

CHAPTER IV

THE JUGO-SLAV IRREDENTA AND THE ROAD TOWARD THE WAR

Even that most dangerous irredenta which finally gave rise to the World War and destroyed the monarchy, the Jugo-Slav irredenta itself, cannot be regarded as an insolvable problem in its very nature, a problem which must have inevitably led to the dissolution of the Habsburg monarchy. On the contrary, the chief factors of the Jugo-Slav situation would have made it possible to have the unavoidable tendency of the Jugo-Slav peoples toward national unity take a course propitious to the monarchy since national integration could have been achieved not from Belgrade but from Zagreb or Sarajevo.

As a matter of fact the Jugo-Slav irredenta, in one way or another, was really an unavoidable sociological necessity but the conditions and the process of its achievement depended to a large extent on the policy followed in this question. The whole history of the nineteenth century is a demonstration of a sociological law, according to which among masses of the same nationality, living under different sovereignties, there develops, with the rise of economic and cultural life, an irresistible current tending toward the unification of the whole national body into one single economic and political organization. The whole process of Jugo-Slav unity was in its essence the same as that of Italian or German unity. At the end of the nineteenth century, every careful observer could see that the tendency toward Jugo-Slav unity had become an inevitable mass-psychological necessity. The intrigues and rivalries of the great powers could retard or accelerate this process but they were not its real causes. Anyone with the slightest historical or sociological sense will repudiate *a limine* this naïve propagandistic point of view which holds that Jugo-Slav unity was the result of the undermining influence of Russian Pan-Slavism and of the diplomatic intrigues of the Entente, though both factors without doubt, have intensively ripened and accelerated the historical process.

A. THE DISPERSION OF THE JUGO-SLAV FORCES

The majority of the Jugo-Slav peoples of Europe, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, lived under foreign domination. The Austrian Slovenians under German, the Serb immigrants of Hungary under Magyar,¹ the Dalmatian Slavs under Italian, the Slavs of the

¹ Under the Turkish rule there was a slow, but continuous infiltration of Serb elements into the southern parts of Hungary. The largest wave of this immigration came in 1690 when about 40,000 Serb families under the leadership of the patriarch of Ipek were colonized by the imperial authorities in the counties of Pozsega, Szerém, and in Bácska. Emperor Leopold I bestowed upon them wide privileges which made their settlements almost a small state in the state.

Balkans under Turkish rule as subject peoples, without the leadership of a national historical class, without a state life or local self-government. Only the Croats were successful in safeguarding their state life and historical continuity to a certain extent.

The wars of the Habsburg monarchy against the Turks naturally aroused also the Balkan Slavs, languishing under Turkish exploitation, and threw into these peoples the sparks which kindled the Slav consciousness, leading after half a century of struggling for independence, in the peace of San Stefano (1878), to the acknowledgment of an independent Serb state. At the same time the independence of the small principality of Montenegro was also recognized by which Serb national life and culture acquired two new centers in the Balkans. From this moment, as a matter of fact, the Serbian state became the natural leader and continuer of the movement which tended toward the elimination of Turkish feudalism from Old Serbia and Macedonia, a movement which in the Balkan Wars of 1912, obtained in the main its aim parallel with the exuberant development of Serb national consciousness. During the decades of the national struggles there developed a vigorous Serb middle class and intelligentsia which absorbed eagerly the revolutionary ideas of the West and which, with a southern impetuosity and a ruthless cruelty acquired in the guerilla warfare with the Turks, embraced the program of entire Jugo-Slav unity. By this the Southern Slav world achieved two powerful centers of attraction: one in Zagreb, in the capital of the Croatian kingdom belonging to the Crown of St. Stephen; the other in Belgrade, in the capital of the independent Serbian kingdom.

These two centers necessarily exercised a great influence on the totality of the Southern Slav peoples, who were divided among six distinct state territories and inside these among a number of distinct provinces. These artificially divided parts of a common national body led for a long time a different economic and cultural life and the feeling of the local particularisms remained for an extended period stronger than the feeling of national unity. But all that which promoted in these national fragments the economic and cultural development augmented from year to year the natural cohesion among them, the consciousness of the ethnographic solidarity and the hatred of the foreign rule.

The comprehension of the nature of the whole process will be facilitated by the following table which shows the Jugo-Slav population of the various countries, distinguishing the Catholic Slavs (Croats, Slovenians) from the Orthodox Serbs. Though the statistical figures from the Balkan territories before the war were not entirely reliable, we can accept the calculations of R. W. Seton-Watson as an approximately correct estimate of the Jugo-Slav forces before the establishment of Jugo-Slav unity.²

² Analyzed in detail in his book, *The Southern Slav Question* (London, 1911).

Tables XVII and XVIII show that more than twice as many Jugo-Slavs lived in the monarchy than outside of it, around the newly developed Serb centers, and, therefore, by the sheer force of numbers, according to the law of mass attraction, an irredentist movement toward the monarchy would have had a greater probability than a tendency toward secession from the monarchy. But beside the numerical conditions there have been even more powerful forces at work which could have changed the line of irredentism in favor of the monarchy. Thus, above all, the majority of the Jugo-Slav peoples living under Habsburg rule had a tremendous advantage over the Jugo-Slavs of the

TABLE XVII

JUGO-SLAVS INSIDE THE HABSBURG MONARCHY (IN ROUND NUMBERS)

I. In Austria (Carniola, Carinthia, Styria, Istria, Dalmatia)	
a) Slovenes	1,400,000
b) Croats	700,000
c) Serbs	100,000
II. In Hungary	
a) Croats	300,000
b) Serbs	500,000
III. In Croatia-Slavonia	
a) Croats	1,750,000
b) Serbs	650,000
IV. In Bosnia-Herzegovina	
a) Croats	400,000
b) Serbs	850,000
c) Mohammedan Serbo-Croats	650,000
Total	7,300,000

TABLE XVIII

JUGO-SLAVS OUTSIDE THE HABSBURG MONARCHY

I. In Serbia	2,600,000
II. In Montenegro	300,000
III. In Turkey	400,000
Total	3,300,000

Balkans in economic organization, in general culture, and in administrative efficiency. Let us suppose that the monarchy, by the help of a Federal Constitution, had bestowed complete cultural autonomy and national independence upon its seven million Jugo-Slav citizens, that they could develop without any hindrance in national force, culture, and economic life. Would it have been a utopian dream to suppose that this Society of Nations around the Danube, counting fifty-one million population and in which, besides Vienna, Budapest, and Prague, Zagreb would have been the most important economic center of the Federation, would have exercised an irresistible attraction for those three million Balkan-Jugo-Slavs who were in dire need of a cultural, economic, and scientific leadership?

Moreover, the Habsburg monarchy would not have been under the necessity of hastening the work of integration, but could prepare it at leisure, slowly and cautiously, acquiring step by step new sympa-

thies and affinities. For, as a matter of fact, as has been mentioned, the consciousness of national solidarity grew comparatively slowly among the Jugo-Slav tribes. At the beginning they faced each other like foreigners with a distrustful attitude. The Croats and Slovenians of the monarchy in their Roman Catholic creed, brought up in the spirit of Western Roman culture, utilizing the Latin alphabet, belonging to the natural blood circulation of Vienna and Budapest, regarded themselves for a long period as distinct from and superior to their Serb kindred folk who formed the southwestern projection of the Byzantine culture, following the orthodoxy of the Greek Oriental religion, utilizing the Cyrillic alphabet and on whom the incessant Komitadjis fought and the bloody struggles against the Turks during centuries impressed a somewhat barbarous, Asiatic color. On the other hand, the Serb minority felt distrustful toward the Croat-Slovenian majority which it considered as vassals of Vienna and Budapest. Under such conditions it was quite natural that the Western majority did not care very much in the beginning for their poor Balkan relatives but it cherished the political ideal of the so-called Illyrism, the conception of which was the restoration of the unity of the three countries of the former Croatian crown. This Illyrism had no hatred at all against the Habsburgs, nay, it was the most decided affirmation of their empire which proved to be, through the powerful propaganda of Ljudovít Gaj, the most efficient ideological force by which Vienna gained the armed support of the Jugo-Slavs against the Magyar fight for independence. . . .³ But even later, through almost three generations, the Croats played the rôle of the most loyal citizens of the Habsburgs, their regiments fought strenuously for the monarchy even during the World War, and the majority of the Catholic Jugo-Slavs followed the tradition of their great national leader, the Banus Jelačić, who wished to unite his race under the rule of the Habsburgs. Even as late as May 30, 1917, a resolution of the Jugo-Slav club vindicated without ambiguity the unification of all the Jugo-Slavs of the monarchy inside its frontiers.

