

The History of the Twentieth Century

Episode 79

“Lessons Learned II: The Fall of the Concert of Europe”

Transcript

[music: Fanfare]

The sudden eruption of an eight-nation conflict across Europe caught the world by surprise. Perhaps it shouldn't have, but over the past fifty years, Europe had seen increasing movement of people, goods, and capital across international borders, to the benefit of all. Now, suddenly, the gates were closed.

No one was more surprised than the one hundred thousand Americans caught in Europe during the crisis. They at once packed their bags and made arrangements to go home, only to find that in Europe the US dollar was suddenly worthless. The American government had to ship gold bullion to Britain aboard the armored cruiser *Tennessee* to provide emergency financial aid to help its citizens return.

Welcome to *The History of the Twentieth Century*.

[music: Opening Theme]

Episode 79. Lessons Learned II: The Fall of the Concert of Europe.

Last week, on *The History of the Twentieth Century*, the Great War began. Before I get into the narrative of the opening moves in the war, I want to do some overview. In the next two episodes after this one, I want to review the war plans of the major powers. We've talked about these war plans to some degree already, but I want to review them, nation by nation, because this will give us a yardstick, which we can use to measure how the actual war works out. Spoiler alert: not at all the way it was supposed to.

But first, this week, we will say farewell to The Concert of Europe and ponder what brought it down and led to the Great War, again in the form of a listicle, as we did back in episode 36.

The top ten reasons why the Concert of Europe fell:

10. This is a society that glorifies violence.

Western civilization in the early twentieth century resembles our own in so many ways, I sometimes find it difficult to remember the ways in which it was different. But one of the ways in which it was different was that early twentieth century societies had a much higher tolerance for violence than we do today.

Dueling still existed in some countries at this time, notably France and Austria, although dueling had evolved into nonlethal forms by the late nineteenth century. For example, duels with swords where the first to draw blood was considered the winner, or pistol duels where the parties get just one shot each, and that shot often missed—often intentionally—or created only minor wounds. But the ethic that verbal provocations might require a physical response still existed. That a man might say something sufficiently insulting that it not only permitted but required the target of the insult to respond with violence was still an accepted norm.

Among men, of course. We are only talking about men here. Violence among women was unacceptable. Lower class men were given to spontaneous brawling, especially at bars, or so went the stereotype, while upper class men were expected to behave in a more sportsmanlike way, such as announcing their intention to fight ahead of time and giving their opponent time to prepare. Or that was the ideal, anyway.

Now some of you might be thinking at this point, “Hey, what about that whole Belle Époque thing? Didn’t you spend hours telling us about art and culture and impressionism and music and ballet and Diaghilev and Nijinsky and Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas? How can you dismiss this era as one that glorifies violence?”

And that’s a valid point. The Belle Époque is compelling for us today precisely because we see in it the seeds of what is to come, new attitudes toward creativity and individualism, the breaking down of barriers; stuff familiar to those of us who live in the early 21st century. But it has to be said that the Belle Époque was an upper-class phenomenon. The lower and middle classes were still very conventional in their tastes, and many of them looked upon artists like Stravinsky or Matisse or Isadora Duncan with attitudes ranging from amusement to disgust. And even among the upper class elites of Europe and America, for every admirer of Richard Strauss or passionate fan of Vaslav Nijinsky, there were equal numbers of stuffy aristocrats who were horrified and saw in the Belle Époque evidence of a civilization collapsing into a hedonistic barbarism. Those elites would be the very ones most enthusiastic about the Great War. They saw in the looming war a golden opportunity to purge Western civilization of these effete and degenerate elements.

Some feminist historians identify in the Victorian and Edwardian eras the rise of a cult of manliness that glorified physicality, stoic endurance, obedience, and teamwork. It was no accident that these are also military virtues. Indeed, it was argued at the time that these were the very virtues that had made Europe master of the world, and cultivating them in future generations of young men was essential, if Europe meant to retain that position. Sadly, the young

men of this era would receive a thorough indoctrination in these manly virtues, and then be shipped off to the trenches, where being strong and brave only got you killed that much quicker.

9. Democratic powers were preoccupied with internal dissent. Authoritarian powers believed war was the key to quelling internal dissent.

