



## 37 Days: Countdown to World War One

### 30 July: Russia mobilises for war

Prof Margaret MacMillan:

In Russia, there is intense anxiety over the fate of Serbia. The foreign minister Sergei Sazonov puts pressure on the Tsar to order full mobilization. Sazonov is convinced that their two enemies are determined to start a major conflict. Russia has no choice but to get ready for war.

Russian minutes:

The Tsar was deadly pale and replied in a choking voice

Tsar Nicholas II:

Just think of the responsibility you're advising me to assume. It's a question of sending thousands and thousands of men to their death.

Prof Margaret MacMillan:

There's a long silence until an aide speaks up

Aide:

Yes it is hard to decide.

Russian minutes:

His Majesty replied in a rough and displeased tone

Tsar Nicholas II:

I will decide.

Prof Margaret MacMillan:

Eventually the Tsar he gives way. It's said he's been warned that if Russia does not show that it's still a great power his dynasty may fall.