But not only among the Catholic Southern Slavs of the empire but even in the Serb kingdom there were not lacking currents and aspirations which were in favor of a movement of unification tending toward the Habsburg monarchy. At the very beginning of the nineteenth century Kara Georg, the leader of the Serb national struggle against the Turks, asked repeatedly for the protection of Emperor Francis and declared himself willing to accept the Austrian suzerainty.⁴ Similar endeavors continued in recent times also. A Serb Premier himself, Dr. Vladán Georgiević, narrated in the columns of a Viennese

³ See pp. 96, 261-62, 310, 368 of the present book.

⁴ For details see Alfred Fischel, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

newspaper, his proposition made to Aehrenthal, then Foreign Minister of the monarchy, in which he offered the willingness of Serbia to enter into the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, claiming in return only such a degree of independence as was possessed by Bavaria inside the German empire. But the Austrian statesman was not willing to give any consideration to this plan.⁵ Immediately before the World War, in 1912, Nicolas Pašić, the Serb Premier, was also very anxious to build up a far-reaching economic approachment and asked Professor Masaryk, the present President of the Czecho-Slovak Republic, then a leading member of the Czech opposition, to present his plan to Count Berchtold, the Foreign Minister of the monarchy. But this unfortunate statesman was not inclined to discuss the matter with the Czech scholar because in a typically Austrian spirit, he believed that "Masaryk wanted to create a commission and we are not here to help people to commissions. . . ." A similar intervention of Joseph Redlich and of Dr. I. M. Baernreither, a member of the Upper House, was equally unsuccessful.

B. THE ORIGINS OF THE JUGO-SLAV IRREDENTA

Confronting such and similar facts, it is not only not natural but it asks urgently for explanation of the cause of that vehement Jugo-Slav irredenta which getting a hold not only over the Serbs but over large masses of the Croatian and Dalmatian younger generations,⁶ led directly to the dissolution of the monarchy. Whoever is desirous of obtaining an accurate answer to this question must read the detailed history of the movement for Jugo-Slav unity as it was described by R. W. Seton-Watson, P. Südland, and above all by Hermann Wendel.⁷ Here I must restrict myself to the emphasis of some of the most salient facts which had the greatest influence in the formation of an irredentistic movement directed against the monarchy.

In this connection, before all, the oppressed conditions of the Jugo-Slav territories of the monarchy must be pointed out. The greatest political fault was the scandalous direction of the all-important Croat problem, the most outstanding events of which have been already described in another chapter.⁸ Out of a country which could have become the natural Piedmont of the Jugo-Slavs the ruling classes of the monarchy made a dissatisfied province and later, in the immoral

⁵ F. Kleinwaechter, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

⁶ In July, 1917, the organ of the loyal Habsburgist Party in Croatia (the so-called Frank Party) emphasized the fact that 90 per cent of the Croatian intellectuals were following the "chimera of Jugoslavia."

⁷ The books of R. W. Seton-Watson and of Hermann Wendel have been already quoted. The Austrian standpoint was elucidated by Südland, *Die Südslavische Frage und der Weltkrieg* (Wien, 1918).

⁸ See pp. 366-75 of this book.

hands of Count Khuen Héderváry, a kind of a Balkan colony which could only be ruled by armed force and absolutism, accompanied by riots, student upheavals and, after Khuen, by attempts against the lives of the exponents of the system. Already in 1871 it had become manifest that the new era was on a bad track. In the so-called "Plot of Ogulin," a widely spread conspiracy was detected which could only be suppressed by considerable military force. At the same time the Slovenian minority was consequently hampered in its cultural progress, whereas Dalmatia, this brilliant center of old Slav culture, played the rôle of the Cinderella of the monarchy, where for a long period a dwarfish Italian minority ruled over a population 98 per cent of which was Jugo-Slav. Besides, Dalmatia was neglected both economically and culturally. About three hundred villages had no schools and in some regions the number of illiterates surpassed 90 per cent. The whole situation could be best characterized by the unique fact already mentioned that the capital of Dalmatia had no direct railway communication with Austria to which it belonged and Zara could only be reached by sea or by carriage.

These and similar evils could only be cured by an independent and self-determining state but the unification of the Jugo-Slav territories broke down before the barrier of the Dualistic Constitution of the German-Magyar hegemony. On the one hand, Hungary claimed a historical right over Dalmatia and later also over the occupied Bosnia-Herzegovina, but at the same time it was rigidly opposed to any effort tending toward the unification of the Jugo-Slav territories of the monarchy because this aspiration would have meant the end of the dualistic system, the breakdown of the German-Magyar hegemony. The Hungarian anti-Slav attitude found a staunch ally in the higher German bourgeoisie, especially in the leading financial circles, for which the dualistic system signified unassailable monopolies in all parts of the monarchy. This alliance became adamant by the protection of the German imperialism, for which a federalized Habsburg monarchy, led by a Slav majority, would have become valueless.

This attitude of the Magyar upper classes against Jugo-Slav unity remained unaltered even during the World War and gives a key to the understanding of Count Stephen Tisza's position which was often misrepresented by official propaganda and superficial foreign observers. When Count Tisza, the most steadfast and class-conscious defender of the big landed interests of the monarchy, tried to avoid the war with Serbia,⁹ his policy was not the outcome of a desire for peace

⁹ It must also be noted that his resistance against the catastrophe-policy of Vienna was very platonic and lukewarm. The truth is, rightly emphasized by Count Theodore Batthyány, a state minister and one of the best informed men of the war period, in his recent memoirs (published in Hungarian in 1927), that Tisza could have impeded the outbreak of the World War if he would have refused to accept the constitutional responsibility for the ultimatum sent to Serbia. Why? Because the

or of moderation. Tisza did not have any "pacifistic bias" at all. He was as convinced as all the other leading statesmen of the monarchy that a war with Russia was inevitable. Already in 1889 in a public speech he declared that the European war was imminent and urged the country to prepare for it.¹⁰ As already mentioned, he twice broke violently the rules of the Hungarian Parliament in order to make the

old Emperor—at least at the beginning—seems to have received unwillingly the plan of the war party. The hatred of the majority of the peoples of Austria against the war adventure was manifest. Therefore, an energetic resistance on the part of the "solid" Hungary through her most powerful statesman, the Magyar "superman" would have been sufficient to counterbalance the influence of the Viennese war party. But Tisza alleviated his conscience by purely verbal arguments. Later he became the most ardent supporter of the war party, helped to make the ultimatum unacceptable for Serbia, moved for the refusal of Sir Grey's conciliation plan (July 31, 1914), and already two weeks earlier went to the German ambassador emphasizing the necessity of the war. (The revocation of his former standpoint earned for him the enthusiastic marginal remark of the German Emperor: *Na, doch mal ein Mann!* "Now, there's a man for you!"). This conversion of Count Tisza, of the "strong man" of the monarchy, "the ablest and most striking political figure" of the period, became a riddle for many foreign students and must remain such for all those who try to explain the decisions of the leading statesmen exclusively on the basis of individual psychology instead of analyzing the general mass-psychological situation. The key for the solution of this "problem" lies in the fact that Tisza, like all other Hungarian premiers, could never dare to oppose the will of the Emperor or that of the dominant court-groups at Vienna. The dangers of such a resistance would have been too great, due to the fact that there was never a real majority public opinion behind the Magyar premier who represented not the country, but only the ruling oligarchy maintaining the Dualistic System. (See the analysis of this system on pp. 357 ff. of the present book.) In the case of conflict (as the case of 1906-7 clearly showed) Vienna could always mobilize against the ruling classes the overwhelming majority of the country, the Magyar proletariat and the nationalities, promising them universal suffrage. And universal suffrage with secret ballot would have meant immediately the end of the latifundist system and the Magyar supremacy in the monarchy, two things which represented the deepest aspirations of the Magyar feudal classes whose uncontested leader Count Tisza was. Therefore the position of a Hungarian premier was not like that of the premier of England, backed by majority public opinion and practically independent of the Crown, but of a royal commissary, an exponent of the feudal interests, entirely dependent on the will of the king. That was the situation when Count Tisza saw in those critical weeks that his memoranda were repudiated in a rather harsh way by the monarch and when he saw the growing war passion of the ruling militaristic and diplomatic circles. His resistance broke completely, *laudabiliter se subiecit*. The tragedy of Hungary was sealed.