Over the course of this podcast, we have seen a great deal of domestic political turmoil in all the major powers. We can attribute a lot of this turmoil to two causes. One was rapid technological and economic changes and their social consequences. This was a society experiencing change at a rate comparable to our own times, maybe even faster, but its political and social and civic institutions were far less accustomed to dealing with rapid change than are ours.

The second is related: a widening gap between the rich and middle classes who were benefiting from these changes, and a larger group of poor and working class people increasingly left behind. This led to a rise in labor unions and socialist political organizations.

We've talked about this on the podcast. All the major powers faced these issues, but dealt with them in different ways, depending upon the political circumstances in each country. In the United States, we saw the rise of Progressivism. In the United Kingdom, we saw the Liberal landslide and ferocious debates over labor laws and women's suffrage and Home Rule for Ireland. In France, we've seen the Third Republic trundling along in spite of anarchism and assassination and the Dreyfus Affair and quarrels over the role of the Catholic Church in French society and, above all else, the stark divide between the conservative and Catholic Right and the socialist and secular Left.

In these democratic countries, these disputes were resolved through the democratic process, as they should be, but it meant a certain preoccupation with domestic issues at the expense of vigilance in foreign policy. This contrasts with the three autocratic powers, Germany, Austria, and Russia. These countries were wrestling with their own versions of the same disputes. But in more authoritarian states, domestic dissent can be suppressed, at least for a while, and the ruling elites in these countries mostly saw domestic quarrels as distractions from what really mattered: imperial expansion.

Indeed, I think you can see to varying degrees in all three of these nations, Germany, Austria, and Russia, a cycle of repression, or at least neglect, of domestic unrest, and as political pressures build, a sense that quarrels with foreign powers offered a form of relief. Surely all our citizens, whether on the Right or on the Left, will come together and do their patriotic duty when the state is threatened.

In short, then, the political trend we're seeing is that democratic states are turning inward to address their internal problems, at the cost of neglecting foreign affairs while autocratic states

become ever more assertive in foreign affairs as a way of addressing their internal problems (although it might be more accurate to say “papering over” their internal problems). The unfortunate result of these trends is that they put the diplomatic initiative into the hands of the most aggressive governments. The result was the Great War.

8. Military buildups across the continent.

There was an arms race going on in Europe in the early twentieth century. There was a armaments technology race. There was a naval race. And at the center of all three was Germany.

It was the German naval buildup that triggered the British response that included the introduction of *Dreadnought*-class battleships. The introduction of dreadnoughts in turn sparked multiple naval races. Britain versus Germany, Italy versus Austria, Austria versus the Ottoman Empire, Brazil versus Argentina and Chile.

The motive for the German naval buildup always looked suspect to the British. Britain needed a global navy for her global empire. What did Germany need hers for? A “luxury navy,” was Winston Churchill’s withering dismissal.

Germany was already acknowledged supreme in land forces. When Imperial Germany was created, it combined nations as diverse as Bavaria and Hesse and Hamburg and Westphalia. But at the center of the German state lay Prussia. “Other states possess an army,” it was said, while “Prussia is an army that possesses a state.” It was not, for the most part, the foppish bemonocled Bavarian aristocrats who ran Imperial Germany. It was Prussian Junkers, the young lords who were raised to fear God and King, and to respect order and the army. It was still a prosecutable offense in Germany to diss an army officer. On the sidewalks of Berlin, the ladies made way for *them*. In public, Kaiser Wilhelm was usually seen in a military uniform. But then, so were the monarchs of all the other kingdoms of Europe.

It’s easier for a state to maintain a large military when it has a large economy. And Germany’s has been booming. Since unification, the German economy has doubled in size. Coal and steel production had quadrupled. The Krupp armaments company was the largest business enterprise in Europe. German chemical companies were world renowned, like Bayer, which first commercialized acetylsalicylic acid as a pain reliever under the trade name “aspirin,” and Badische Anilin- und Soda-Fabrik, or BASF, a world leader in synthetic dyes and chemicals. The Kaiser Wilhelm Society was a world-renowned center of scientific research.

The German Army was a model for the rest of the world. It was well trained, well equipped, and the envy of Europe. And under the command of the mercurial Kaiser Wilhelm II, it was becoming Europe’s worst nightmare. “There is no balance of power in Europe,” Wilhelm once boasted, “except for me and my twenty-five army corps.”

