Otto van Bismarck

"The great questions of the day will not be decided by speeches resolutions, but by iron and blood."

Events of the 1850's

- Following Olmutz, Austria were still dominant.
  - 1853 signed a traded treaty with the Zollverein
- Two events were to weaken Austria's power
  - Crimean War 1854-1856
    - 1849 - Russia had sent troops to assist Austria in suppressing Hungarian revolutions (Lajos Kossuth)
    - 1850 - Russia had backed Austria at Olmutz
    - Britain, France, Piedmont and Ottoman Empire Vs. Russia
    - War was about stopping Russian expansion towards the Mediterranean sea at Turkish expenses.
    - Austria demanded a Russian surrender in 1856 or she would join the allies.
- LEFT AUSTRIA ISOLATED
  - Prussia stayed neutral.
- Italy 1859
  - Napoleon III "do something for Italy." Magenta and Solferino (Austria were defeated).
  - Demonstrates Austrian isolationism and weakness.
  - Napoleon III kept Nice and Savoy.
- FEAR OF FRENCH EXPANSION
  - German states look to Prussia.

The Growth of Prussian Power

- Friedrich Wilhelm IV had a stroke in 1858 and died in 1861. His younger brother Wilhelm became regent 1858-61. Became Wilhelm I from 1861 until 1889.
- Wilhelm was in the army and he felt humiliated by the Austrians at Olmutz and was keen to boost the Prussian army.
- Von Moltke; chief of staff in 1857
- Von Roon; Minister for war in 1860
  - Both men had a desire to improve the Prussian army. They started an army college. Taught the theory of war based on: Von Clausewitz "On war"
  - Defeating the enemies state, not their army
  - They wanted to raise the Prussian army from 500,000 soldiers to 750,000 between 1860-1865. They also wanted modern equipment such as: breach loading rifles.
  - They wanted the Prussian army to wear field grey uniforms and use the trains for transportation.
- 1866 - Russia took 45 days to mobilise and Prussia only took 5.
- The cost was very expensive and the budget was accepted by the Prussian "Diet" in 1861, but rejected in 1862. This led to the Prussian Crisis; which led to the rise of Bismarck.

Prussian Economy and Industry

- Had huge amounts of both iron and coal.