



AP European History

Memoirs of Unification

Name:

Section:

Score: ____/5

Directions: Read the following excerpts from Otto von Bismarck and Victor Emmanuel and Victor Emmanuel and answer the thought questions below.

Bismarck Memoirs (Excerpt)

I was received at Babelsberg on September 22 [1862], and the situation only became clear to me when his Majesty defined it in some such words as these: "I will not reign if I cannot do it in such a fashion as I can be answerable for to God, my conscience, and my subjects. But I cannot do that if I am to rule according to the will of the present majority in parliament, and I can no longer find any ministers prepared to conduct my government without subjecting themselves and me to the parliamentary majority. I have therefore resolved to lay down my crown, and have already sketched out the proclamation of my abdication.".... The King showed me the document in his own handwriting lying on the table, whether already signed or not I do not know. His Majesty concluded by repeating that he could not govern without suitable ministers.

I replied that his Majesty had been acquainted ever since May with my readiness to enter the ministry.... After a good deal of consideration and discussion, the King asked me whether I was prepared as minister to advocate the reorganization of the army, and when I assented he asked me further whether I would do so in opposition to the majority in parliament and its resolutions. When I asserted my willingness, he finally declared, "Then it is my duty, with your help, to attempt to continue the battle, and I shall not abdicate."...

I succeeded in convincing him that, so far as he was concerned, it was not a question of Liberal or Conservative of this or that shade, but rather of monarchical rule or parliamentary government, and that the latter must be avoided at all costs, if even by a period of dictatorship. I said: "In this situation, I shall, even if your Majesty command me to do things which I do not consider right, tell you my opinion quite openly; but if you finally persist in yours, I will rather perish with the King than forsake your Majesty in the contest with parliamentary government." This view was at that time strong and absolute in me, because I regarded the negations and phrases of the Opposition of that day as politically disastrous in face of the national task of Prussia, and because I cherished such strong feelings of devotion and affection for William I.... It required all the king's honest and noble fidelity for his first servant, to keep him from wavering in his confidence towards me.

In the beginning of October I went as far as Jüterbogk to meet the King, who had been at Baden-Baden for September 30, his wife's birthday....My object in taking this opportunity for an interview was to set his Majesty at rest about a speech made by me in the Budget Commission on September 30, which had aroused some excitement and which, though not taken down in shorthand, had still been reproduced with tolerable accuracy in the newspapers....

I had indicated plainly enough the direction in which I was going. Prussia--such was the point of my speech--as a glance at the map will show, could no longer wear unaided on its long narrow figure the panoply which Germany required for its security; that must be equally distributed over all German peoples. We should get no nearer the goal by speeches, associations, decisions of majorities; we should be unable to avoid a serious contest, a contest which could only be settled by blood and iron. In order to secure our success in this, the deputies must place the greatest possible weight of blood and iron in the hands of the King of Prussia, in order that according to his judgment he might throw it into one pale or the other. I had already given expression to the same idea in the House of Deputies in 1849.... [The crucial part of the speech read: "not by speeches and majority votes are the great questions of the day decided--that was the great mistake of 1848 and 1849--but by blood and iron."]

For my part, I was torn between the desire of winning over members to an energetic national policy, and the danger of inspiring the King, whose own disposition was cautious, and shrank from violent measures, with

mistrust in me and my intentions. My object in going to meet him at Jüterbogk was to counteract betimes the probable effect of press criticism....When I begged for permission to narrate the events which had occurred during his absence, he interrupted me with the words: "I can perfectly well see where all this will end. Over there, in front of the Opera House, under my windows, they will cut off your head, and mine a little while afterwards."...

I answered with the short remark, "Et après, Sire." "Après, indeed; we shall be dead," answered the King. "Yes," I continued, "then we shall be dead; but we must all die sooner or later, and can we perish more honorably? I, fighting for my King's cause, and your Majesty sealing with your own blood your rights as King by the grace of God....Your Majesty is bound to fight, you cannot capitulate; you must, even at the risk of bodily danger, go forth to meet any attempt at coercion." As I continued to speak in this sense, the King grew more and more animated, and began to assume the part of an officer fighting for kingdom and fatherland....He felt as though he had been touched in his military honor, and was in the position of an officer who has orders to hold a certain position to the death....This set him on a course of thought which was quite familiar to him; and in a few minutes he was restored to the confidence which he had lost at Baden, and even recovered his cheerfulness.

Otto von Bismarck, Bismarck, the Man and the Statesman; Being the Reflections and Reminiscences of Otto von Bismarck (London: Smith, Elder & co., 1898), 2 vols.

Otto von Bismarck (London: Smith, Elder & co., 1898), 2 vols.

King Victor Emmanuel: Address to Parliament, Rome, 1871

Senators and Deputies, gentlemen!

The work to which we consecrated our life is accomplished. After long trials of expiation Italy is restored to herself and to Rome. Here, where our people, after centuries of separation, find themselves for the first time solemnly reunited in the person of their representatives: here where we recognize the fatherland of our dreams, everything speaks to us of greatness; but at the same time it all reminds us of our duties. The joy that we experience must not let us forget them. . . .

We have proclaimed the separation of Church and State. Having recognized the absolute independence of the spiritual authority, we are convinced that Rome, the capital of Italy, will continue to be the peaceful and respected seat of the Pontificate....

Economic and financial affairs, moreover, claim our most careful attention. Now that Italy is established, it is necessary to make it prosperous by putting in order its finances; we shall succeed in this only by persevering in the virtues which have been the source of our national regeneration. Good finances will be the means of re-enforcing our military organization. Our most ardent desire is for peace, and nothing can make us believe that it can be troubled. But the organization of the army and the navy, the supply of arms, the works for the defense of the national territory, demand long and profound study....

Senators and deputies, a vast range of activity opens before you; the national unity which is today attained will have, I hope, the effect of rendering less bitter the struggles of parties, the rivalry of which will have henceforth no other end than the development of the productive forces of the nation.

I rejoice to see that our population already gives unequivocal proofs of its love of work. The economic awakening is closely associated with the political awakening. The banks multiply, as do the commercial institutions, the expositions of the products of art and industry, and the congresses of the learned. We ought, you and I, to favor this productive movement while giving to professional and scientific education more attention and efficiency, and opening to commerce new avenues of communication and new outlets.

The tunnel of Mont Cenis is completed; we are on the point of undertaking that of the St. Gotthard. The commercial route, which, crossing Italy, terminates at Brindisi and brings Europe near to India, will thus have three ways open to railway traffic across the Alps. The rapidity of the journeys, the facility of exchanges, will increase the amicable relations which already unite us to other nations, and will make more productive than ever the legitimate competition of labor and the national rivalry in advancing civilization.

A brilliant future opens before us. It remains for us to respond to the blessings of Providence by showing ourselves worthy of bearing among the nations the glorious names of Italy and Rome.

"King Victor Emmanuel: Address to Parliament, Rome, 1871." Internet History Sourcebooks. Fordham University, July 1998. Web. 06 Feb. 2014.

Thought Questions:

1. What do both documents reveal about the roles of the governments of unified Italy and Germany?
2. How are Bismarck and Emmanuel similar in their views of the formation/responsibility of the new governments? Different?
3. What seem to be the ultimate goals of Bismarck? Of Emmanuel? Support your claims using evidence from the readings.
4. Which method of nation building (Italy's or Germany's) do you think is more effective? Support your answer using the assertion, reasoning, evidence method.