The French noticed, and in 1913 enacted the Three-Year Law, which increased the active-duty obligation of French conscripts from two years to three, which would eventually bring the French Army almost into numerical parity with Germany. The Russian Army was much larger, but in a shambles after the Russo-Japanese War, and disgraced after the Bosnian annexation crisis, when all it took was for Germany to put out the word that it supported Austria, and Russia had no choice but to cave. And so, in that same year, 1913, Russia borrowed French money and built rail lines and armament factories and modernized its own army, already the largest in Europe.

To France and Russia, these were defensive moves, meant to contain a dangerous and unpredictable foe. To Germany, it felt like suffocation. Suffocating to the point that war seemed inevitable, and the sooner the better, before the noose tightened further.

7. A sense of perpetual crisis.

Ever since the Congress of Vienna in 1815, 99 years ago now, Europe has had an informal system under which the Great Powers hold conferences to mediate disputes. Historians call it “The Concert of Europe.” It was not a formal treaty arrangement. There was no standing organization to monitor international affairs and no established procedure for determining when a conference would be necessary or for calling one. It just happened by consensus.

But over the 99 years of the Concert of Europe, these conferences came to be called more and more frequently, and the agreements reached in them seemed increasingly irrelevant. Fundamental problems remained, and the Great Powers disagreed fundamentally on the solutions. That’s how we get into situations like the one during the Balkan Wars when a new crisis emerged just days after the London Conference purported to resolve the old one.

New crises erupted because of dissatisfaction with the solutions offered at the resolution to the old crisis, but they also erupted because the call-a-conference response had become so ingrained that, paradoxically, it made the nations of Europe more willing to take risks. That was because the risk of war was tempered by the likelihood that all the risk-taking nation was actually risking, at worst, was yet another conference. Nations that didn’t take risks—that were not so confrontational—found themselves being dragged into these conferences over and over and pressed to come up with concessions to placate the countries that *were* being confrontational.

This cycle of crisis-to-conference-to-crisis took its toll. It was stressful, and became increasingly intolerable. If Great Power conferences were no longer able to come up with a long-term solution to the crisis of the moment and make it stick, well then, that means the international system is breaking down. This thinking leads to an increasing sense that some kind of major war is inevitable, and after a while, it even begins to seem desirable. War at least held out the hope of

humbling some of the players in the international order, reshuffling the deck, and purging Europe of this cycle of endless crises.

And so, when the July Crisis came, as we saw, the thinking of the Great Power leaders in Europe was not so much “How can we resolve this latest crisis peacefully?” but rather “Is this a favorable moment to start the war we that all know is going to happen someday?” Which leads us to:

6. World leaders believed a major war could be brief and profitable.

The decision to go to war, like any decision, has to be made by weighing the costs and the benefits. With the advantage of hindsight, the Great War looks like a series of huge costs and little or no benefit to anyone. Today we have a hard time seeing what possible gain any of these combatants could have imagined might come out of this mess.

But in 1914, no one envisioned a war going on so long, or becoming so costly. And in 1914, historical precedent seemed to support that view. Take a look at recent wars that have involved one of the Great Powers: There was the Italo-Ottoman War of 1911 and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904. Going a bit further back, you’ll recall the Anglo-Boer War and the Spanish-American War. And further still, we have the Franco-Prussian War, and the Austro-Prussian War, the wars of Italian unification, the Crimean War.

We’re looking here at sixty years’ worth of experience in modern warfare, and what’s striking about this list is how limited most of these conflicts were. Most of them were less than two years long, with some lasting mere weeks or months. They were limited geographically as well, and in every case, the winner of the war got some important benefit out of it. Germany and Italy owed their existence as nation states to short, sharp, carefully calculated wars.

As for the losers in these conflicts, they all suffered losses, yes, but in no case was the defeated nation entirely destroyed, unless you count the Boer states in South Africa, and even there, the Boer states retained much influence, even if they are no longer formally independent states.

Given these precedents, the leaders of the Great Powers in 1914 had good reason to expect that if a general war did come, there was hope that their own country might come out of the war better off, or at least, suffer no worse than some modest territorial losses and perhaps payment of an indemnity. In other words, it was easy to underestimate the costs and overestimate the benefits.

