

How the British Crown created the Balkan powderkeg

by Joseph Brewda

On June 28, 1914, Archduke Ferdinand, the heir to the Austrian throne, was gunned down by Serbian assassins in the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo. The assassins were members of the "Black Hand," which claimed to be dedicated to liberating Serbians from foreign oppression. Bosnia had been annexed by Austria from the Ottoman Turkish empire six years before, and Serbia claimed the land to be rightfully hers. Austria was an ally of Germany; Russia, France, and England were patrons of the Serbs. The chain of events provoked by the Balkan assassination led to the Russian czar ordering his army to mobilize; Germany responded. Within weeks, the most destructive war of the twentieth century was unleashed.

Just how Britain triggered the war is a study of the imperial method of divide and rule, and of the creation and manipulation of nationalist chauvinist movements that have characterized modern Europe especially since the 1848 revolutions directed by British Prime Minister Lord Palmerston.

Britain deliberately set World War I into motion at the 1878 Congress of Berlin, which had been called by Britain following Russia's crushing defeat of the Ottoman Turkish Empire the previous year. The effect of the conference was to lure both Russia and Austria into moving southward into the Balkans, in a competing effort to grab the European lands held by a disintegrating Ottoman Empire. This disastrous competition had the additional effect of forcing Germany to choose between the two competing powers.

The Russian, Austrian, and Ottoman empires were Britain's primary (although not exclusive) targets of the planned war. The common characteristic of all three empires was that they were composed of often savagely oppressed, subject peoples, led by a group that considered itself a master-race, and for that reason, as the 1848 revolutions had proved, the empires were easy to destroy. By raising the banner of "self-determination" in the Balkans, Britain deliberately began a process which led to irreconcilable conflict within these empires and among them.

As far back as 1863, Palmerston's agent, Giuseppe Mazzini, who had led the 1848 revolts, emphasized the necessity of destroying both the Ottoman and the Austrian empires. He assigned a special role to Serbia—then largely divided between the two empires—which he defined as the "natural center of revolution in the East." A Serbian insurrection would spark nationalist insurrections throughout both em-

pires, he said. The result would be the general "transformation of the map of Europe." The plan was to foster conflicting expansionist movements amongst the Serbians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Turks, and others, that would engulf the region in bloody war.

To that end, Mazzini formed the Young Ottomans in 1865. The group sought to restore the power of the Ottoman Empire, in part through fostering racial pride among the ruling race of that multi-ethnic empire. The Young Ottomans were formally aligned with Mazzini's Young Poland and Young Hungary, and expressly dedicated to combatting Russia, which the Turks, Poles, and Hungarians feared. In 1866, Mazzini also created the Union of Young Serbs, which sought to unify the Serbian people, and recreate a Russian-allied Greater Serbia carved out of the Ottoman Empire that the Young Ottomans were committed to maintain.

Meanwhile, Britain was also supporting a Greater Greece movement and a Greater Bulgaria movement. Greater Greece, Greater Bulgaria, and Greater Serbia claimed much of the same European lands that were then part of the Ottoman Empire. In 1903, the British established the Balkan Committee, which was charged with handling these contradictory movements, and steering them into the type of conflict amongst themselves required to trigger the war.

We shall now proceed to give profiles of these various British-manipulated movements, followed by an account of how the Balkan wars were sparked, dossiers on the British controllers, and concluding with a chronology of the countdown to World War I.

Geopolitical pawns of the British Foreign Office

Greater Greece

Modern Greece, which had been under Turkish domination for 400 years, came into existence through an Anglo-Russian-instigated revolt begun in 1821. The revolt was directed from the top by British intelligence chief Jeremy Bentham; it had been directed on the scenes by British romantic revolutionary poet Lord Byron, who had been sent there by Bentham. By 1827, it was almost entirely crushed by Otto-

man forces. Britain, France, and Russia began to directly intervene, and in 1829, those three powers declared Greece an independent state. The Ottoman Empire was forced to comply.

The Greek revolutionaries' object was the realization of what was called the "Great Idea," according to which the boundaries of a resurrected Greek state would have to include all lands that had been under Byzantine rule. The object was nothing less than the reestablishment of the Byzantine Empire, with its capital in Constantinople (Istanbul). The Ottoman Turks had put an end to that Greek-speaking empire with their capture of Constantinople in 1453.

Of course, even under the Byzantines, much of the empire was not ethnically Greek, and much had happened under 400 years of Ottoman Turkish rule. But for the proponents of the Great Idea, it was the destiny of the Greeks to Hellenize the vast territory that they believed by right to be theirs.

Instead of achieving this impossible aim, the Greek rebels of the 1820s only liberated a small section of present-day Greece. This newly created state was considered a temporary military base from which liberated Greeks would carry on a holy crusade on behalf of their unliberated brethren. Some even proposed that the new state forgo a capital, as a solemn reminder that Constantinople was not yet in its possession. Like Israel, modern Greece was established with a built-in expansionary dynamic.

After a couple of compromise candidates, the British eventually installed a member of the Danish royal house into power as the king of the newly established state. The Danish monarchy had married into the House of Hanover, and the new Greek king was a relative of Queen Victoria. Prince Philip, the husband of the current British monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, is the son of the Greek king who ruled in the days before World War I.