But this was only his derivative sin, the consequence of his whole system, which by the rigidity of its feudal economic structure, by the disrespect of the Nationality Law, by the maintenance of the corrupt electoral law made the racial problems of the monarchy insolvable and led directly to the explosion of the Yugoslav irredenta. Therefore, one of his greatest admirers, but a man of independence and a broader conception, Mr. Glaise-Horstenau, is right in calling him "the grave digger of his beloved thousand-year-old fatherland" (*op. cit.*, p. 112).

Exactly the same thing happened with the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina which was the beginning of the apocalyptic ride of the monarchy. Again a Magyar statesman, Count Julius Andrassy, was chiefly responsible for it. Now we know from the reminiscences of his son (Count Julius Andrassy, *The Antecedents of the World War*, I, 20-21, in Hungarian) that the founder of the Dualistic System opposed very energetically this scheme. Later, he became its leading protagonist. Again the Hungarian premier was an instrument of Habsburg expansion and was unable to maintain his original standpoint.

¹⁰ Joseph Redlich, *Kaiser Franz Joseph*, p. 406.

Army Bill accepted which the military circles demanded from him as a necessity for the future war. His attitude toward international relations was a strictly Machiavellian one. He wrote to the Emperor in his first memorandum for the maintenance of peace (July 1, 1914) the characteristic words: "In face of the present Balkan situation it would be my smallest concern to find an apt *casus belli*. When the time comes for the striking of the first blow, it is easy to construct from the various questions a case for war. But before this we must create a diplomatic constellation which will make the relations between the powers less unfavorable for us."¹¹ His famous *politique de longue main* was not a peace policy, but the preparation of a new military alliance for the future war.¹² His "moderation" was determined by two chief considerations: In case of a defeat, the whole monarchy would be lost; in case of a victory, the annexation of the Jugo-Slav territories of the Balkans would be demanded by all those military and diplomatic circles which were aware of the fact that without the unification of the Jugo-Slav tribes, the irredentistic danger would continue and envenom as before the whole atmosphere of the monarchy. But annexation and unification would have signified Trialism or Federalism, the end of the German and Magyar hegemony. And exactly this was the most dreaded thing for the beneficiaries of the big landed interests. Count Tisza upheld this leading point of view until the last. When Serbia and Montenegro were occupied by the victorious Central Powers and some leading Viennese circles, influenced by Conrad, were for a final annexation of them in order to solve the Jugo-Slav problem by a radical operation, Count Tisza bitterly opposed this policy. And doing this he was motivated again not by a feeling of moderation of justice toward the Serbian state, or by cautiousness to avoid further international complication, but by the perfectly clear vision that the unification of the Jugo-Slavs would lead immediately to the federalization of the monarchy. He favored, therefore, the mutilation of Serbia by a strategic correction of its frontiers, by giving parts of it to its rival neighbors, he favored a policy of complete economic domination over the defeated state. Generally speaking, his point of view was the continuation and petrification of the *status quo*, the maintenance of Serbia in its position of a state embryo, incapable of any serious independent economic and political life. When, after the defeat, he insulted, as it was shown, the Serb leaders at Sarajevo, he was animated by the same fears and hates toward the Jugo-Slav world. Therefore, the whole attitude of the powerful Hungarian statesman during the World War was completely in harmony with his fundamental dogma of the Dualistic Constitution, but his plan, if successful, would have perpetu-

¹¹ *Diplomatische Aktenstücke zur Vorgeschichte des Krieges 1914* (Wien, 1919), I, 17.

¹² S. B. Fay, *The Origins of the World War*, II, 191-92.

ated the tension in the Balkans and the irredentas in the monarchy. The war would have meant only a breathing space for new and more vehement convulsions. The other bulwark of the Dualistic Constitution, the old Emperor himself, shared completely this point of view of Magyar feudalism and regarded it as an axiom that Jugo-Slav unification must be crushed. In an autographed letter written to William II immediately after the catastrophe of Sarajevo, he advocated the plan of a Balkan League which "will only be possible if Serbia . . . is eliminated as a political factor in the Balkans."¹³

Under the pre-war conditions just analyzed, the Jugo-Slav problem of the monarchy became more and more inflamed because it is in the nature of irredentism that such a tendency grows in a direct ratio with the economic and cultural development of the respective territories. This situation was further aggravated by the fatal foreign policy of the monarchy which, seeing a mortal danger in the Jugo-Slav aspiration for unification, was by necessity animated by the purpose of checking the Serbian kingdom in its independent economic and political development and of retaining it in its rôle of an abortive state embryo. This unfortunate attitude, which later threw the Serbs and large masses of the other Jugo-Slavs into the arms of the Russian propaganda, found already a symbolical expression in 1876 when, during the fight of the Serbs and Montenegrinians for independence against the Turkish rule, Magyar public opinion broke out in clamorous manifestations for the Turks. A sword of honor was sent from Budapest to the Turkish generalissimus and Svetozar Miletić, the popular leader of the Serbs of Hungary and member of the Hungarian parliament, was imprisoned for several years because he tried to organize a Serbian volunteer troop in Hungary in order to help their Balkan brothers in their struggle against Turkish absolutism. Svetozar Miletić became insane in prison and his tragic figure constituted one of those sentimental barriers which separated the Serbs from the ruling dualistic system.

C. THE DANGER-SPOT, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

But the most important issue which fomented irredentistic feelings among the Jugo-Slavs was the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1878. Extensive and controversial literature has been written concerning this expansion of the monarchy but its sense and meaning is quite clear. The fatal decision had two chief motives. One was the old desire for conquest of the Habsburg imperialism which, after so many humiliations, became again victorious and could recompense itself with an important province for its losses in Italy. If anyone should deny this motive, I would simply allude to an interesting docu-

¹³ *Diplomatische Aktenstücke zur Vorgeschichte des Krieges 1914*, I, Teil, p. 3.

ment which sheds sufficient light on the real purposes of the leading circles. Even at the end of 1913, that is, half a year before the catastrophe, this Habsburg empire, pressed by so many unsolved problems and preparing for new wars under the dreadful burdens of its irredentas, continued feverish diplomatic negotiations for acquiring colonies in the territories of the then vacillating Turkish sovereignty, in Cilicia, a province in Asia Minor. Obviously, they did not yet have sufficient irredentas and they were anxious to supplement them with an Asiatic one, and to excite the Turkish world, too, against their empire. Count Berchtold had no such scruples when he declared before the German ambassador that "especially in the circles of Hungarian parliamentarians there is a keen desire to get an economic footing in Asia Minor."¹⁴ The booty of Bosnia was not enough to satisfy the appetite of dualistic imperialism.

The other cause for the war of occupation against Bosnia-Herzegovina was the growing desire to check the natural extension of the Serb state and of Jugo-Slav unity. The Serbs have interpreted the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in this manner from the beginning and the wrath of national paroxysm shook the whole Jugo-Slav world in the Balkans, a paroxysm skilfully utilized by Russian propaganda in fomenting the conviction that against the mortal enemy, Austria, Serbia can trust only a Pan-Slav protectorate. The Jugo-Slav world considered the new provinces conquered by Austria as the oldest center of its national culture and, therefore, the Habsburg occupation was regarded as the projected arm of the German imperialism for the frustration of Jugo-Slav unity. From this moment the Serbs became implacable enemies of the monarchy and the occupation of the new provinces, imagined by Count Julius Andrassy, then foreign minister and author of the project, as a simple *Parademarsch* (a march in dress parade), became a very bloody adventure involving great and serious losses in life and property. After it an extremely envenomed press campaign was started against the monarchy both in Serbia and in foreign countries, exciting also public opinion inside the monarchy. This anti-Austrian feeling broke out in 1882 in a stubborn and widely spread riot in certain regions of southern Dalmatia and of the occupied provinces (the so-called "upheaval of Crivoscie"), the suppression of which cost a real warfare of nine months during which the Delegations were repeatedly convoked and an extra appropriation of thirty million florins were granted for the pacification of the "riotous provinces." The dual monarchy was compelled to mobilize an armed force of nearly a hundred thousand men against the Jugo-Slavs and its victory was filled with bad forebodings because regular military enrolments could not be carried on for long years and the immediate

¹⁴ *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinete*, Vol. XXXVII, Part II, Nos. 15,045, 15,048, 15,052, 15,054, 15,057, 15,069, 15,070, 15,072, 15,079, 15,100.

effect of the military expedition was that nearly 10,000 men emigrated from the monarchy to the territory of Montenegro.

