

## WORLD NEWS

## New Fissures Over Century-Old War

Across Europe, Modern-Day Tensions Flare Over How to Commemorate Great War That Changed World

By NAFTALI BENDAVID  
AND FRANCES ROBINSON

BRUSSELS—European nations this year are beginning a four-year commemoration of the centennial of World War I, a conflict that ripped the continent apart and set the stage for the modern world.

But beneath official themes of friendship and unity—epitomized by a meeting of the French and German presidents at one of the war's bloodiest battlefields—old wounds and modern-day tensions are flaring up.

In the Balkans, Serbs chafe at what they see as attempts to blame them for the war. In Belgium, the national government is rebuking its Flanders region for allegedly seizing on the anniversary for separatist purposes. Some critics complain about Germany's relative lack of remembrances, while the British are battling over whether the country's war effort was noble or bumbling.

The sensitivities reflect how alive the war remains on the continent where it unfolded. "The war was absolutely terrible—and it touched every family," said Bernard Valero, France's ambassador to Belgium.

World War I was sparked by the June 28, 1914 assassination in Sarajevo of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by a Serbian nationalist protesting Austrian rule in what is now Bosnia-Herzegovina.



A World War I-era photograph shows British infantrymen running out of their trenches for battle in France.

Complications arose when trying to organize an international conference about those events. Some in the country—now divided among Serbs, Croats and Muslims—see the assassin, Gavrilo Princip, as an idealist or even a hero, while others see him as a terrorist.

Due to what one diplomat calls "the usual local complexity," and personal differences among academics, there are now two conferences, one organized by an international foundation, the other locally. Historians generally hold Germany responsible for World

War I, though they differ on how much other countries may share culpability. Some new books such as Christopher Clark's "The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914," have rejected the idea of a single smoking gun, pointing to failures in British policy and the pan-European arms race.

Balkan leaders reject any perceived attempt to shift some blame toward nationalist movements in their region. "Serbia will neither allow a revision of history, nor will it forget who are the main culprits in World War I," Serbian

Prime Minister Ivica Dacic warned in an interview with Agence France-Presse in January.

For all the emotion, the centennial is also expected to be a major tourism draw, especially along the Western Front. Belgium's Flanders region alone has earmarked almost \$30 million for dozens of World War I projects and events, including a Flanders Fields museum.

Belgium put up stiff resistance to the Germans in the early stages of the war, giving France time to mobilize its defenses. Flanders' centrality is

famously remembered in John McCrae's poem "In Flanders Fields."

Flemish leaders drafted a "Flanders Fields Declaration" commemorating the war and asked national leaders to sign it, but many balked since Flanders isn't a country. The Belgian government is now taking over the declaration and getting a better reception, though its content is still evolving.

Geert Bourgeois, the regional tourism and heritage minister, says Flanders can't help that it was a staging ground of the war, and that it is simply trying to be a good host for an event that will deeply affect millions of people.

"I don't deny that in this way we put Flanders on the map," Mr. Bourgeois said. "But if we didn't do anything, people would still come. Everything in Flanders fields still remembers that war—the landscape, the bunkers, the relics, the cemeteries."

Such comments upset Belgium's leaders, who see them as an attempt to bolster Flanders' long-running separatist campaign.

In Britain, the debate has centered around the country's war role and the competence, or lack thereof, of its leadership. U.K. Education Secretary Michael Gove, a Conservative, has lashed out at what he called "left-wing versions of the past designed to belittle Britain and its leaders."

## Protesters In Libya Storm Parliament

Associated Press

TRIPOLI, Libya—Armed protesters stormed Libya's parliament while it was in session and beat at least three lawmakers, trashed furniture and burned the speaker's chair, the deputy speaker said.

The armed protesters were calling for the dissolution of the interim parliament, a demand also made by powerful militias who have threatened to detain lawmakers.

Parliament is split between Islamist and non-Islamist blocs. Its mandate was to have expired in February, but the Islamists led a motion to extend it by a year. The parliament was in session Sunday to discuss the results of a vote for a panel to draft the country's new constitution and subsequent presidential and parliamentary elections.

Earlier Sunday, the head of Libya's election commission Nuri al-Abari and two members of the body resigned, state media reported. The commission head didn't say why he resigned, but it appeared to be out of concern over the volatile political situation and tension over the election. Mr. Abari's deputy Emad al-Sayeh, who also resigned, said the move would open the road for younger generations.

The February vote for the constitutional panel was marred by violence. But the vote is crucial for Libya's transition to democracy after a political stalemate and violence since the ouster of Moammar Gadhafi. Since then, powerful militias have controlled the streets and some politicians have used them for support.

Also Sunday, a French engineer contracted by a medical center in the eastern city of Benghazi was shot dead by gunmen as he drove in the city center, authorities said. Benghazi is a stronghold of militias with roots in the rebel brigades that fought against Gadhafi. Some of the groups are Islamic hard-liners with al Qaeda links.

## WORLD WATCH



SUNDAY MARCH Demonstrators wave flags in Caracas as thousands rallied in one of the largest antigovernment demonstrations in weeks.