Through British, Russian, and French patronage, Greece grew dramatically in the nineteenth century at Ottoman expense. But the Ottoman lands that Greece was demanding were inhabited not merely by Turks and Greeks, but also by Romanians, Bulgarians, Albanians, and Serbs. The Romanians and Bulgarians had been victims of cruel Greek oppression under the Byzantines and then under the Ottomans, since the Greeks continued as their feudal overlords and usurers. These other ethnic groups had no desire to be part of Greece. But the Great Idea demanded these lands, and also demanded that the minority populations inhabiting them be "Hellenized." In 1908, one of the most vociferous proponents of the Great Idea, Eleutherios Venizelos, became prime minister of Greece.

Greater Serbia

Serbia began to reemerge as a state in the Napoleonic wars after 400 years of domination and division by Austria and Turkey. A Serbian revolt began in 1804 under Russian patronage, and its initial success was related to Russian mili-

Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria, and their territorial claims in 1911



Note: Current modern boundaries have been included for reference.

tary operations in the region.

The architect of the revolt, Russian Foreign Minister Prince Czartoryski, later emigrated to Britain, where he became one of the heads of the eastern European division of the British Secret Services. Czartoryski nurtured the "pan-Slavic" ideology that was used to lure Russia into an imperial claim over the Balkan Slavic peoples, a claim that was a necessary precondition to World War I.

In 1830, the British finally forced the Ottoman Empire to recognize the creation of an independent Serbia, after a series of otherwise inconclusive revolts.

As in the case of Greece, the new state was only a small part of the lands that the revolutionaries demanded. Their ideal was "Greater Serbia," the recreation of the fourteenth-century empire of Stephan Dushan, which extended down into present-day Greece, and which had included large numbers of Greeks, Bulgarians, and Albanians as subject peoples. By the 1840s, the Greater Serbian ideal was further enlarged to include the notion of a "South Slav federation," that is "Yugoslavia," embracing Croatia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, with Serbia as its ruling core. This Greater Serbian state, Yugoslavia, was eventually created following World War I.

Britain, France, and Russia patronized Serbia's rapid

growth from its inception in 1830. But to the proponents of the Greater Serbian idea, this growth was never satisfying; the function of the Serbian state as it then existed was simply to serve as a military base and safe haven for the realization of their Greater Serbian ideal.

In 1906, Britain and France began massively arming Serbia, with the intent of making it the leading South Slav state. The Greater Serbian ideal seemed more attainable. In 1911, Union or Death, popularly known as the Black Hand, was established, dedicated to liberating Serbs under Austrian and Ottoman domination. The organization was secretly directed by a specially established British-run freemasonic lodge of the French Grand Orient. According to eyewitness observers, the lodge was involved in a "vast political scheme in alliance with the Russian Okhrana [secret service], which could only be brought to fruition by a terrible European war."

Greater Bulgaria

Modern Bulgaria was created at the 1878 Congress of Berlin, which was convened following Russia's crushing defeat of the Ottoman Empire the previous year. Russia sought to establish an independent, though Russian-dominated, Bulgaria, modeled on the tenth-century Bulgarian empire. That empire extended down to the Aegean Sea. The state established at the British-dominated Congress of Berlin was far smaller. Bulgarian revolutionary aspirations remained deeply frustrated.

The Bulgarian revolutionaries were originally sponsored by Serbia in the 1860s, as part of her effort to create a South Slav federation which at that time envisioned Bulgaria's inclusion. But the incompatibility of Greater Bulgarian and Greater Serbian aspirations began to assert themselves. Byzantium had played off the Serbs and Bulgarians for centuries, and Greater Bulgaria and Greater Serbia claimed much of the same land. That Bulgaria would collide with Greece was already clear. Bulgarian nationalist aspirations demanded a self-ruling Orthodox Church, since recognition of nationality in the Ottoman Empire was tied to having a national church. In 1870, the Ottomans recognized the independence of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church; the Greek Patriarchate denounced the Bulgarian church as schismatic. The Bulgarians were then largely impoverished peasants, and like the Romanians, were under the Greek absentee landlord and usurer's thumb.

Among the Greek fears was that Bulgaria would emerge as a threat to a Greater Greece. For while Greece claimed Ottoman Macedonia and Thrace, the largest population in both districts was Bulgarian. In 1885, Bulgaria fought a war with Serbia, with Greece almost joining Serbia, over some of these rival claims. In 1887, Britain placed the son of the prince of Saxe-Coburg, a cousin of Queen Victoria, on the Bulgarian throne. In 1881, the British placed Queen Victoria's granddaughter on the throne in Romania. Bulgaria and Romania accordingly thought they had British support

against Greece. Greece, which also had a British-related ruling house, thought the same.

Nowhere did the conflicting claims of Serbian, Greek and Bulgarian nationalism come into sharper conflict than in the Turkish region of Macedonia (see map). Historically, Macedonia comprised three Turkish provinces that were ill-defined both geographically and ethnically. There was then no Macedonian nationality. The population of Macedonia was a mixture of Bulgarians, Turks, Greeks, Albanians, Jews, and Romanians, in that numerical order. Greek and Serbian claims to the area were based on their imperial history, and landlocked Serbia's desire to have access to the Aegean Sea (Macedonia then included a large section of present-day Greece's coast). Although the Bulgarians comprised the largest group in Macedonia, their population there was less than half, while even the smallest ethnic minorities constituted overwhelming majorities in scattered enclaves. In 1893, ethnic Bulgarians in Macedonia created the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) to achieve Macedonian independence from Turkey. It was expressly modeled on Mazzini's earlier Italian secret society, the Carbonari. Funded out of London and Geneva, the organization's motto, "Macedonia for the Macedonians," was taken from a famous phrase of British Prime Minister William Gladstone. Gladstone profiled himself as an anti-Turkish "Bulgarophile"; "Macedonia for the Macedonians," everyone knew, meant "Macedonia for the Bulgarians."

