UNIT 7   NEW POLITICAL SYSTEMS

Structure

7.0   OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit you will learn about the :

* 19th century changes in European political system,
* establishment of populist authoritarianism by Napoleon III, and
* Bismarckian way of establishing conservative regime through manipulations of parliamentary system.

7.1   INTRODUCTION

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Europe came to display a greater diversity in its political systems than in the early part of the century. Early in the century most parts of Europe, with the solitary exception of Britain, which was a constitutional monarchy slowly undergoing a democratic transformation, were governed by rulers who claimed absolute powers despite a perceptible inclination in some of these domains towards constitutional government. During the second half of the century constitutional government in the sense of a potentially democratic regime or at least a plebiscitory authoritarianism became the dominant forms. To a large measure this was a consequence of the concessions that the European rulers had to offer to the spirit of liberalism strengthened in mid-century by the emergence of mass politics. Around the middle of the nineteenth century the liberal challenge to monarchical absolutism came to fruition, after a series of reverses, particularly during the period of restoration under the Metternich system. In the aftermath of the revolution of 1848, European rulers could no longer ignore the invasion of the sacred realm of their statecraft by the profanities of mass politics. Politics ceased to be an exclusive domain of the king, his courtiers and his rich and influential subjects; it became very much a part of the life cycle of ordinary men and women whose experience of participation in different kinds of economic and social struggles, contributed to revolutionary unrest.

This Unit explains the transformation in the political system from monarchical government towards democratisation. You will be introduced to the course of political changes in France and Germany during the mid 19th century. This Unit shows that how the authoritarian regime legitimised its rule with the support of the people.

7.2   DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMATION OF AUTHORITY

The revolutionary upheavals in the middle of the century made democratisation a very important issue on the liberal agenda . It became a part of the challenge to absolutism and an active component in the liberal movement, despite the reservations of some leading liberals of the nineteenth century about the prospective political dominance of the large majority of unenlightened men. Rule by the 'ignorant rabble' was a constant fear in their minds. In fact European liberalism was much less unanimous about democracy than has usually been assumed. It also had distinctive regional features. In some places by the second half of the century liberalism spawned democratic ideologies; in others it was still a movement for constitutional government.

To some extent such varied regional dimensions of European liberalism were consequences of an accommodation between liberalism and the national monarchies The diversity of regimes that Europe came to experience in the latter half of the nineteenth century was linked with the varied success of European rulers in dealing with mass movements and democratisation. At one end of the spectrum stood Britain where in the course of the nineteenth century the process of democratisation within the framework of a constitutional monarchy made remarkable progress. The other extreme was autocracy in Russia which, despite a few important concessions here and there managed to retain its steel frame until the revolutions of 1905 made dents in its foundations.

In Russia however, the liberal movement was much weaker than in France or in Germany; but even in the latter the record of the liberal movement was not a story of unmixed success. The struggle against absolutism went through ups and downs. Even though the revolution of 1789 in France had brought about a republican regime which claimed its legitimacy from a democratic ideology, it was soon replaced by a kind of plebiscitory kingship with absolutist pretensions under the garb of Bonapartism. The story was repeated in the middle of the century when the post - 1848 republican regime was eclipsed by a resurgence of Bonapartism under Louis Napoleon. Bonapartism was a half way house between popular democracy and monarchical absolutism; absolutism in such situations as in the France of Louis Napoleon was reinforced by popular electoral support which provided an additional prop of legitimacy for what was essentially a dictatorial regime. While the empire of Louis Napoleon which represented this sort of a regime was finally destroyed by military failures in the war of German unification in 1871, in the aftermath of this war a roughly similar regime was established by Louis Napoleon's adversary Bismarck in the newly created German nation-state. The latter combined the basic features of Prussian absolutism with innovations like universal suffrage for the constitution of the national parliament. The hybrid structure managed to survive till the military failures of the First World War and the consequent republican revolution in Germany in 1918. Bismarck showed a remarkable ingenuity in manipulating democratic institutions and principles for galvanising popular support for the monarchical order in the newly established German empire after 1871. In a way this political strategy, described as Bismarckism, was the German variant of Bonapartism which throughout the imperial era remained a principal watchword of the German ruling classes.

Germany's rulers made continuous efforts to rally the "patriotic German people" behind the monarchy. An extreme form of aggressive nationalism derived largely from a racist ideology became the most important ingredient in this kind of manipulative mobilisation by Germany's ruling classes. In the process of mobilising popular support for the monarchy, the rulers in Germany unleashed forces of popular conservatism that contained Fascist tendencies nurtured by anti-Semitism and jingoism .