◆ MYANMAR  
U.S. Official Ties Aid To Continued Overhaul

The U.S. government's chief aid officer warned that assistance to Myanmar depends on continued reform and that the country must stop restricting aid access to communities hit by sectarian violence. Rajiv Shah, head of the U.S. Agency for International Development, said the \$186 million in foreign aid in Myanmar "only works if

the country remains fully committed to implementing reforms." Tensions in the state of Rakhine have been a particular concern, he said, regarding aid for 140,000 Muslims displaced by violence.

Shibani Mahtani

◆ NORTH KOREA  
Australian Is Expelled

North Korea expelled an Australian held in the country since last month, one of three missionaries

known to have been detained in recent months in a country with only superficial religious freedoms.

John Short, 75 years old, arrived at Beijing airport Monday after North Korea said he had committed a "criminal act" of spreading Christian leaflets and had written an apology that appeared to have been scripted for him.

The North's state media released photos it said showed Mr. Short writing the apology. *Alastair Gale*

## FROM PAGE ONE

## Toothbrushes Hit the Web

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rector for P&G's Oral-B electric toothbrush business.

"I truly believe that 10 years from now," he says, "it's going to be hard to think you didn't have something like it."

Not everyone is champing at the bit. "It's one of those things you think are great at first but never actually buy," says Karina Clarke, a 34-year-old Paris real-estate agent. The idea, she says, seems like "a microwave you put in your mouth."

This race to wire the world's jaws is playing out in one of tech's buzziest arenas: the so-called Internet of things. Giants like Google Inc., which recently bought a networked-thermostat maker called Nest, are investing, as are smaller startups. New products include smart socks (to measure running form) and connected water bottles (to gather water-consumption data.)

"We're just at the beginning of seeing a bunch of really ridiculous products that tie pretty much anything to a smartphone," says Stacey Higginbotham, who writes about the Internet of things for tech website Gigaom.

The roots of the Internet toothbrushes stretch back at least two years. P&G was researching how to improve its electric-toothbrush line, which already offered external timer screens to encourage longer brushing. Mr. Cohen-Dumani says. The jump to smartphones was a logical step.

Around the same time, Kolibree's Mr. Serval was looking for ways to encourage his kids to brush more and hit on the idea of a connected brush, he says.

Mr. Serval is a serial investor in the world of connected devices. He started and sold a connected barcode-scanner company and recently bought into a French startup that plans to bring out an Internet-connected e-cigarette.

Kolibree is betting on sensors and analytics to improve the daily oral-hygiene ritual. Its sonic toothbrush, called the Kolibree, includes nine motion sensors and an algorithm designed by five mathematicians to identify which quadrant of the mouth a user is brushing, Mr. Serval says.

Kolibree is designing its brush so anyone, from dentists to game developers, can build applications that tap into its data. "We are kind of geeks going into the dental industry," Mr. Serval says. "We want to use data to reinvent



Procter &amp; Gamble's Oral-B smartphone-connected toothbrush.

the way people brush their teeth."

P&G is leaning on its history. The company's Oral-B brand offered its first electric toothbrush in 1963. The mobile app with P&G's toothbrush—it will be part of the Oral-B SmartSeries line—tells avid users how long to spend on each corner of the mouth.

Some features are industrial secrets. Mr. Serval gives few details about what sensors are inside his Kolibree brush, saying he wants to avoid tipping off competitors. He declines to show the final version of the smartphone app that operates his toothbrush, wanting to keep its design a secret.

"They are not stealing. I want to be very, very clear about that," Mr. Serval says of P&G. "But there are some ideas and even some worldviews in what they are doing that are very close to my pitch."

When Oral-B promoted its new brush as the first available in a news release ahead of the Mobile World Congress, Kolibree noted that it had announced its brush during January's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

P&G started development of its app and brush long before Kolibree's January unveiling, P&G's Mr. Cohen-Dumani says. "It's impossible to start or copy a product like that in a month," he says. "It is a coincidence maybe that we had the same idea."

P&G says it will be the first connected electric brush available to consumers. "Our competitors have some prototypes," says Mr. Cohen-Dumani, "and we are

excited to see how they come along."

P&G says its toothbrush will be available in limited quantities in Germany in May before a global rollout begins in June. It recommends a \$219 retail price tag in the U.S.

Kolibree says its brush will be available in limited quantities in June and widely by fall. It expects a price of \$100 to \$200.

Neither toothbrush will technically be the first on sale to track teeth on an app. Beam Technologies, a Louisville, Ky., startup, has been shipping a connected toothbrush since January 2013.

But its brush is manual, not electric like Kolibree's and P&G's. Beam Chief Executive Alex Frommeyer admits that leaves the first-toothbrush question open to interpretation.

"To some extent, it's how you play the marketing game and the semantics involved," he says. "But it definitely bothers me."

Competition among Web-enabled toothbrushes is set to continue. Beam plans a powered brush. Kolibree is working on a companion device with sensors to identify dental disease. P&G is exploring adding "detection and motion-sensing" to future versions.

But "until robots can brush for you," P&G's Mr. Cohen-Dumani says, "you still have to do that part yourself."

—Stacy Meichtry in Paris contributed to this article.

## Online»

See a video of the brushing apps in action at [WSJ.com/Ahed](http://WSJ.com/Ahed).

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