The Young Turks

The Young Turks, who came to power in 1908 with British support, were another British patsy movement. It was their actions which most directly paved the way for World War I.

The Young Turks were formed in 1865-67 in Paris as a formal affiliate of Mazzini's European Revolutionary Committee. The foreign department of the Young Turks (then also known as the Young Ottomans) was handled by Young Poland. The stated purpose of the organization was to organize a Polish-Hungarian-Ottoman alliance against Russia. The chief ideologue of the movement, Arminius Vambery, was a Hungarian Jew working for British Prime Minister Lord Palmerston. Vambery concocted the pan-Turkic ideology which called for uniting all Turkic peoples, including those in Central Asia who had never been under the sultan, against Russia. The idea of reforming the multi-ethnic Ottoman Empire on a Turkish chauvinist basis, however, necessarily meant conflict with the numerous minorities in that empire, notably the Armenians, Greeks, Arabs, and Slavs.

Driven underground, the Young Turks reemerged in 1889 in Istanbul and Saloniki, the capital of Ottoman Macedonia, organized along the lines of the Carbonari. The leader of the Young Turks was Emmanuel Carasso, the grandmaster of the Macedonia Resurrected (Macedonia Risorta) freemasonic lodge of Salonika. The lodge, which doubled as a

synagogue, was where the Young Turk conspirators met, and where the 1908 Young Turk revolution was planned. It was an affiliate of the Italian Grand Orient run by the heirs of Mazzini, itself formally subordinate to the United Grand Lodge of England.

Carasso's family ran the B'nai B'rith in Salonika, the nominally Jewish freemasonic organization that had been created by Britain in 1838. Carasso later emerged as the leading patron of B'nai B'rith and Zionist circles generally under the Young Turk regime. Among his close associates were Alexander Helphand Parvus, the British agent who funded the Russian revolution, and Vladimir Jabotinsky, the British agent who founded the most expansionist wing of modern Zionism. Both Parvus and Jabotinsky were also leaders of the Young Turks.

Despite its chauvinist ideology, the Young Turk revolution was supported by Bulgarian, Armenian, Arab, Kurdish,

and related ethnic minority national liberation movements, who saw in the revolt a means of achieving their own chauvinist aims. "All men are brothers," was the euphoric slogan of the "flowery revolution," as it was called. The first foreign minister of the new regime was an Armenian affiliated with the Armenian Revolutionary Committee (Dashnag); in the Balkans, the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization and diverse liberation movements began establishing above-ground organizations. In order to acquire the broad base to succeed, the Young Turks had promised these movements a free hand, at least in achieving ethnic autonomy.

Once in power in 1908, however, the party rapidly moved to suppress its former allies, and to implement its pan-Turkic program. The Turks were to be the ruling race of the empire, and the non-Turks forcibly assimilated or suppressed. Non-Turkish languages, family names, dress, customs, and the like, were banned. This was the policy of "Turkification"

How the British ran the Sarajevo murder

On June 28, 1914, Archduke Ferdinand and his wife were gunned down in Sarajevo, Bosnia, providing the convenient incident that triggered World War I. In March 1917, the trigger-man Gavrilo Princip and his accomplices, Nedjelko Chabrinovitch and Tryfon Grabez, were put on trial in a Serbian court. All proudly confessed to the murders, saying that it was necessary to kill the archduke since he was an opponent of Greater Serbia. They reported that they were members of the Black Hand, and that their superior in that society, Milan Ciganovitch, directed the murder. Interrogation of the accused reveals aspects of how the murder was organized:

President [of the court]: "Did you speak to Ciganovitch about Freemasonry?"

Princip: "Why do you ask me?"

President: "Because I want to know."

Princip: "Yes, Ciganovitch told me he was a Freemason. . . . On another occasion he told me that the heir apparent [Archduke Ferdinand] had been condemned to death by a Freemason's lodge."

Defendant Chabrinovitch was then examined. He stated that the lodge official who organized the murder was Dr. Radoslav Kazimirovitch.

Chabrinovitch: "He is a Freemason, in some ways one of their heads. He travelled off at once [so soon as Chabrinovitch et al. agreed to the murder] and travelled the continent. He was in Budapest, Russia, and France.

Whenever I asked Ciganovitch about our affair [the planned murder] he replied: 'When that man comes back.' Then he told me that the Freemasons had condemned the archduke to death two years before but that no people would carry out the sentence. Afterwards, when he gave the Browning and the cartridges, he said, 'That man came back from Budapest last night,' I knew the journey had been made in connection with our affair and that he had conferred with certain circles abroad."

President: "Are you telling us fairy tales?"

Chabrinovitch: "No. It is the plain truth—a hundred times truer than your documents about the Black Hand."