This incident aggravated very much the acuteness of the Jugo-Slav problem, during which the Joint Minister of Finance, Szlávy, acknowledged publicly in the Delegations that the very idea of the occupation of the provinces was to drive a wedge into Pan-Slavism. This policy could have been defended as an act of prospective self-defense from the point of view of a higher cultural mission if, at the same time, it had made the way free toward the national and economic development of Bosnia-Herzegovina by the unification and self-government of the Jugo-Slav territories of the monarchy. But just the opposite happened. The monarchy took under its control, without any far-reaching conception, the new provinces, simply as a capitalistic colony. In consequence of the Austro-Hungarian rivalry, already analyzed, not even the constitutional position of the occupied territories could be determined. Bosnia-Herzegovina was put under a military commander, under the protection of whom an intense economic activity was started but not from the point of view of the interests of the inhabitants but from that of the capitalistic colonial enterprises. The province was administered by German, Magyar, and Polish-Jewish officials who did not have the least idea of the real needs of the population. Bosnia-Herzegovina remained the classic country of illiteracy (90 per cent!) and the government based its power, primarily, on the Mohammedan feudalism which continued its rule over the Christian Slav bondsmen. The old Habsburg practices were renewed and the Joint Finance Minister, Kállay, the head of the civil government, was anxious to promote artificially a specific "Bosnian nationalism" against the Jugo-Slav tendencies toward unification. Besides, the system of spies was far more virulent than in the other parts of the monarchy and the pressure of the government on the public schools was so exacerbating that student strikes were not infrequent and the high school of Mostar was closed for a whole year (1913).

This system aroused the most vehement form of Jugo-Slav irredentism in the new province. The Balkanic atmosphere; the Southern romanticism, not reckoning with real facts; the confused revolutionary propaganda of half-educated young men, systematically exploited by the Pan-Slavistic agents; the brutal terror of the military absolutism piled high the popular passions which exploded at Sarajevo. But even previously, in 1910, a Serb student fired at General Varešanin, the military commander of the province. The attempt was unsuccessful and the student committed suicide. According to a widely spread rumor the general kicked the corpse of the unfortunate youth. Perhaps this story was only invented but it became one of those legends which created the type of the Jugo-Slav revolutionaries from which also the murderer of Archduke Ferdinand was recruited. (We

must not forget that the catastrophe of Sarajevo was the seventh attempt in four years directed against the representatives of the monarchy by exalted young men!) This revolutionary type united within itself, in a strange and awful way, the national idealism of a Mazzini with the violence of a Bakunin and a nebulous ideology of Communism. Many members of this revolutionary generation studied in the West and some were in direct connection with Trotsky and the Russian *émigrés*.

One of the most terrifying products of this feverish and envenomed public atmosphere was the widely diffused conviction which I heard personally from serious Jugo-Slav intellectuals concerning the brothels of Sarajevo. These ill-famed places were generally known in the military circles of the monarchy, both by their number and their quality. The Austrian authorities showed probably a cynical indulgence toward them but scarcely a greater one than in the other great military garrisons of the monarchy. Jugo-Slav public opinion, however, shared by many from the middle class, was that the brothels were an intentional creation of the Austrian policy in order to envenom the blood and the morals of the native population by the lust of the colonizing foreigners. A more dreadful accusation was perhaps never formulated against foreign invaders!

These morbid conditions, growing worse year by year, were not bettered by the final annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina which was forced through by Aehrenthal in 1908 among many diplomatic blunders. This unfortunate and thoroughly unmotivated diplomatic coup (for the annexation did not make any *de facto* change in the situation of the provinces, whereas *de jure* it made the Habsburg imperialism more odious) resulted in drawing the circle of the Entente more tightly around the monarchy and in inciting speeches in the Serb *Skupština* against it.

D. THE ATTITUDE OF THE DANUBE MONARCHY TOWARD SERBIA AND THE PIG WAR

Besides Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the third and most important current of the Jugo-Slav irredenta was born in the Serbian kingdom. This robust peasant people, full of life, scarcely liberated from the Turkish yoke of many centuries, raised in a medieval war-like atmosphere, proud of its democratic constitution, unaccustomed to feudal pressure, a classic type of an independent, self-conscious small peasantry, naturally felt most clearly its national aims and the obstacles to the unification of its race. At the same time the terrible situation of the Christian population in Macedonia, the eternal fights against the Turks, and among the various armed bands hired by foreign imperialism or Balkan interests was a powerful incentive toward unity and elimination of foreign rule. Year by year, 2,000 political

murders were committed on the average in Macedonia, a country with less than three million inhabitants. And in these statistics the rapines, ravishments, and arsons were not included. In this bloody chaos the Serbs felt themselves the most interested.¹⁵ The young nation was exasperated by the situation of its kindred folks within the frontiers of the Habsburg monarchy, and felt continually on its own body the lashes of Viennese policy. Instead of playing the rôle of a protector and educator toward its young neighbor, Austria regarded it from the beginning as an undesirable competitor, the material and political growth of which must be checked at any cost. Foreign Minister Count Kálnoky (1881–1895) informed his Minister in Belgrade that “he did not count on Serbia adhering to us for love; she will have to do so from fear and material interests and these I consider as far more reliable motives than the changing feelings of such half-wild peoples. . . .”¹⁶

This unhappy principle remained to the end the ruling idea of official policy in spite of some diplomatic enunciations in a milder tone. King Milan, the tyrannous Obrenović, became a real vassal of the Viennese court who under the protection of Austrian arms continued his fatal policy against his own people (1882–1889). King Milan saw more and more clearly that his position was becoming precarious against the growing national consciousness of his people. On one occasion he ran to Vienna in order to convince the leading circles of the uncertainty of his crown. Concerning this episode, Crown Prince Rudolf wrote the following reminiscence and his words throw much light on the Balkan policies of the Habsburg monarchy. The Crown Prince narrates that in the Foreign Ministry the Serb King was told that:

He should not see everything so black but should continue calmly his previous course without provoking a public scandal. This is easy to say, thought the poor king to himself, and openly declared both before the Emperor and Count Kálnoky that only two roads were open for him: either to turn and to throw himself into the arms of the Russian Pan-Slavistic policy or to remain a good Austrian and take up a struggle against his own people. For such a course, however, it would be necessary that on the frontiers Austrian troops should be concentrated.

Meanwhile the situation became so acute in Serbia that King Milan made concrete propositions in Vienna concerning the annexation of Serbia by the Habsburg monarchy (1885).¹⁷ It is a startling fact that a sovereign asked for the incorporation of his country,

¹⁵ The moral and political impossibility of the *status quo* was stated by René Pinon in, *L'Europe et l'Empire Ottoman. Les Aspects Actuels de la Question d'Orient* (Paris, 1908), pp. 152–54.

¹⁶ Quoted after Corti by R. W. Seton-Watson, *Sarajevo: A Study into the Origins of the Great War* (London, 1925), p. 23.

¹⁷ Bibl, *op. cit.*, II, 424.

against the will of his people, by a foreign and hated empire and it demonstrated the extreme envenomed state of the Jugo-Slav problem. As a matter of fact, the system of Milan could only rule Serbia by means of an Asiatic absolutism, delivering the little state completely both economically and politically to Austria. This policy poured fresh oil on the fire of Pan-Slavism and Jugo-Slav irredentism. In the seething atmosphere of political imprisonments and murders a new generation was rising, intoxicated by the most radical socialistic and anarchistic ideas of the West and regarding the history of Italian unity as a symbol: Italy too had sighed in former times under the yoke of the Habsburgs. . . . The conception of a new Serbia, of a Piedmont of the Jugo-Slav world conquered the souls of the youth. . . . At the same time these young men who began to attend frequently foreign universities rejected more and more the antiquated conception of a Serb, Croat, and Slavonian patriotism and under the influence of the Western ideas, especially under the sway of the mighty personality of Professor Masaryk at the University of Prague, the consciousness of Jugo-Slav unity was further developed.

