).

2. On June 28, 1914, Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian throne, is assassinated while traveling through the country of Bosnia located in the Balkans.

   a. The Archduke was assassinated by Gavrilo Princep, a member of a radical Slavic nationalistic group that opposed Austria and the Austria-Hungarian Empire.

B. This assassination led to a chain reaction where the major nations of Europe responded, according to their entangled treaties.
• Archduke Franz Ferdinand
The Assassination
Gavrilo Princip
II. Short-Term Causes of WWI

A. The chain reaction that would lead to World War I:

1. Austria-Hungary blamed Serbia for assassination of the Archduke and made harsh demands on Serbia.

2. Serbia refused to comply with any of the demands.

3. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on July 28, 1914.

4. Russia, a Slavic nation and friend of Serbia, mobilizes and prepares to defend Serbia against Austria-Hungary.

5. Germany, an ally of Austria-Hungary, declared war on Russia.

6. Germany declared war on France.

7. Germany invaded Belgium on August 3, 1914, so that German forces could enter France more easily.

8. Britain declared war on Germany.