In 1917, British author C.H. Norman reported that the Grand Orient Masons were behind the murder of the archduke, in his pamphlet "Some Secret Influences behind the War":

"Somewhere about the year 1906 I was invited to attend a meeting of Englishmen for the purpose of discussing a proposal to form an English lodge of the Grand Orient. . . . The lodge was 'to be engaged in propaganda on behalf of the Entente Cordiale' . . . with this apparently innocent object I found myself in sympathy. But, nevertheless, I decided to discover whether it was all its benevolent program pretended.

"To my astonishment I found the Grand Orient was about to embark upon a vast political scheme in alliance with the Russian Okhrana, which could only be brought to fruition by a terrible European war."

Norman reported that the Grand Orient included many leading Frenchmen, notably "M. Poincaré, Combes, Delcassé, Briand, Viviani, Millerande." He further reported that the London agent of the Grand Orient was involved in planning the murder of the archduke.—*Joseph Brewda*

which detonated the Balkan wars that led to World War I. Carasso oversaw the implementation of this intentionally provocative policy. He also ran the Young Turk intelligence organization in the Balkans.

Turkification provokes the Balkan wars

The characteristic way that Byzantium, Venice, and the Ottoman Empire had controlled the Balkans over millennia, was through playing off conflicting, irreconcilable claims to territory and population by the diverse populations of the region. Massacres were common, and the peoples of the region had come to hate each other with a greater passion than they hated their imperial overlords.

But by simultaneously threatening to eradicate all the cultures of the region, and to reduce all the population to one uniform Turkic identity, Carasso provoked what would otherwise have seemed impossible: a temporary unity of Greeks, Bulgarians, Albanians, Romanians, and Serbs against the Turks.

But that was the policy's actual intent; after all, it was a policy made in London.

In the summer of 1909, Carasso began blowing up the Balkans and the empire generally. The following account of the effects of the policy is taken from William Miller, a British intelligence official on the scenes in Athens who managed the advocates of Greater Greece. As a result of this policy:

- The Bulgarians of Macedonia protested against the immigration of Bosnian Muslims, and renewed their revolutionary organization in self-defense. They invited Britain, France, and other imperial powers to intervene into the region against Turkey.

- The Druse religious minority revolted in Lebanon; a new Mahdi, Said Idris, appeared in poorly held Yemen, threatening Turkish rule.

- A Greek bishop was murdered and the Ecumenical Patriarch proclaimed equality to be a mere phrase, declaring the Greek Church within the empire to be in mortal danger. Renewed calls for imperial assistance against Turkey were made.

- The representatives of the "Twelve Islands" of what is now Greece complained that their privileges had been annulled; the Cretan Christians protested against the attempt to send them Muslim judges.

- The Muslims of northern Albania objected to the payment of dues, to military service in distant Yemen, and to the destruction of their fortified towers.

In 1909, the Albanians began fighting in the north of the country; the Catholic tribes known collectively as the Mountain Men began a fresh insurrection in 1911, put down

with great savagery by Kurdish troops. Great excitement was raised in Montenegro, where many Albanians had found refuge among their Albanian relatives; war was only prevented by the influence of the king, and a "provisional government of Albania" was formed.

Immediately following the Albanian insurrection, Turkey found itself at war with Italy, which had used the occasion to seize the long-coveted Tripoli (Libya). The war was declared in September 1911. To aid the effort, Italy occupied some of the Turkish Aegean islands in the spring of 1912. A congress of delegates on one of them, however, called for union with Greece and proclaimed in June an autonomous "state of the Aegean."

In other words, Turkification had begun to set the empire aflame.

A vivid description of the intent behind Carasso's Turkification policy is found in London *Times* editor Henry Wickham Steed's autobiography. Steed was a British intelligence controller of the Serbs, and one of the persons responsible for triggering World War I.

"Less agreeable [than Turkish Grand Vizier Talat] but equally interesting was Emmanuel Carasso effendi, the Salonika Jew who had helped to dethrone the Sultan Abdol Hamid. He looked like an efficient and ruthless brigand, a bold buccaneer, frank and fearless. Though he and his fel-

The war guilt clause of the Versailles Treaty

The entire international public order of the post-1919 era, including the League of Nations and, by extension, the United Nations, has been based on the absurd lie that Germany was solely responsible for the outbreak of World War I. This finding was officially reported to the Paris Peace Conference at the close of the war by a "Commission on the Responsibility of the Authors of the War," which was chaired by American Secretary of State Robert Lansing. Lansing refused to allow any Germans to take part in his deliberations, and the commission ignored a new "German White Book" compiled in 1919 by Hans Delbrück, Professor Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, Count Montgelas, and Max Weber, which contained enough evidence to show that the thesis of exclusive German war guilt was untenable. The kernel of Lansing's conclusions was as follows:

"The War was premeditated by the Central Powers together with their allies, Turkey and Bulgaria, and was the result of acts deliberately committed in order to make it unavoidable. Germany, in agreement with Austria-

lows of the Salonika Committee for Union and Progress [Young Turks] had been responsible for the atrocious policy of 'Turkification' which had led to the formation of the Balkan League and to the Balkan Wars, their power was apparently still as great as their information was prompt and accurate. Carasso knew even then, September 1913, of the Austrian attempt to make war upon Serbia a month before, and, as he explained to one of my friends, he was convinced that though the big war had not quite 'come off' that time, it would come before long and that Turkey would then have her chance. One Sunday, in September, I was at Prinkipo in the company of Carasso's cousin, Maitre Salem, a Salonika Jew who had become, under Young Turk auspices, the leading lawyer of Constantinople. When not gambling at the Casino, Carasso joined our party and talked freely. Answering the question what he and his like were going to do with Turkey, he said:

" 'Have you ever seen a baker knead dough? When you think of us and Turkey you must think of a baker and of his dough. We are the bakers and Turkey is the dough. The baker pulls it and pushes it, bangs it and slaps it, pounds it with his fist until he gets it to the right consistency for the baking. That is what we are doing. We have had one revolution, then a counter-revolution, then another revolution and we shall probably have several more until we have got the dough just

right. Then we shall bake it and feed upon it.' "

"Carasso's nephew, who was manager of a bank, looked at his uncle in terrified amazement. 'What is to become of business with all these revolutions?' he asked. Carasso patted him affectionately on the head and replied, 'Don't worry, my boy. Things will come out all right.' "

"Maitre Salem, overhearing this conversation, turned to Carasso and said sharply, 'What *are* you saying, Emmanuel?' "

" 'Shut up, Salem' retorted Carasso. 'What would *you* have been without the revolution? A pettifogging little Salonika lawyer.' And Salem held his peace."

The London Balkan Committee

The Greater Serbian, Greek, Bulgarian, and Young Turk movements were established by Mazzini and his associates by the 1860s. These movements were largely alien impositions; to the extent that they can be considered "indigenous," they had their basis in earlier Byzantine, Venetian, and Ottoman manipulation.

In 1903, the British established the Balkan Committee, as the London-based command center of these movements. It is this little-known institution which orchestrated the various

Hungary, deliberately worked to defeat all the many conciliatory proposals made by the Entente Powers."

This false verdict was then incorporated into the infamous Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles, which alleges:

"The Allied and Associated Governments affirm, and Germany accepts, the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies."

The German delegates were coerced into signing the Versailles Treaty by threats of renewed war and by the economic blockade still imposed on Germany after the armistice by the fleets of the Entente. The thesis of exclusive German war guilt was required by the Entente as a premise for the Carthaginian peace imposed on the Central Powers, which included the demand for more than \$32 billion in war reparations, especially to France, plus interest for servicing this debt over decades into the future.

In the years after the war, documentary evidence was published which further undermined the Big Lie of Versailles. This included Karl Kautsky's *Outbreak of the World War* (New York, 1924), the Soviet *Materials for the History of Franco-Russian Relations from 1910 to*

1914 (Moscow, 1922), the *Austrian Red Book of 1919*, and the diary of Baron Schilling of the Russian Foreign Ministry (London, 1925).

The false verdict of Versailles had already become a scandal in America during the 1920s, when historians like H.E. Barnes demanded the revision of the war guilt clause. Typical is this conclusion from the academic historian Sidney B. Fay of Harvard in 1930: "The verdict of the Versailles Treaty that Germany and her allies were responsible for the War, in view of the evidence now available, is historically unsound. It should therefore be revised. However, because of the popular feeling widespread in some of the Entente countries, it is doubtful whether a formal and legal revision is as yet practicable. There must first come a further revision by historical scholars, and through them of public opinion."

Now, after fascism, a second world conflict, the Cold War, and the fall of the communist regimes in Europe, the time has come to reopen the Versailles Treaty. The treaty must be revised to specify the war guilt of an international conspiracy masterminded first by King Edward VII of England, and after him by Sir Edward Grey, in which figures like Izvolski, Sazonov, and Clemenceau were participants. The center of war guilt must be fixed in London.—Webster G. Tarpley

British experts in manipulation

In his autobiography, British intelligence official Aubrey Herbert brags about the British ability to manipulate the peoples of the Balkans and Mideast region:

"All the peoples in Turkey, including the Turk, were in a chronic state of shipwreck; the English were in permanent possession of the lifeboat, though often the lifeboat could not put out to sea. David Urquhart had the affection of the Circassians and has had no successor in a later generation; Professor E. G. Browne stands alone in Persia. Lawrence is undisputed champion of the Arabs; Bouchier and the Buxtons were the heroes of Bulgaria; Miss Durham restored Albania to the memory of Europe; Steed, Seton-Watson, and Edward Boyle were the advocates of a Serbia that existed in their minds; the Greeks have had a multitude of archaeologists, classical scholars, and there are a few remaining romantics devoted to their renaissance. Turkey has had the friendship of many British officials. . . . It would appear that there is a quality of Englishmen that is rarely possessed by men of other nations, which produces unique relations between themselves and the peoples of the East."

conflicting policies and gambits that led to the Balkan wars and World War I. Described as a permanent association of writers, statesmen, historians, and travelers, the committee, which met in the House of Commons irregularly, was supposedly dedicated to creating an informed opinion about Balkan affairs. The formation of the group had been called for by former Prime Minister William Gladstone, leader of the "Bulgarophiles." Members of the Balkan Committee included Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey and Foreign Secretary Lord Lansdowne. The president of the group was Lord Bryce, the most active supporter of the "Armenian cause" in England. The Balkan Committee had the public support of the Archbishop of Canterbury, several bishops, and the chiefs of the various non-Anglican Protestant churches that had been arrayed around Gladstone, as well as the heads of several Oxford and Cambridge colleges.