In 1903, three events of great importance indicated that this new public spirit stirred already the very masses of the Jugo-Slav world. The Macedonian uprising against the Turkish rule, the murder of King Alexander, the son of Milan, and of his wife by the military revolution at Belgrade (which broke out in consequence of the enforcing of an absolutistic constitution) and the fall of the corrupt and hated system of Count Khuen in Croatia were manifestations that the Jugo-Slav revolution all around was progressing. . . . Under its new, very democratic constitution and influenced more and more by the Pan-Slavistic agitation, Serbia came into increased conflict with the monarchy. The most statesmanlike moderation and the introduction of deep organic reforms would have been necessary in the dual monarchy in order to avoid the eruption of the Jugo-Slav crisis. But just the opposite course was followed. Under the pressure of the overwhelming feudal interests, the Austro-Hungarian government started a light-minded and pernicious customs war, the so-called Pig War, with Serbia (1906).¹⁸

There is not the least doubt that this frivolous and brutal economic policy, detrimental not only to Serbia, but also to the great majority of the Austro-Hungarian population, was "the chief cause"

¹⁸ The most important literature on the customs war crisis is in the following:

Von einem aufrichtigen Freunde der Österreichischen Landwirtschaft: *Der Serbische Handelsvertrag, ein Sieg der Agrarier* (Wien, 1908).

Alfred Simitsch, Reichsritter von Hohenblum, *Materialien zur Vorbereitung des Österreich-Ungarischen Handelsvertrages mit Serbien* (Wien, 1903).

Otto von Zwiedineck, *Die handelspolitischen Beziehungen Serbiens zu Österreich-Ungarn*, Harms, *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv*, Band 6.

Karl Renner, *Die Aera Hohenblum. Der Ruin unserer Staats- und Volkswirtschaft* (Wien, 1913).

which made Serbia the irreconcilable enemy of the Habsburg monarchy. The responsibility for the World War lies to a great extent on those circles which provoked this customs war, a real class war, against the interests of the Serb producers and Austro-Hungarian consumers. Since 1882 the monarchy had had a fairly liberal commercial treaty with Serbia which made a comparatively close economic relation possible between the two countries. Before 1905, 60 per cent of the grain and 95 per cent of the cattle imported by the monarchy came from Serbia, whereas 87 per cent of the Serbian imports were furnished by the monarchy.

As early as 1903 this highly beneficial commercial treaty was attacked in an impetuous way by the big landed interests both in Hungary and in Austria. Count Stephen Tisza and Ritter von Hohenblum were the chief champions who favored the exclusion of Serbian agricultural imports, especially cattle, from the monarchy. This agitation, backed by the all-powerful political influence of the big estates, made it impossible to renew the commercial treaty with Serbia in 1906. The Austro-Hungarian government presented almost impossible conditions to Serbia: they were not to bring in live cattle and at the same time were obliged to buy all materials for railway construction and all war munitions from the monarchy. This cruel and narrow-minded policy was motivated not only by the traditional anti-Slav feeling of the monarchy and the rapacious agrarian interests, but it had also two other motives. The one was to put Serbia under pressure to recede from the Serb-Bulgarian customs-union treaty, already unanimously accepted by the parliament of Sofia at the end of 1905. The other, to induce the Serb government to give an order for twenty-six million francs to be expended in cannon manufacture to the Austrian Skoda plant. And though Serbia withdrew from the customs union and gave other signs of its conciliatory spirit, the pressure of the agrarian interests both in the Austrian and the Hungarian parliaments was so ruthless that the Foreign Minister was compelled to abandon the successful negotiations with Serbia. And when, in 1908, a new provisional solution was inaugurated, though the international atmosphere was already full of dangers, the agrarian circles of the monarchy, led by Ritter von Hohenblum, Count Tisza, Count Berchtold, and Count Stürgkh, started an envenomed propaganda against the liquidation of the customs war; and in Austria the government was menaced with the threat of concentrating peasant masses around the Viennese parliament. This infamous policy made the prices of meat at Vienna so excessive that public opinion of the cities demanded the importation of meat from Argentina. At the same time it aroused a degree of hatred and exasperation in Serbia, the like of which was only surpassed in the crisis of annexation.

Following this episode the Serb people regarded the Habsburg

empire not only as a national enemy but as the promoter of a plan of trying to starve the whole country, which at the beginning of the customs war had no commercial possibilities except in the Austrian markets. At the same time this was the period when the pressure of Hungarian absolutism on Croatia was the most vexatious. It is no wonder that the Serbian and the Croatian disaffection met each other and that the consciousness of Jugo-Slav national unity was further developed as a symbol of national independence and economic progress. It is quite natural that this hypertense situation was ruthlessly and demagogically exploited by the growing Pan-Slavistic propaganda against the dual monarchy. The governments in Belgrade and Cetinje became more and more obedient instruments of the Russian diplomacy. At the same time the various Serb literary and cultural societies assumed increasingly a political color for the unification of the Jugo-Slavs. Whereas, the earlier association of this kind, as the *Zora* ("Aurora," founded at Vienna in 1863) or the *Omladina* ("Youth," founded in 1866 in Novisad) maintained more or less their legal and peaceful character, the *Narodna Obrana* ("Society of National Defense"), established in 1909 after the Bosnia Crisis, employed more and more provocative hues. Finally, a secret society was started in 1911, the so-called "Black Hand" or "Union or Death," which under the leadership of the demoniac personality, Dragutin Dimitrijević (in 1913 he became head of the Intelligence Bureau of the Serb General Staff), frankly accepted the methods of murder and terrorism as the unique means for unification and liberation. The Serbian government made unsuccessful (probably not quite seriously meant) efforts to check or suppress its activities which made the revolutionary fever more and more acute and led directly to the murder-plot of Sarajevo.

This growing danger did not escape the attention of the more thoughtful statesmen and observers. Conrad von Hötzendorf saw quite clearly that conditions were becoming unbearable. Under the sway of these pessimistic prospects, after 1906, when he became the Chief of the Staff, he urged constantly and passionately a preventive war against Serbia,¹⁹ but also a radical solution of the Jugo-Slav problem through the unification of all Slav territories, giving them a complete autonomy. It became manifest that without the solution of this problem, the Jugo-Slav irredenta would explode and lead to world complications, a world war, the chances for the success of which would become worse from year to year in consequence of the advance of the French and English policy in creating the Entente against imperi-

¹⁹ "Not counting the period 1906-1912 . . . it may be noted that in the seventeen months from January 1, 1913, to July 1, 1914, the chief of staff had, according to his own statements, urged war against Serbia no less than twenty-five times" (S. B. Fay, *The Origins of the World War*, II, 224). And the reader should not forget that Conrad was not an isolated maniac but the exponent of the all-powerful military and diplomatic leading circles!

alistic Germany. And when, in 1912, the Balkan War inflamed the national consciousness of the Serbs still more and the armed interference of the monarchy seemed to be inevitable, Conrad von Hötzen-dorf, who became for the second time Chief of Staff, urged passionately the military solution of the Jugo-Slav problem. He declared in one of his memorandums that "the union of the southern Slavs is one of those nation-moving phenomena which cannot be denied or artificially prevented," the only question to consider was whether this union should be created under the protection of the monarchy or against it. This statement of the Chief of Staff was almost a verbal repetition of a diagnosis made a year earlier by an English observer, by R. W. Seton-Watson, who, in his book on the Jugo-Slav problem, said:

The movement in favor of Croato-Serb unity has many obstacles to surmount. . . . But as surely as Germany and Italy have won their liberty and unity, so surely will it be won by the Croato-Serb race. The real problem is the manner of its achievement: and here we are at once faced by two alternatives. Unity can be obtained either inside or outside the Habsburg monarchy, either by the latter's aid and under its auspices, or in defiance of its opposition. . . . Upon Austria's choice of alternatives depends the future of the Habsburg monarchy. . . .

