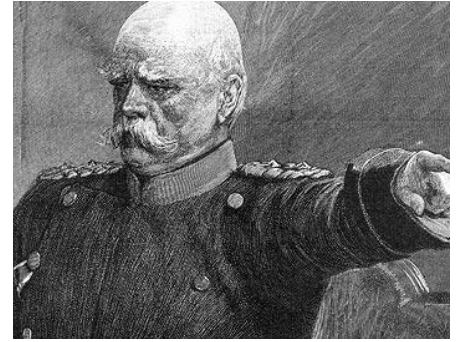


Notorious OVB

Directions: Examine the documents below about Otto Von Bismarck and answer the questions that follow.



Document A: Central Europe in 1870



1. Based on the map, what powerful empires surrounded all the German states?
2. How could it benefit the German states to unify into one nation called Germany?

Document B: Revolution Spreads to the German States

In his memoir, the German revolutionary Carl Schurz describes the excitement he witnessed on the streets of Berlin during the German Revolution of 1848. Schurz would later move to America to serve as a Union general in the American Civil War and later a US Senator.

Great news came from Vienna! There the students of the university were the first to assail the Emperor of Austria with the cry for liberty and citizens' rights . . . In the Prussian capital the masses surged upon the streets, and everybody looked for events of great import. On the 18th of March we too had our mass demonstration. A great multitude gathered for a solemn procession through the streets of the town [Berlin] . . . At the head of the procession Professor Kunkel bore the tricolor—black, red, and gold—which so long had been prohibited as the revolutionary flag. He spoke with wonderful eloquence, his voice ringing out in its most powerful tones as he depicted a resurrection of German unity and greatness and new liberties and rights of the German people, which now must be conceded by the princes or won by force by the people. And when at last he waved the black-red-gold banner, and predicted to a free German nation a magnificent future, enthusiasm without bounds broke forth. People clapped their hands; they shouted; they embraced one another; they shed tears.



3. How does the speaker in this document show nationalist sentiments? Cite examples.
4. How could these feelings be used or manipulated by political leaders for their own gain?

Document C: Otto von Bismarck, “Blood and Iron” Speech

As a chancellor, or prime minister, of Prussia, Bismarck was the real builder of a unified German nation. He knew what he wanted to do, and he explained how he was going to do it. The passage below is a speech before the Prussian parliament on September 20, 1862. In this speech to the Prussian parliament in 1862, Otto von Bismarck argues for a buildup of the Prussian military. Bismarck went on to build the Prussian army into a great war machine that would use “blood and iron” to forcibly unite the German states under Prussia.



Public opinion changes, the press is not [the same as] public opinion; one knows how the press is written; members of parliament have a higher duty, to lead opinion, to stand above it. We are too hot-blooded, we have a preference for putting on armor that is too big for our small body; and now we're actually supposed to utilize it. Germany is not looking to Prussia's liberalism, but to its power; Bavaria, Württemberg, Baden may indulge liberalism, and for that reason no one will assign them Prussia's role; Prussia has to coalesce (bring together) and concentrate its power for the opportune (perfect) moment, which has already been missed several times; Prussia's borders according to the Vienna Treaties [of 1814–1815] are not favorable for a healthy, vital state; it is not by speeches and majority resolutions that the great questions of the time are decided—that was the big mistake of 1848 and 1849—but by iron and blood.

5. What did Bismarck think of the liberal democratic way of allowing the people to decide important questions?

6. According to Bismarck, why is Prussia the state that is best suited to lead Germany?

7. What did he mean by his phrase “Iron and blood” in the last sentence?

Document D: “Speech to the German Parliament” February 6, 1888

“When I say that we must strive continually to be ready for all emergencies, I advance the proposition that, on account of our geographical position, we must make greater efforts than other powers would be obliged to make in view of the same ends. We lie in the middle of Europe. We have at least three fronts on which we can be attacked. France has only an eastern boundary; Russia only its western, exposed to assault...SO we are spurred forward on both sides to endeavors which perhaps we would not make otherwise.”

8. According to Bismarck, what key factor makes Germany a potential target for invasion? Why?

9. Do you think Bismarck might have been exaggerating the threat to Germany? Why?

Check for Understanding: What is Realpolitik, and how did Bismarck use Realpolitik to establish a German Empire?

