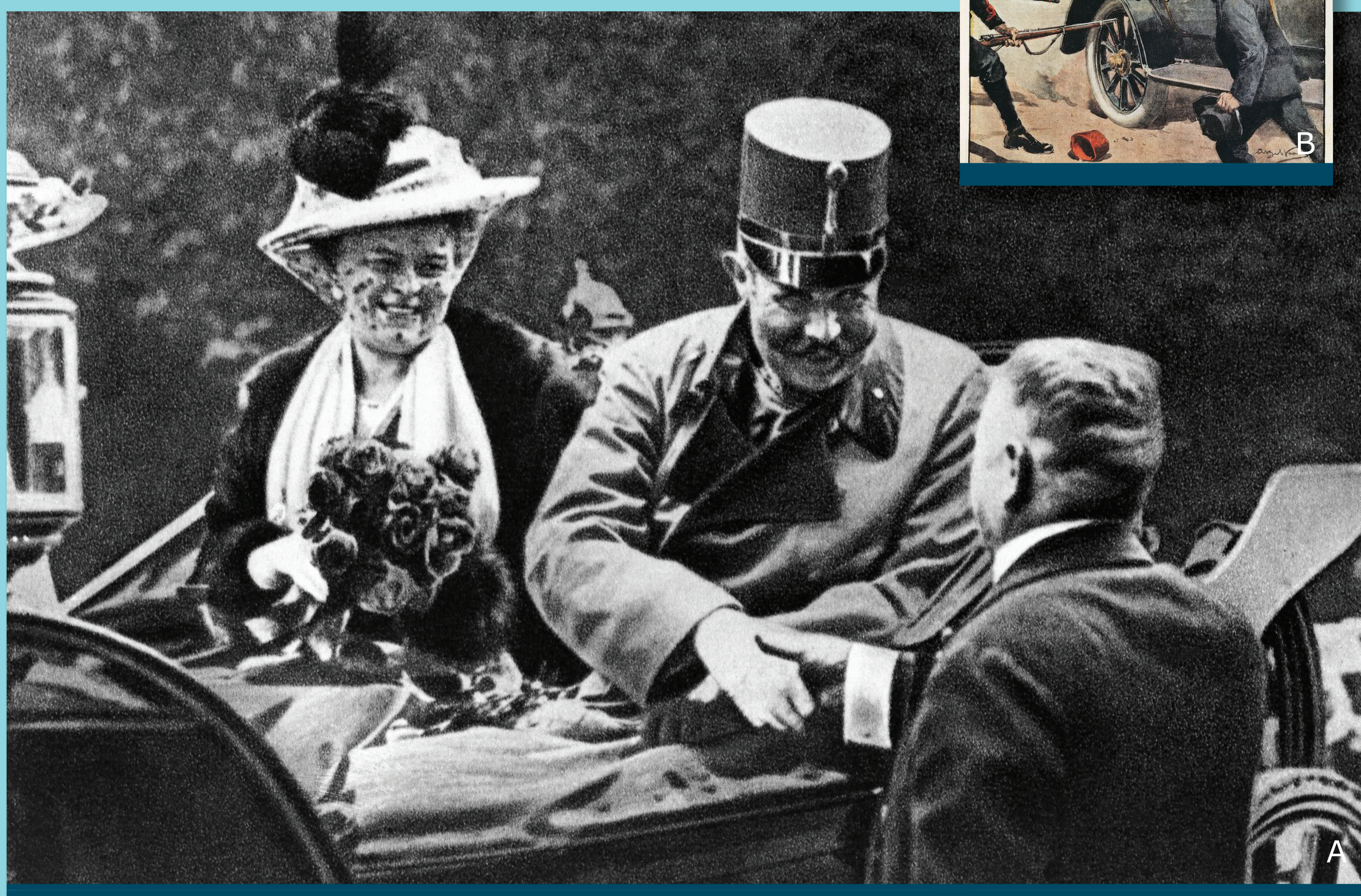# ASSASSINATION OF ARCHDUKE FRANZ FERDINAND

One event served as the catalyst to bring the world to war. This event occurred on June 28, 1914, when a Serbian nationalist named Gavrilo Princip killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in Sarajevo, Bosnia.

In order to maintain its credibility as a force in the Balkan region, Austria-Hungary needed to enforce its authority. However, with the threat of Russian intervention looming and its army unprepared for a war, Austria-Hungary required Germany's help. Emperor Franz Josef wrote a personal letter to Kaiser Wilhelm requesting his support, and on July 6 German Chancellor Theobald Bethmann Hollweg informed Austrian representatives that Vienna had Germany's full support.

On July 23, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador to Serbia delivered an ultimatum: The Serbian government must take steps against terrorist organizations within its borders, suppress anti-Austrian propaganda, and accept an independent investigation by the Austro-Hungarian government into Franz Ferdinand's assassination, or face military action.

After Serbia appealed to Russia for help, the czar's government began moving towards mobilization of its army. This is because Russia believed that Germany was using the crisis as an excuse to launch a preemptive war in the Balkans. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on July 28. On August 1, after hearing news of Russia's general mobilization, Germany declared war on Russia. The German army then launched its attack on Russia's ally, France, through Belgium, violating Belgian neutrality thus bringing Great Britain and her allies into the war as well.

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