And though the number of those who recognized the fatal importance of the Jugo-Slav problem grew continually and though, as we have seen, the later victim of this problem, Archduke Francis Ferdinand, urged desperately its solution, not only nothing happened in this direction but the national consciousness of the Slavs of the monarchy was constantly irritated, whereas against Serbia the traditional hostile policy was continued. In the same year in which the victorious arms of the Balkan Slavs swept out the corrupt Turkish rule, heightening almost disproportionately the national consciousness of the Southern Slavs, in Croatia the system of open absolutism envenomed public opinion and led to repeated political attempts against the life of the hated exponents of this rule. And when the bullet of a young fanatic directed against the detested banus, "the Royal Commissary" of the Budapest government, failed to hit its target but killed instead a high employee accompanying the banus (June, 1912), an enthusiastic Austrian patriot, Theodore von Sosnosky wrote the following diagnosis of the situation:

As long as the present system continues, as long as the Croatian Banus is not the representative of the Croatian people but the exponent of the Hungarian government . . . the system of political murders cannot be eliminated. . . . Therefore, it is unspeakably silly to describe this attempt as the individual deed of a single man as the official press tried to cause it to be believed. . . . On the contrary it was a typical symptom, an early flash of lightning from heavy thunder clouds which are gathering menacingly in the southeastern part of the monarchy. . . .²⁰

²⁰ *Die Politik im Habsburger Reiche* (Berlin, 1913), II, 366-67.

Golden words, which were equally true of the later attempts and especially of the catastrophe of Sarajevo.

The official circles of the monarchy, however, did not learn anything. No one dared to attack the holy dogma of the Dualistic Constitution but the whole statesmanship of the empire was exhausted in a diplomacy which tried to impede Serbia in its natural development. During the Balkan War the monarchy mobilized and the military circles would have liked to interfere in order to break down the victorious Serb Piedmont. . . . For this purpose a disgusting legend was officially propagated concerning the terrible mutilation of the Austrian consul in Prizren, Mr. Prochaska. Not a single word of this rumor was true as it was simply intended as a means of propaganda for the contemplated war. And when, under the pressure of the Great Powers, the armed interference of the monarchy was prevented, Bulgaria was encouraged by the Austro-Hungarian diplomacy to the second Balkan War against Serbia. After the failure of this experiment, the dual monarchy was successful in carrying out, under the disguise of the Albanian national independence, a feeling quite rudimentary at that time, the establishment of an impotent Albanian buffer state serving as a barrier between Serbia and the sea (in order that the economic dependence of Serbia should be maintained) and as a naval base for Austrian and Italian imperialism. The cup of despair was filled for Serbia. She could use no other solution than a war against the hated dual monarchy under the protection of her big Russian brother. And Count Polzer-Hoditz, the chief of the Cabinet of the late Emperor Carl, the last Habsburg, after demonstrating long and copiously the innocence of the monarchy in the World War comes, as a kind of Freudian outburst after a long "Verdrängung," to the following confession:

Nobody thought of revising our Balkan policy for this would have involved a complete change also in the inner policy. The understanding that the hatred of Serbia and Rumania . . . was caused by ourselves, by our custom policy, that the Southern Slavs did not want anything else than to unite themselves and to get an outlet to the sea, that by our unfortunate Albanian policy we have closed the last valve and therefore an explosion became inevitable: this understanding was never attained by the ruling elements. . . .²¹

E. THE GROWING DANGER OF THE WAR

In this manner a mass-psychological situation was created inside the monarchy and on its frontiers which forced the dualistic system, step by step, toward explosion, making the struggle between Habsburg imperialism and Russian Pan-Slavism more imminent from year to year. It became almost a political dogma that this life and death

²¹ Arthur Graf Polzer-Hoditz, *Kaiser Karl* (Wien, 1928), p. 246.

struggle was totally inevitable and in the last decades the leading military circles in both camps prepared feverishly for the final clash. And it was really inevitable in the sense that nothing serious was undertaken for the solution of a vital problem, the colossal gravity of which was clearly felt by all intelligent observers, both national and foreign, as the immediate cause of the approaching historical catastrophe. This conviction was expressed with an almost cruel lucidity by the German ambassador at Vienna, von Tschirschky, in a report addressed to the chancellor of the empire, Bethmann-Hollweg, November 18, 1912. The ambassador made an analysis of public opinion of the non-Slav political and military circles at Vienna and summarized his observations as follows: "We are tumbling into the war" (to which the German Emperor made the marginal note: "Drifting!"). The ambassador emphasized that this war would be very popular in this camp if it should be utilized for the solution of the Jugo-Slav problem in accordance with the German point of view. The general staff and the feudal circles were extremely depressed and ashamed that the monarchy did not dare to draw the conclusions of the situation.

They see with astonishment and anguish the sudden [It was "sudden" only for the official circles!] swelling of the Slav wave and on all lips is fluttering the anxious question, what will happen to Austria? The Germans are disheartened. One of their leaders told me recently in the House of Lords: "That is the end of the Germans in Austria." [Marginal remark of Emperor William II: *Kopf hoch!*]. They will lose all influence in the monarchy and I ask myself if they will not be compelled to secede. . . .

Later the ambassador called attention to the fact that it was becoming more and more difficult to retain the seven million Jugo-Slavs inside the boundaries of the monarchy. "A new Lombardo-Venezia has been born in the southeastern part of the empire, an irredenta which must unavoidably fall beyond the frontiers to the new great, independent Serb state. . . ." The ambassador asserted that the ruling circles scarcely believed that the Slav regiments could be utilized against Serbia in the case of war and the pessimism of many is so great that they think that "after the dissolution of Turkey, Austro-Hungary will be next." (Marginal remark of the Emperor: "*So was!*") The ambassador stated with despair that after the Balkan victories the religious difference among the Jugo-Slavs will no longer be a serious obstacle for their national unity. Von Tschirschky summarized his conclusions in the following weighty and characteristic words:

The idea of a united Empire, the feeling of solidarity disappears more and more. . . . The picture which the internal structure of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy shows at the present time is not a cheerful one, also not cheerful from the point of view of the German ally. It would require

great wisdom and energy of the central government [Marginal remark of William II: *Mit Blut und Eisen sind die Kerle noch zu kurieren* ("By blood and iron the fellows can still be cured.")] to maintain the centrifugal forces of the strongly developing Slav peoples serviceable for the purpose of the state and to carry on further a policy of a great power beside the German ally. . . .²²

But from where could this wisdom and energy have emanated in the period of the dissolution and approaching catastrophe, when these qualities were totally lacking for half a century under circumstances far more propitious for the monarchy? It may well be doubted whether, after the victorious Balkan War of the Southern Slavs, any amount of wisdom and energy would have been useful so completely had the monarchy lost the confidence and esteem of the Jugo-Slavs and its other nationalities. Under such circumstances and under the growing pressure of the Pan-Slavistic current only the road to war remained open.

Regarding things from this perspective, only the roughest outline of which have I been able to give, the problem of responsibility for the World War gains another sense and significance. This immense literature which has been developed around this question is, according to my opinion, in its largest part worthless because in a naïve and childish way it seeks only individual responsibilities in such events which were not the work of individual men but the results of old institutions, of heavy national and social sins. These naïve historians (who are to a large extent the so-called "war criminals" themselves) investigate only the calendar date of the outburst of the world crisis and they forget that if the catastrophe had not broken out in 1914, it could have exploded (always under the hypothesis of *rebus hic stantibus*, under the existing national and social complications) some years later, as it was already near to explosion in 1887 and 1912.²³ No diplomatic *finesses*, no Kellogg Pact, or treaties of amity could have avoided this explosion whose real roots were in the social, economic, and national structure both of Russia and of the Dual Monarchy. The point where the feudal, pseudo-constitutional political structure of the former monarchy, clinging desperately to its dualistic monopolies, impeding the development of the overwhelming majority of its population and partly also, that of the neighboring states, came into conflict with the Pan-Slavistic, militaristic currents of the Czarist autocracy longing for Constantinople and the half sentimental, half imperialistic "lib-

²² *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette*, XXXIII, No. 12,402.