The key operatives of the group, who managed the contending Balkan chauvinist movements, were Aubrey Herbert, Noel Buxton, James David Bouchier, Arthur Evans, and R.W. Seton-Watson. Herbert controlled the Young Turks and the Albanians; his decades-long crony Noel Buxton controlled the Bulgarians, while having much influence in Serbia also. Bouchier and Evans controlled the Greeks;

Evans and Seton-Watson controlled the Serbians.

Aubrey Herbert

The son of Lord Carnarvan (who officially oversaw British freemasonry on behalf of King Edward VII), Herbert was from two of the most powerful oligarchical families in England: the Herberts and the Howards. The Herberts hold no fewer than four Earldoms, while the Howards hold three. The Duchy of Norfolk (a Howard preserve) is the oldest in England; the Duke of Norfolk is always formally designated the "peer of the realm."

The World War I boss of T.E. Lawrence ("Lawrence of Arabia"), Herbert was a specialist in managing diverse Mideast movements. He was also a chairman of the Balkan Committee.

Herbert began his career in 1904 as a consul in the British Embassy in Istanbul; his uncle, Esme Howard—later World War I ambassador to the United States—was then consul in Crete. In 1905, Howard traveled to Russian Georgia during the middle of the Russo-Japanese War. He was arrested as a British spy and expelled. That same year, he hooked up with another member of the Buxton family, Leland Buxton, to spark the Yemeni insurrection against Ottoman rule which led to the death of 100,000 Turkish soldiers. In 1906 he returned to England to become a member of Parliament, and to run the Balkan Committee.

During the first few days of the 1908 Young Turk coup, Herbert was on the scene, meeting with Talaat and Enver—two of the triumvirate that later led the regime—and also "Macedonia Resurrected" leader Emmanuel Carasso. During this crucial period, he operated out of a Bektashi Sufi monastery. The Bektashis were key to the Young Turk revolution, and Herbert was one of their controllers.

Right from the beginning, Herbert called for a Young Turk crackdown on the nationalist aspirations of the Jews, Arabs, and Armenians, and criticized some Young Turk rhetoric espousing equality. Writing to his brother at the time, Herbert notes: "I wish them luck, the Young Turks. It's very fine but only a beginning. . . . Equality is charming as a sentiment but Turkey will find it as impractical in their Empire as we have in ours. The Turk can't compete with the Syrian, Armenian, and the Jew. He is the dominant race, and in the interests of peace he should show that straight away or blood will run in thick rivers in Constantinople."

Herbert's control of the Young Turks is celebrated in the novel of World War I Propaganda chief John Buchan (Lord Tweedsmuir), *Greenmantle*. Buchan later described Herbert as "a sort of survivor from crusading times."

Herbert returned to Britain after the coup was consolidated. But from 1911 through 1914, he frequently traveled to Turkey and Ottoman Albania, where he met with the Young Turk leadership. And while promoting the Young Turks, Herbert was also promoting Albanian independence. The Bektashi order controlled Albania, and the Albanian

nationalists offered to make him king on three occasions.

During the same period, Buxton traveled frequently to Bulgaria to support the opposite side.

Herbert's control of the Young Turks proceeded both through his family's control of British masonry, and also through the Howard and Herbert families' historic ties to Venice; the family is largely Catholic, and Herbert grew up in Italy.

Noel Buxton

Great-grandson of the "Great Emancipator," Thomas Buxton, known for his sanctimonious denunciations of the slave trade, Noel Buxton was a member of the Quaker family that controls Barclays Bank. The founder of the Balkan Committee, and a close crony of Herbert, Buxton was the chief propagandist of Greater Bulgaria in the pre- and post-World War I period in England. During World War I, Buxton was the chief British liaison to Bulgaria, in a nominal effort to secure Bulgarian neutrality. He was also a primary British liaison officer to President Woodrow Wilson's adviser Col. Edward House, in an effort to secure American entry into the war under the pretext of combatting Turkish massacres of Armenians.

Buxton wrote numerous tracts such as *The Black Sheep of the Balkans* defending Bulgarian claims to Macedonia, but he maintained close ties to the Serbs and Young Turks as well. Shortly after the 1908 revolution, Austria issued a formal note of protest to Britain complaining that Buxton "disposed of considerable funds and employed a large number of agents in [the] nefarious work of propagating aspirations among the ignorant Serbian population." He was, said Austria, agitating for a Young Turk-supported Serbian war against Austria.

Following World War I, Buxton became a leader in the pro-Nazi Cliveden Set, and also formed two important Quaker intelligence organizations, the Anti-Slavery Society and the Save the Children Fund.

James D. Bouchier

Correspondent for the London *Times* in the Balkans from 1892 through 1915, Bouchier was the operative who put together the Balkan League uniting Serbia, Greece, Albania, Romania, and Bulgaria against Turkey in the first Balkan war. This stunning diplomatic feat required considerable lying to all of the parties concerned, over the final disposition of Ottoman lands that they wanted to seize. Largely based in Greece, Bouchier was an adviser to the Greek king, a cousin of Edward VII. Yet despite his Greek ties, Bouchier was the champion of Bulgarian aspirations in Ottoman Macedonia, which Greece and Serbia also claimed.

Sir Arthur John Evans

Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, a center of British masonry, Evans had been active in Balkan politics since 1870

as England's most prominent proponent of Serbian aspirations. His political ideal; he said, was a "South Slavonic monarchy built out of Austria and the Balkans." Evans was the founder of the British School of Athens and the British Academy there, which put out glorious depictions of ancient Greece which also served to popularize the Greek cause.