In fact, the recent war that looked the most like the coming Great War was the American Civil War of 1861-65. That war, like the Great War, was not decided by superior training or clever tactics or brilliant maneuvers or even by detailed mobilization plans. The winner of the American Civil War was the side with the larger economy, greater industrial output, control of

the seas, the ability to deploy and supply the most soldiers for the longest time, and to absorb the most casualties before a catastrophic collapse of morale or economic output brings it to its knees.

And don't even get me started about frontal assaults against an entrenched enemy armed with modern weapons.

At the time, the American Civil War looked like an outlier, compared to the rest of 19th century military experience. So we can forgive analysts of the time for failing to recognize that in fact the American Civil War was the best predictor of what was to come, an early warning sign of what awaits twentieth century nations when they go to war. Which brings us to:

5. Military planners believed a rapid offensive could win a war in a short time.

You'll remember friend-of-the-podcast Jan Bloch from episode 29. He was the accountant of the peace movement, the fellow who analyzed modern warfare and came to the conclusion that it would inevitably bog down into a static war of attrition, like the American Civil War, only worse.

In hindsight, Bloch looks amazingly prescient, which inevitably leads to the question, why didn't they listen to him? We have talked about this question a little bit already. An important part of the answer is simple denial. Bloch's picture of what a modern war would degenerate into was so bleak and apocalyptic that any military planner who embraced it would simply have no choice but to brief the civilian government that war is no longer an option and then resign.

Nobody was willing to do that, of course. Those old-timey military uniforms are just too cool. Who would want to give up a helmet with a spike on the top? So there was a strong incentive to ignore or rationalize away everything Bloch was saying. The easiest argument to make was that Bloch was a civilian who didn't understand military matters well enough to make such sweeping claims, whereas the people who do understand them, we, the military planners, simply don't agree.

But there was another argument that could be made, and was. The militaries of two nations might be evenly matched on paper, in a Jan Bloch accountant kind of way, and yet one prevail over the other on the field of battle because of superior strategy. And this is not an unreasonable argument. Military history is full of examples of battles where a larger army is defeated by a smaller one, or a larger and more advanced country loses a war to a smaller and apparently less advanced country. Remember the Russo-Japanese War?

And the strategy that most military planners in 1914 would have pointed to as the one most likely to score a quick and decisive victory and prevent the sort of long, debilitating war Bloch was warning us about was the strategy of rapid mobilization and a quick offensive.

You've probably already noticed the obsession military planners of this era have with mobilization plans. A carefully designed mobilization plan is to the world of 1914 what the intercontinental ballistic missile would be to the world of 1964, fifty years from now: a weapon that will win you total victory over your enemy, provided only that you deploy it first.

And so, a great deal of time and effort was invested in these mobilization plans, along with investment in new railroad lines and rolling stock, to make sure soldiers could be delivered to the front lines as rapidly as possible. In some European countries, any changes to rail lines or construction of new ones had to be done in consultation with the military.

Everyone made careful calculations of how many days it would take to mobilize their armies, versus how many days it would take potential enemies to mobilize theirs, and everyone made every effort to reduce those mobilization times. The unfortunate corollary to all this was that it could be disastrous to allow a hostile nation to begin mobilizing first. Any indication that your adversary was mobilizing automatically meant that your own military would have to mobilize also. We get to the point where countries begin mobilizing, not to go to war, but to make a point. Because a mobilization is a sure-fire attention grabber. It shows you mean business. But there were drawbacks, too. Mobilizations are expensive, they're disruptive, and they have the potential to trigger an accidental war. Oops.

4. Great Power leaders embraced zero-sum Social Darwinism and rejected the idea of a stable Europe.

I'm using the term "Social Darwinism" here, but I need to caution you that this is a term that's been applied to several distinct philosophies or ideologies, some of which have nothing to do with the set of ideas I am discussing here. For our purposes, I'm referring to the ideology that sees a nation or an ethnic group as analogous to an organism, and sees expansion and competition for resources and conflict as natural, even desirable, traits in a nation. In this view, nations and peoples compete, and the strong prosper while the weak wither. In the Victorian era, for example, when the British Empire was approaching its zenith, it was argued that this was a natural and proper consequence of the fact that Anglo-Saxons were the stronger race.

