

Question:

Evaluate integrated strength of
Prussia combined with Bismarck's political
skills to achieve German unification.

Introduction

The German empire
was built on "coal and
iron" that "blood and
iron".

The 19th century European history
witnessed a unification of Germany.
Germany was under the protection

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of Austria after congress of Vienna. But the advantageous territorial arrangement of Prussia through congress of Vienna and diplomatic strategic of Bismarck led to unification of Germany. Bismarck initiated internal reforms and embarked on skillful diplomacy of isolating enemy and waging war. This led to unification of Eastern and Western Germany with very less blood shed.

Inherited strength of Prussia:

Territorial arrangement
by congress of Vienna

Territory
Manpower
Leadership
Trade and Zollverein
Geography

Prussia acquired Rhine Province and
lost Poland

Prussia became more German with
new 2/3rd German territory.

Austria acquired more Italian states

↓
Prussia got strong control over German states, although these were under Austrian control.

↓
Reduction of German states from 300 to 39 made unification easy.

Formation of Zollverein

Prussia consisted of provinces, scattered around Germany. Each province had its own tariff laws.
To reduce internal custom

Zollverein system duties, Zollverein system

Unified economic system of German states. Formed import duties were zero. Large numbers of Eastern Germany states became part of Zollverein system to avoid high taxes.

Role of Bismarck in unification:

Bismarck was appointed as the Chancellor of Prussia. He believed to unify Germany through Blood, sword, iron. Based on this he introduced internal reforms.

Military reforms:

Bismarck believed that strong military was the pre-requisition for unification as Austria would not budge its guardianship without war. He reformed military, increase weapons, training, recruitment of troops.

Economic reforms:

Bismarck strengthened industry to provide economic resources and was matched to military. Transportation was improved for industries.

Diplomatic isolation:

Bismarck developed diplomatic isolation strategy for enemies. It was impossible for Russia to fight all enemies in combine, so, Bismarck first isolate enemy and then provoke him into war.

Prussian-Danish war and Bismarck strategy:

Bismarck, after developing strong army, declared war for part of war with Austria. It comes through problem with Denmark as it tried to annex ~~German~~ states Schleswig and Holstein. Prussia along with Austria declared war and after the defeat of Denmark they divided both states.

Bismarck deliberately gave Holstein to Austria to use

it forefront of war in future.

Austro-Prussian War:

Bismarck deliberately accused Austria of oppressing Germans in Holstein, invaded and annexed that state. Austria was highly influenced they declared war on Prussia and defeated owing strong military of Prussia.

Bismarck strategically annexed North and South ~~Germany~~:

After compelling Austria, Bismarck unified whole Germany and became new chancellor. Communication and foreign policy of German states were in the hands of Prussia.

After French, he annexed Alsace-Lorraine into Germany.

Conclusion

Bismarck is remembered as great hero in German history.

He developed skillful political acumen and strategies to unify whole

Germany by defeating Austria and later on French empire.

Along with his strategies the territorial arrangement granted to Russia after Congress of Vienna also played effective role in the unification process of Germany.

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