Robert William Seton-Watson

Son of a wealthy Scottish merchant in India, Seton-Watson was the most prominent advocate of Greater Serbia and later Yugoslavia, in the first half of the twentieth century. Among the most vehement propagandists against the Austrians and Hungarians, Seton-Watson issued numerous pro-Serbian histories in the period of the Balkan wars, and was detailed to aid Serbia on behalf of British intelligence during World War I. In the immediate post-war period, Seton-Watson and his crony Sir Bernard Pares (a controller of the Bolsheviks) established *Slavonic Review*, affiliated with the Slavic Studies Department of Kings College. The review remains one of the most pro-Serbian British academic outfits today.

Countdown to World War I

In 1909, Carasso's Turkification policy began to trigger increasing hostility and outright revolt among the non-Turkic population of Ottoman Europe. Those most affected were the Greek and Bulgarian populations of Macedonia, a region also claimed by Serbia.

In the summer of 1912, Balkan Committee agent J.D. Bouchier formed the Balkan League, comprising Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Greece, and Bulgaria. Its purpose was to combine forces for a liberation war against the Ottoman Empire. Conflicting claims over Macedonia were put off to the future.

In August 1912, Bulgaria issued a wildly provocative note to Turkey demanding Macedonian autonomy, under the control of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO). The Balkan Committee supported this demand; Balkan Committee President Noel Buxton had called for Bulgarian assimilation of Macedonia for years.

But despite this new threat, the Young Turks remained confident of continuing British support. They had been put in power by the British and were under the management of Balkan Committee official Aubrey Herbert. One of their first acts in office was to hand over the control of their army to British officers, and their navy to the French.

In September, Greece and Bulgaria decided for war with Turkey under the pretext of supporting Macedonian independence.

In October, Montenegro—a puppet state of Venice—declared war on Turkey, thus formally beginning the first Balkan war. Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece joined the war, as

stipulated by the Balkan League. Because the Italo-Turkish War was still being waged, Turkey was especially weak.

In October and November, Bulgarian and Serbian forces smashed the Turks, virtually reaching the gates of Istanbul. Russia issued a warning to Bulgaria not to occupy Istanbul, as she wanted Istanbul for herself. For the first time, a European great power threatened to intervene.

In November, Serbia overran northern Albania.

At this point, Austria announced it would not allow Serbian access to the Adriatic (achieved through occupation of Albania), and announced its support for an independent Albania. The Germans offered Austria support, while Russia supported Serbia.

In December, Turkey, Bulgaria, and Serbia signed an armistice, ending the first phase of the first Balkan war. Greece refused to sign. The British convened a peace conference in London, nominally dedicated to settling the conflict.

But in January 1913, the peace conference broke down, as the Turks refused to give up Crete, the Aegean islands, and Adrianople. Now known as Plovdiv, Bulgaria, Adrianople was then the capital of Balkan Turkey, and of immense military importance.

On Jan. 22, 1913, the Imperial Powers, led by Britain, forced Turkey to give up Adrianople, which virtually meant the abandonment of all of European Turkey. On Jan. 23, Young Turk leader Enver Pasha retook power in a coup.

On Feb. 3, the first Balkan war resumed. The Greeks took Janina, then part of Albania, now part of Greece. The Bulgarians seized Adrianople. Under immense pressure, Turkey capitulated; Bulgaria and Turkey struck a separate peace. In April, the Montenegrins took Scutari, Albania. But in May, under the threat of Austria entering the war, they abandoned Scutari, while the Serbs withdrew from Durazzo, the capital of central Albania.

Sir Edward Grey turned Sarajevo crisis into war

Even after decades of British geopolitical machinations, it still required all of Sir Edward Grey's perfidy and cunning to detonate the greatest conflagration in world history by exploiting the diplomatic crisis surrounding the assassination of the Austrian heir apparent Archduke Franz Ferdinand on June 28, 1914 in Sarajevo, Bosnia.

Sir Edward Grey had learned an important lesson in the Moroccan crisis of 1911, when Germany sent the warship *Panther* to Agadir to secure German interests there, which were in conflict with those of France. This lesson was that if Germany clearly perceived in a crisis that there was a direct risk of Anglo-German war, Berlin would back down, frustrating the war party in London. In the Agadir crisis, the British minister Lloyd George had delivered a clear public warning to Berlin, and Germany had replied at once that she was not seeking a permanent presence on the Atlantic coast of Morocco; the crisis was soon resolved.

The German chancellor from 1909 to 1917, Dr. Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg, was an anglophile and a crony of the kaiser's student days, anxious to make concessions to London in order to secure peace. Sir Edward Grey declared in 1912 that any differences between England and Germany would never assume dangerous proportions "so long as German policy was directed by" Bethmann-Hollweg.

During the Balkan Wars and the Liman von Sanders

affair of 1913, Grey cultivated the illusion of good relations with Germany. By mid-1914, Anglo-German relations were judged by Sir Edward Goschen, the British ambassador to Berlin, as "more friendly and cordial than they had been in years." But it was all a trick by Perfidious Albion.