But this view found expression elsewhere, too, most notably in *Germany and the Next War*, the book we've already discussed, which embraced a zero-sum, dog-eat-dog perspective on world affairs and argued that Germany was destined to rule the world. It is ironic that Norman Angell's *The Great Illusion* was in bookstores at the same time. History would vindicate Angell. The world of the twentieth century is a different place from centuries past. Land is no longer the most important source of wealth, and a country's greatness is no longer determined by how wide a swath of the map it occupies, if indeed it ever was.

In the twentieth century, trade and capital and technology and productivity are the bywords. And they are distinctly positive-sum. German nationalism made Germany great by removing political barriers to the movement of people and capital and trade and innovation across Germany. But from this German nationalists took a false lesson. Germany cannot absorb non-German territory into her Empire and at the same time remain German. One glance at Austria should tell you that much. Germany has to choose between being a larger state and being a German state.

But what Germany can do is develop economically and prosper. In the modern world, war is expensive, and being a wealthy country is a better defense than expanding your borders. Which brings us to:

3. Germany felt increasingly surrounded and threatened.

How do you make your country feel safer? If you are either France or Russia, you make your country feel safer by working out a defensive alliance with the other one that keeps Germany off balance. Germany may be able to defeat either of you individually in a war, but it can't defeat you collectively, because there is strength in numbers, and because Germany is stuck in the middle fighting a two-front war.

And so, the Franco-Russian alliance was remarkably stable, lasting twenty years. It made both countries feel more secure. But here's a hard-won twentieth-century lesson in diplomacy. The Franco-Russian alliance made Germany feel less secure, and thus contributed to the Great War. The moral of the story is this: if you want to avoid a war, it is not enough that you feel secure. Your enemy has to feel secure as well.

Germany was in some sense the victim of its own right-wing ideology of conquer-or-be-conquered. Embrace grandiose plans of dominating the world today, and tomorrow you wake up in a cold sweat after nightmares about grandiose Russian plans of dominating you. But France and Russia have to bear part of the blame for this. They could have done more to emphasize that their alliance was defensive only. Instead, the opposite happened. By 1914, France was embracing Serbia as if she, too, were part of the alliance, and Russian elites were talking up the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France.

So the paranoia of the German elites was not entirely a product of their own imaginations. One does have to ask, though, why the German response to the perceived threat is a lightning offensive rather than hunkering down and offering her enemies a dogged defense.

Another unfortunate response to the perceived threat was Germany yoking itself to Austria, which leads to Germany having a stake in the ups and downs of Austria's struggle to remain relevant. Which brings us to:

2. Austrian expansionism.

In his book, *A Mad Catastrophe*, Geoffrey Wawro—and I sure hope I'm pronouncing that right—argues that when we think about the Central Powers and the Great War, the conventional image is of Germany as the tough and ambitious military powerhouse, while Austria is the well-meaning but comic, bumbling sidekick, the Tom Arnold to Germany's Arnold Schwarzenegger. But, he argues, to think about Austria in this way is to go far too easy on her. Austrian dreams of expanding her Empire into the Balkans was the primary reason this war broke out. It is true that German policy was to egg her on, but that does not excuse Austria's fatal ambition.

Austria in 1914 is a majority-minority Empire in a world where nationalism is increasingly becoming the force that holds nations together. Or in this case, tears them apart. And her ruler at this time is the octogenarian Kaiser Franz Josef, a man not noted for strong leadership even in his prime. Now, strong leadership is a quality we admire in a leader who applies it in the service of noble ideals, while we deplore it in leaders who apply it toward unworthy goals. But in his long reign, Franz Josef shows little evidence of either strength or nobility. His only real commitment was to Habsburg tradition; his only real ideal that Habsburgs ought to rule because they are Habsburgs.

It is a tragedy for Europe that Franz Josef reigned as long as he did. He had no vision. He was a go-along-and-get-along kind of guy, who allowed his Empire to decentralize, apparently because he believed he himself was the unifying principle that would hold his disparate peoples together. If that's what he thought, he was borderline delusional.

Instead of reforming or reorganizing the Empire he had, Franz Josef and his ministers looked to expanding the Empire as a way of strengthening it, which was also an idea that was borderline delusional. Why anyone would think that adding more unwilling, disgruntled minority subjects into an Empire already bursting at the seams with unwilling, disgruntled minority subjects is likely to strengthen it is a question more appropriately brought before a psychologist than a historian.