²³ How the peace of Europe in the two decades before the World War was repeatedly saved by the firmness of the German diplomacy against the sturdy war passion of Austria, was aptly shown by Alfred Frankenfeld in his *Österreichs Spiel mit dem Kriege* (Dresden, 1928).

eration" of the Slav brothers . . . here was the real danger spot of Europe for three generations. All the other factors, the English-German capitalistic rivalries, the lust for revenge in France, the Italian irredentism, the sabre-rattling dementia of the Kaiser, his pathological *Alarmlblasenkatarrh* were only of second importance in the undermining of Europe. No artificial diplomatic arrangements (Europe was full of them for three generations) could have avoided the world catastrophe, but only a radical cure of social and political reforms: the elimination of the feudal system in Austria-Hungary, its federalization, a free trade policy toward the neighboring nations. And at the same time the breakdown of the Czarist absolutism, a democratic and liberal Duma, and the agrarian reform of Stolypin, carried on at least two decades earlier than they were initiated. . . . But even with an autocratic Russia another European equilibrium would have been possible. Imagine that the negotiations of Lord Haldane (in 1912) had been successful in establishing a solid compromise between Great Britain and Germany and imagine an Austro-Hungarian monarchy which would have become, on the basis of a democratic confederation, a real fatherland for all its peoples and one can hardly see how the unscrupulous propaganda of Russian Tsarism could have thrown Europe into the wholesale slaughter of its most cultured nations.

But the growing irredentistic movements of the monarchy not only made the internal tension among the peoples unbearable but they strengthened at the same time, as a result of interference, the Russian Pan-Slavistic parties which covered their imperialistic aims by the partly true, partly false ideology of the liberation of the Slav brothers. One should not forget that the natural reactionary alliance among the three emperors, among the German, the Austrian, and the Russian autocrats was not dissolved by their personal rivalry but under the pressure of a widely spread national public opinion which demanded from the Tsar a more energetic defense of the oppressed conationals. We must remember that as late as 1905 a personal treaty was made between the German Kaiser and the Tsar but the Russian autocrat could not get the treaty accepted by the ruling circles who were under the sway of nationalistic public opinion.

F. THE SOCIOLOGICAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WAR

From this point of view the responsibility for the war falls, in the first place, upon the Dual Monarchy which by its antiquated dualistic constitution and by the narrow-minded economic and nationality policy disseminated during generations the germs of the world conflagration. A personal responsibility can only be established in the sense of placing the blame upon those statesmen who hastened the date of its outbreak. In this respect it can easily be demonstrated

that the leading generals and diplomats of the monarchy tried at any price to utilize the catastrophe of Sarajevo for a war with Serbia and possibly with Russia. They did this not because they were a bit more warlike or imperialistic than their colleagues in the camp of the Entente but because they considered the war as inevitable and, seeing the feverish war preparations of their antagonists, they came to the conclusion (perfectly legitimate under the condition of the national and social *rebus hic stantibus*) that every additional year could only increase, to their detriment, the chances of a future war. That was why Conrad von Hötzendorf urged, since 1906, a preventive war against Italy and Serbia; why he told at the outbreak of the World War that "in 1909 the war would have been a game with open cards, in 1913 it would still have been a game with chances, in 1914 it had become a game of *va banque*, but there was no other alternative"; why Premier Count Stürgkh said in that fatal Crown council which determined, July 7, 1914, the destiny of the monarchy: "It must come to decisive action; a purely diplomatic victory will not suffice us. . . . If, from international points of view, the course of a previous diplomatic action must be entered upon, it must be carried on with the firm intention that this action can only finish with a war."²⁴ That is the reason why the ultimatum to Serbia was purposely so conceived that Serbia would not be able to accept it; why a previous jural opinion from Professor Hold was demanded as to what legal pretext could be found if Serbia should submit; why the offer of the Tsar to present the conflict to the tribunal at the Hague was rejected; why they watched carefully that all foreign interference for the maintenance of peace should be eluded under diplomatic evasions; why the consent of the hesitating old Emperor, Francis Joseph, was forced by the false announcement of the battle at Temes-Kubin which really never occurred; why this petrified monarch himself calmed the war party at the time of the Annexation Crisis with the memorable words: "This war will come by itself, unaided. . . ."; and why in the final crisis he said with resignation: "If the Monarchy must perish it should at least perish with decency. . . ." And that is also why the whole official and semi-official press, both feudal and capitalistic, agitated unscrupulously for war;²⁵ why in Budapest officially paid and arranged demonstrations were made in order to arouse enthusiasm for the Serbian War;²⁶ why even so cultured a gentleman as Count Albert Apponyi

²⁴ *Diplomatische Aktenstücke*, Part I, p. 31.

²⁵ See for details Heinrich Kanner's *Kaiserliche Katastrophenpolitik* (Wien, 1922), pp. 59, 122, 325.

²⁶ One of the best-informed and most reliable journalists of the pre-war period writes me: "I could observe it for many days how the scum of the population, for a daily payment, shouted on the streets of Budapest for war against Serbia. Realizing my responsibility, I can assert that in Budapest masses organized and paid by the police demanded the war."

greeted the Serbian war in the Hungarian parliament with an enthusiastic "At last!"; and finally why Count Moltke, the Chief of the German Staff shared the point of view of Conrad, that "all retardation would mean the lessening of our chances," and as late as July 31, 1914, reminded Conrad of the seriousness of the warlike will of the Central Powers.

These and similar facts, which might easily be extended, demonstrate that the Austro-Hungarian monarchy did not wish to postpone the war. And this wish was motivated by no frenzied imperialism but by the conviction that its internal situation had become unbearable because it could not solve its own problems; because it came into conflict more and more with the will of its people; because in the atmosphere of the continual attempts against the lives of the exponents of the state, the leading circles of the monarchy lost their heads (how characteristic, for instance, that William II was urged not to come to Vienna to attend the funeral of Francis Ferdinand for, according to reliable information, his life would not be secure in the imperial city on account of Jugo-Slav plotters!); because its military and diplomatic experts were convinced that, if a few more years should be granted to Russia for the repairing of its loss in blood and treasure caused by the Japanese defeat, the chances of war would have become desperate for the dual monarchy.

This series of facts and not sheer diplomatic machinations leads us toward a better understanding of the problem as to the "immediate" cause of the war (which, I repeat, is a problem different from that of "war guilt" and must be sought in the sins of omission and commission of the national and social policy followed for a century). From this point of view, Dr. Heinrich Kanner, based on the memoirs of Conrad von Hötzendorf, has shown with clear and strong argument the preponderant importance in the outbreak of the war of the "secret military convention," convened by the chiefs of the German and Austrian Staffs under the auspices of the two Monarchs and the other responsible factors in 1909, in which the former strictly defensive alliance contracted by Bismarck was extended into an offensive alliance between the two states in case Austria should find it necessary to start a preventive war against Serbia.²⁷ It may be doubted whether this agreement can be called a "military convention" in the strict sense, as Mr. Kanner has done, but there can be no reasonable doubt that the existence of such a "binding agreement" influenced profoundly the attitude of the Austrian war party. One should not forget that Bismarck, as long as he was in office, always resisted strenuously the Austrian efforts (in 1882 and 1887) to extend the *casus foederis* to the case of an offensive war also, because, according to his own words, he feared the "desire for war" (*Kriegslust*) and the "light-minded-

²⁷ *Der Schlüssel zur Kriegsschuldfrage* (München, 1926).

ness" of the Austrians and was not willing "to pay them a premium for a pretext of their quarrels with Russia" (*eine Prämie auf das Händelsuchen mit Russland*). When, however, Bismarck was no longer in power, and when in Austria the foreign policy was directed by Aehrenthal, a chief exponent of the so-called "active" policy, and when Conrad von Hötzendorf, the apostle of the preventive war, was put at the head of the Staff, there was no longer any obstacle to the remolding of the defensive alliance into an offensive one. Beginning with 1909 the Habsburg monarchy could count on the assistance of its powerful ally even in case it found it necessary to start a war itself. It may be doubtful whether Germany really acted under the stipulations of this agreement but it cannot be doubtful that the World War was born under the shadow of it and the daring advance of the Austrian war party would be unimaginable without this psychological motive. (The military agreement was later supplemented almost yearly by written or oral negotiations.)