Some weeks after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the Austrian government, blaming Belgrade, addressed a very harsh ultimatum to Serbia on July 23 demanding sweeping concessions for investigating the crime and the suppression of anti-Austrian agitation. The Russian court slavophiles were demanding war against Austria and Germany in defense of Serbia; these slavophiles were madmen on the strategic offensive who sought a general European war. In Vienna, the leading minister, Count Berchtold, and the chief of staff, Conrad von Hoetzendorff, were determined to use the crisis to smash Serbia, which they saw as a threat to the survival of their empire. Berchtold and Hoetzendorff were madmen on the strategic defensive, even if they assumed the tactical offensive against Serbia. Their aggressive intentions involved Serbia, but not other great powers. When Serbia issued a conciliatory reply to the Austrian ultimatum, Kaiser Wilhelm II and others were relieved and thought that the war danger had receded; but the Vienna madmen seized on minor refusals by Serbia to declare war on July 28.

If Sir Edward Grey had sincerely wished to avoid war, he could have pursued one of two courses of action. The first would have been to warn Germany early in the crisis that in case of general war, Britain would fight on the side of France and Russia. This would have propelled the kaiser and Bethmann into the strongest efforts to restrain

In May, the London peace conference reopened, resulting in the Treaty of London, where Turkey gave up much of its remaining European possession; the status of Albania was left to the powers. The Albanians offered to make Aubrey Herbert the king of their projected independent state. So ended the first Balkan war.

In June 1913, one month later, the Serbs and Greeks allied against their former ally Bulgaria, due to Bulgarian reluctance to grant Serbia more of Macedonia. So began the second Balkan war.

On June 29, the Bulgarians attacked Serbian-Greek positions. Turkey then entered the war, this time siding with Serbia and Greece against Bulgaria. Bulgaria was rapidly defeated.

In August, the Treaty of Bucharest, overseen by Britain and the powers, handed most of Macedonia to Greece and Serbia. So ended the second Balkan war.

The conclusion of the second Balkan war was necessarily temporary, since Bulgaria would never tolerate Greece and Serbia acquiring most of Macedonia. And while Serbia acquired much of Macedonia, she did not acquire access to the Aegean Sea. Serbia would not tolerate remaining landlocked.

So, in **September 1912**, one month after the formal end of the second Balkan war, Serbia invaded the newly independent state of Albania in order to gain access to the Adriatic sea. But Austria issued an ultimatum, and Serbia withdrew. By so doing, Austria emerged as the biggest threat to the Greater Serbian chauvinists who knew that they had British, French, and Russian backing.

Twenty-one months later, in **June 1914**, the Black Hand killed Archduke Ferdinand, whom they had denounced as an obstacle to Greater Serbia. In so doing, they triggered World War I.

the Vienna madmen, probably forcing them to back down. The other course would have been to warn Paris and especially St. Petersburg that Britain had no intention of being embroiled in world war over the Balkan squabble, and would remain neutral. This would have undercut the St. Petersburg militarists, and would have motivated Paris to act as a restraining influence.

Grey, a disciple of Edward VII, did neither of these things. Instead he maintained a posture of deception designed to make Germany think England would remain neutral, while giving Paris hints that England would support Russia and France. These hints were then passed on to Russian Foreign Minister Sazonov, a British agent, and to Czar Nicholas II. In this way, French *revanchistes* and Russian slavophiles were subtly encouraged on the path of aggression.

Grey's deception of Germany meant assuming the posture of a mediator rather than a possible party to the conflict. In early and middle July, Grey proposed direct conversations between Vienna and St. Petersburg to avoid war, but dropped this when French President Poincaré, a war-monger, responded that this would be "very dangerous." On July 24, Grey shifted to a proposal for mediation by other great powers of the Austrian-Russian dispute. On July 26, Grey proposed a conference of ambassadors from England, France, Italy, and Germany, which was declined by Germany for various reasons. Grey's charade of war avoidance contributed to complacency in Berlin and a failure to do anything to restrain the Vienna crazies, since, the kaiser thought, if England did not fight, France and Russia were unlikely to do so either.

Edward VII's son King George V made a vital contribution to the British deception. Late on July 26, King

George V told the kaiser's brother, Prince Henry, who was visiting England, that Britain had "no quarrel with anyone and I hope we shall remain neutral." This was seized upon by the pathetic kaiser as a binding pledge of British neutrality for which, he said "I have the word of a king; and that is sufficient for me." The gullible Kaiser Wilhelm was kept thoroughly disoriented during the last critical period when Germany could have forced Vienna to back down and avoid general war, before the fateful Russian and Austrian mobilizations of July 30 and 31.

The declaration of war

It was late on July 29 before any warning of British armed intervention in the looming conflict was received in Berlin. When German forces entered Belgium in the context of the Schlieffen Plan (the German plan for a two-front war against France and Russia), Grey declared war at midnight Aug. 4-5, 1914.

The British were the first of the great powers to mobilize their war machine, in this case the Grand Fleet of the Royal Navy. On July 19, the British had already staged a formidable naval demonstration with a review of the Grand Fleet at Portsmouth. On the afternoon of July 28, Winston Churchill ordered the fleet to proceed during the night at high speed with no lights from Portsmouth through the Straits of Dover to its wartime base of operations at Scapa Flow, north of Scotland. On July 29, the official "warning telegram" was sent out from the Admiralty; the British fleet was now on a full war footing.

The first continental state to mobilize had been Serbia, on July 25. The order of general mobilizations was Serbia, Great Britain, Russia, Austria, France, and, finally, Germany.—*Webster G. Tarpley*