I'm often puzzled when I compare this situation to the origins of the Second World War. Ask anyone what caused the Second World War and they will likely say it was caused by German greed and ambition and lust for power. Why we are so willing to let Austria off the hook for similar offenses a quarter-century earlier?

If a combination of hubris and cluelessness had brought down only the Habsburg dynasty, we might call it poetic justice. But this particular combination of hubris and cluelessness cost millions of lives and destroyed the international order in Europe. All we can do is survey the wreckage and wonder. And finally,

1. Mobilization plans forced leaders to make quick decisions while limiting their options.

The major powers of continental Europe were on a hair trigger by 1914. The doctrine of mobilization had been engendered by the Franco-Prussian War, 44 years ago now, and today, military planners across the continent accept implicitly that whoever mobilizes first wins. The unfortunate corollary to that doctrine is that mobilization of a potential enemy demands that you, too, mobilize, even in the absence of any overt hostile act.

These mobilization plans were complex documents, hundreds of pages of timetables that demanded hundreds of hours of planning and were among the most closely guarded of state secrets. Out of their very complexity and secrecy seems to have arisen their mystique, as if any document that complicated and that secret must inevitably be brilliant. They were treated with reverence and followed to the letter, and they led the great nations of Europe into ruin.

One consequence of all the secrecy was how compartmentalized military planning was. We saw, for example, how shocked the Austrian foreign minister was when he learned that mobilization would take sixteen days. Even this basic fact, that mobilizations take weeks, not hours, was unknown to him. That's because the military drew up these plans and kept them as close secrets, even from the civilian leadership.

And the corollary is that the civilian leadership doesn't get any input into the plans. And that's how the German General Staff can blithely draw up a battle plan that involves invading Belgium. Because no civilian from the Foreign Office was involved; someone who might have raised the point that invading Belgium might draw Britain into the war.

And of course, the real cause of the war was a combination of alliances and war plans which created a line of dominoes that ran from an Austrian declaration of war on Serbia to a German invasion of Belgium in a matter of days. No one planned such a chain of events, or intended for it to play out this way, but it was the result of this narrow focus of multiple groups of experts, each on their own piece of the European situation, with no one who had all the information, or could see the larger view. No one who was able to take a step back and look at the whole picture, this ramshackle apparatus that would lead Europe into a general war.

We'll have to stop there for today. Thanks for listening, and I hope you'll join me next week, on *The History of the Twentieth Century*, as we look at the German and Russian mobilization plans, and find out what really were these big secrets they've been keeping all these years. That's next week, on *The History of the Twentieth Century*.

Oh, and one more thing. I mentioned that by 1914 Russian elites were talking up the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France. In that regard, I'd like to share with you this excerpt from the memoirs of Maurice Paléologue, the French ambassador to Russia, describing a dinner he attended during that state visit of the French President to Russia in July 1914. It involved the

Grand Duchess Anastasia, the wife of the Grand Duke Nikolai and the daughter of King Nicola of Montenegro:

I was one of the first to arrive. The Grand Duchess Anastasia and her sister, the Grand Duchess Militza, gave me a boisterous welcome. The two Montenegrins burst out, talking both at once:

“Do you realize that we’re passing through historic days, fateful days! ... I’ve had a telegram from my father to-day. He tells me we shall have war before the end of the month.... What a hero my father is! . . . He's worthy of the *Iliad!* Just look at this little box I always take about with me. It's got some Lorraine soil in it, real Lorraine soil I picked up over the frontier when I was in France with my husband two years ago. Look there, at the table of honour: it's covered with thistles. I didn't want to have any other flowers there. They're Lorraine thistles, don't you see! I gathered several plants on the annexed territory, brought them here and had the seeds sown in my garden ... Militza, go on talking to the ambassador. Tell him all to-day means to us while I go and receive the Tsar . . .”

At dinner I was on the left of the Grand Duchess Anastasia and the rhapsody continued, interspersed with prophecies. “There’s going to be war . . . There’ll be nothing left of Austria You’re going to get back Alsace and LorraineOur armies will meet in Berlin . . . Germany will be destroyed” Then suddenly:

“I must restrain myself. The Emperor has his eye on me.”

Under the Tsar’s stern gaze the Montenegrin sybil suddenly lapsed into silence.

[music: Closing Theme]