This fatal military convention or "binding agreement" was the expression of the conviction of the leading circles that the situation of the dual monarchy had become untenable and could only be saved by the daring operation of a preventive war. In this saving of the monarchy the German empire was naturally deeply interested not only on behalf of the *Nibelungentreue* but also in consequence of the fact that its policy in Asia Minor and in Africa aroused against it the jealous antagonism of the other imperialisms. After having repeatedly refused the English offers for a solid compromise, after the unhappy policy "of the loud mouth" and of the pose of a continuous "sabre rattling," Germany stood perfectly isolated in Europe, bound to Austria for life and death. What the genius of Bismarck could avoid, the policy of his successors precipitated: Germany was compelled to follow its fatal ally into its leap to death. It did this not from the motive of a frenzied imperialism but under the stress of the system of the balance of power. Its situation was clearly analyzed by an objective German historian, Wolfgang Windelband in the following weighty statement: "If Germany had not wished to acquiesce in the destruction of its power—and a spontaneous yielding would have been the symptom of the most dangerous internal rottenness—it was obliged to maintain its alliance with Austro-Hungary because the possibility of a more advantageous one was lacking in consequence of its own sin. Very sharply did the change in the situation become manifest: Germany was dependent on Austro-Hungary and was therefore compelled to accept its interests. . . ."²⁸ This was the real motive of the German participation, the motive of the balance of power, and not the alleged indignation against the Serbian criminal maneuvers. How hypo-

²⁸ *Die Auswärtige Politik der Grossmächte in der Neuzeit*. Zweite, durchgesehene Auflage. (Stuttgart und Berlin, 1925), p. 411.

critical this argument was, has been vigorously stated by Prince Lichnowsky, the last German imperial ambassador to London, in the following note made in January, 1915:

Has not the Italian unity arisen by perfectly similar means and does not the same thing which happened between 1848 and 1866 in Italy repeat itself with the Jugo-Slavs? There in the Lombardo-Venetian provinces the Austrians tried to crush the national movement by violence, sword, and gallows . . . the Italians, too, utilized bombs and daggers for political aims and laid violent hands on the Divine Right and even on the Holy Father! Did we, therefore, refuse to make an alliance with Italy or did we declare war against Italy because Orsini threw a bomb at Napoleon? Is not the foundation of Italy exactly as "revolutionary" as the tendencies of the Great Serbian movement directed against Austria? . . . Why must the German people rush into a World War in order to crush the Jugo-Slav movement for unity?²⁹

G. THE "PERSONAL WAR GUILT"

In the honest and serious literature on the so-called "war guilt" problem one of the most outstanding is, without any doubt, the recent book of Professor Fay, already referred to, who made a comprehensive and admirable effort to disentangle all the various currents leading to the World War. He was successful in demolishing the propagandistic legend of the exclusive war-guilt of the Central Powers. The great importance of this work imposes the duty on the author of the present book to make his standpoint clear concerning certain points in which he disagrees with the presentation of Professor Fay. In his noble ardor for justice he follows too much the present swing of the pendulum of public opinion when he does not see, that the Central Powers, *though they alone did not cause the World War, they determined the date of its outbreak.* His attitude is decidedly pro-German and sometimes biased by some inaccurate private information.³⁰

²⁹ Published in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, November 8, 1927, from the memoirs of Prince Lichnowsky: *Auf dem Wege zum Abgrund*. The Italian situation in 1859 and the Serbian in 1914 have so general and striking resemblances that one has the impression that we here face a sociologically determined typology of the crisis for national unification.

³⁰ For instance, Herr Leopold Mandl, for two decades the semi-official mouth-piece of the Ballplatz and the organizer of a press campaign against Serbia, is called by him the "Austrian historian." Mr. Wendel is qualified as a "pro-Serb German writer" which he really is. But at the same time none of the fanatic anti-Serb pamphletists whom he quotes abundantly is qualified by him as an anti-Serb German writer. Dr. Kanner, one of the most acute students of war-responsibility, is called the editor of the former *Viennese Socialist Daily*. Probably Dr. Kanner was characterized before him in this way by the German nationalists in order to portray him as a rabid Communist. The truth is that Dr. Kanner has published a solid liberal bourgeois daily (*Die Zeit*). Whereas he quotes the worthless German anti-Freemason pamphletists and the Viennese propagandistic journal of the Soviets to the discredit of the existing Balkan governments, he does not even mention the great historical work of the leading authority, Professor Bibl, who though a staunch supporter of the German cause, shows that Austria could not postpone the war at the time given.

It seems to me that the great number of facts given by Professor Fay alone show abundantly and conclusively that the leading Viennese circles by all kinds of Machiavellian means precipitated the war because, according to Conrad, the position of Austria would have become more untenable from year to year in the case of a warlike complication. They knew that with the completion of those military reforms which were going on in Russia and France, and with the growth of the anti-Austrian irredentistic propaganda the odds for Austria in a later war would have become practically null. The only power which could have crushed, as it did several times in the past, the war will of Austria, was Germany. But the Germans—to quote Professor Fay—“made the grave mistake of putting the situation outside of their control into the hands of a man as reckless and unscrupulous as Berchtold. They committed themselves to a leap in the dark. They soon found themselves involved in actions which they did not approve but they could not seriously object and protest because they had pledged their support to Austria in advance, and any hesitation on their part would only weaken the Triple Alliance at a critical moment when it most needed to be strong. . . .” (II, 223). So a *carte blanche* was given to Germany (*ibid.*, p. 255) which was practically equivalent to a declaration of war. It is true that Germany got the ultimatum of Austria less than twenty-four hours before the Austrian Minister was to present it at Belgrade, but (according to Professor Fay) “even if Bethmann and Jagow had been informed of the text earlier, it is not to be assumed that they would have modified or stopped it” (*ibid.*, p. 267). That is absolutely sure, because previously the *carte blanche* was given to Austria.

But it is not sufficiently clear why the German military circles who several times in the past stopped the light-mindedness of Austria became at once so meek and indulgent. The only explanation is that they saw that Austria was headed for catastrophe and that they agreed with Conrad that this was the last possibility for Austria, their only ally, to risk a war to save its existence which was more endangered from year to year. Only those social and political factors which we analyzed in this book can really explain the motives of both Austria and Germany.

Therefore it is quite evident that *Austria fixed the date of the conflict and Germany did not stop her ally*. Here lies the primordial responsibility of Austria, motivated not by personal crimes of her statesmen, but by the social and national sins of the whole system. And here lies the responsibility of Germany which was rather an omission than a commission. From this point of view the vexed problem of the war-guilt assumes almost a mathematical simplicity. Is it true or not that after the catastrophe of Sarajevo none of the Entente Powers had any motive to start a war in 1914? The whole world opinion

was so terrified by the crime that to attack the ramshackle empire *at this time* was a mass-psychological impossibility. But it was a good opportunity for Austria to utilize the general indignation of the world to crush the stormy center of Serbia. (That was the leading point of view not only of Vienna, but of Berlin too!) Then I ask further is it true or not that Austria without a German backing was not in the position to begin a war? A small logical experiment will suffice to decide this question. Let us suppose that in the last critical week a single telegram would have been sent from Berlin to Vienna with the following short text: "Germany cannot promise any participation in a war as long as all the diplomatic means are not exhausted to settle a fair compromise." I do not say that this course was open for Austria without the complete collapse of her prestige on the Balkan. But I do say that under such a step of Berlin no ultimatum could have been sent from Vienna. The War would have been stopped for a few years!

This is the simple truth both from a logical and a historical point of view. And besides all the facts which I enumerated there is also the direct testimony of the late General Max Hoffmann, one of the ablest German military leaders who in his memoirs, recently published, made the following sincere and outspoken statement:

"To be sure, we could have ducked our heads again in the summer of 1914; then the Entente would not have struck until 1917, since they were prepared only for this period. In this sense we began the war, that is true. . . ." ("Natürlich hätten wir uns auch im Sommer 1914 wieder ducken können, dann hätte die Entente erst 1917 losgeschlagen, denn zu diesem Termine waren sie erst fertig. Insofern haben wir den Krieg angefangen, das stimmt. . . .")³¹

In these few words the whole war-philosophy of the Central Powers at the outburst of the war is vigorously stated. And this philosophy was perfectly sane under the clausula of *rebus hic stantibus*. Only deep organic reforms could have avoided the war and for these reforms there was no more time.

³¹ *Die Aufzeichnungen des Generalmajors Hoffmann* (Berlin, 1929), I, 155.

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PART VII
CONSCIOUS EFFORTS IN CIVIC EDUCATION