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**Otto Von Bismarck: Analyzing a Primary Source- “BLOOD AND IRON”**

*The following selection is adapted from Bismarck’s memoirs published in 1898. In this selection, Bismarck recalls his early association with William I. Read this selection and answer the questions that follow.*

I was received by King William on September 22, 1862. The situation became clear to me when His Majesty said “I will not continue as king if I am to rule according to the will of the majority of parliament, and I can longer find any cabinet ministers who are prepared to conduct my government without subjecting themselves and me to the will of parliament. I have therefore decided to lay down my crown.”

After a good deal of discussion, the king asked me whether I was prepared as a cabinet minister to advocate the reorganization of the army, and when I agreed he asked me whether I would pursue this policy if the parliament were opposed. When I asserted my willingness, he 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 it was not a question of Liberal or Conservative, but rather of monarchical rule or parliamentary government, and that this last alternative should be avoided at all costs, if even by a period of dictatorship. I told him, “I will rather die with the king than forsake Your Majesty in the contest with parliamentary government.”

Late in September, after being named prime minister, I gave a speech that created some excitement. I had said that we will not get nearer the goal of German unification by speeches, associations, and decisions of the majorities. Only BLOOD AND IRON, I stated would settle the issue. I insisted that parliament must place the greatest possible weight of blood and iron in the hands of the king of Prussia.

The king feared the consequences of this speech, predicting that my policies would result in our execution. I responded by saying to him that “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.”

**Vocabulary – Define each of the following terms.**

Abdicate –

Parliament –

Dictatorship –

Opposed –

Perish –

1. Why did King William threaten to abdicate his thrown?

2. Why does he ultimately decide to stay?

3. What type of person does Bismarck present himself to be?

4. How does the source of this document influence its credibility?

5. What are the problems associated with parliamentary government?

6. What is Bismarck’s goal? How does he intend to achieve that goal?