Democratisation, it seems, had varied and complex ramifications. It could broaden the basis of political rights and freedoms for ordinary citizens of the states: it might as well be a weapon in the hands of autocratic rulers. Different regions in Europe responded to the stimuli in different ways. Such differences were of course linked with social change and modernisation; the difference between Britain and Germany, for instance, has often been ascribed to Germany's belated industrialisation and the resultant deficiency in bourgeois development which made possible the survival of pre-industrial feudal power devoted to the preservation of the old order in the absence of an assertive bourgeoisie claiming equality in political status. Some historians are of the opinion that even in the later nineteenth century when the material and political world in the German empire was changing fast under the impact of industrialisation and large scale electoral mobilisation unleashed by universal male suffrage, the pre-industrial landowning elite maintained their social and political dominance by successfully manipulating the electoral processes. At a social level the successful pursuit of this strategy depended on the periodic renewal of their traditional ties with the peasantry and effective co-option of the upwardly mobile middle classes within aristocratic society Such strategies were central to what is known as Bismarckism and the absence of this grand design in the Russian empire contributed greatly to the latter's relative weaknesses. Even though the overall limitations of the Russian bourgeoisie made for the infirmities in Russian liberalism which may be the reason why the Russian imperial state felt no urgency to work out a strategy of rallying the middle classes, a Russian variant of Bismarckism, nonetheless was likely to strengthen the power of the autocracy Certainly some Russian officials (such as P.A. Stolypin) experimented with this idea, but these were sporadic attempts which did not produce any tangible results.

Different kinds of political inheritances were, however as important in determining these divergences as broader social developments. Britain - the first modern democratic country- began the "long nineteenth century" with an ambiguous democratic inheritance which, of course, goes back to the English revolution of the seventeenth century. During the English Civil War, royal absolutism was destroyed and considerable powers were transferred to the elected House of Commons Although the suffrage remained highly restricted by property and rate-payment qualifications throughout the eighteenth century; in the course of the nineteenth century suffrage was gradually expanded to make Britain the earliest modern democracy. It all began with the movement for parliamentary reform from the 1820s. There was a new determination for reform among many sections of the middle class, and working class support for this movement gave it added strength. The ground swell from below was so strong that the resistance to reform in men of the British political establishment began to weaken . It now seemed that the British ruling class was trying to take the wind out of the sails of the social movement. In the reform proposals that were put forward by Earl Grey's ministry, after it took power in 1830, the radical demands for secret ballot and parliaments of shorter duration were ignored, but the franchise was substantially broadened. Yet the uncertainties in the minds of the British ruling class could not be easily resolved. There was some resistance especially from parliamentarians representing rural constituencies, and the first version of a parliamentary reform bill was defeated. Against this backdrop the elections of 1831, which followed, became a virtual plebiscite (decision made by a direct vote) on reform. The elections returned a pro-reform House of Commons, at which juncture the House of Lords rejected a revised version of the reform bill, resulting in popular protests including riots and demonstrations, which convinced the policy makers that there was danger in a reactionary policy. Many of them felt, following the great utilitarian intellectual, Jeremy Bentham, that reform was essential to avoid a revolution of the kind that had overtaken France half a century earlier. Consequently in the summer of 1832 the electoral system in Britain was radically changed without a revolution with the enfranchisement of small property owners. Electoral corruption, which had been a long standing issue since the early eighteenth century and had provoked much opposition to electoral manipulations by the royal court through corrupting use of patronage, however, could not so easily be eliminated until the radical demand for a secret ballot was implemented later.

Despite these changes, parliament continued to be dominated by the gentry and the aristocracy. The failure of middle class representation to increase was due to the tight control exercised by the aristocracy over different levers of power within the government at least until the 1870s. Increased county representation strengthened the position of the gentry. The preservation of a three hundred pound property qualification ruled out participation of a fairly large number of urban voters. Besides, political life in the cities was still very loosely organised with local businessmen very often taking a much greater interest in municipal elections than in parliamentary politics. The real losers in this incomplete act of reform were the working classes. Their pressure had made reform possible but their rights remained unrecognised.

The reform debate was reopened again in 1860 when a further extension of franchise was suggested by the radically inclined middle class associations such as the Reform League which had the support of the working class elements. Increasingly working class pressure for reform became acute. After a protracted controversy when the liberals and the aristocrats often expressed fears about lower class tyranny, the Reform act of 1867 extended the franchise. It is indisputable that a significant move towards democracy was taken. The number of people enfranchised in 1867 was very large. The electorate almost doubled within three years and went on increasing steadily, thanks to the initiatives of local party functionaries. One example will suffice. The Birmingham electorate of 15,000 in 1866 had risen to 43,000 in 1868 and to 62,000 by 1877. What was begun in 1867 was subsequently completed by later legislation, by which something approaching a liberal democracy was established.

It was also around this time that France made her final leap into democracy after the collapse of the Second Empire of Napoleon III (established in 1852 after dissolving the second republic). The course of French democratisation in the nineteenth century was one of advances and reversals. Earlier during the 1840s when England experienced a slow but irreversible transformation towards a democratic polity, French politics was much more turbulent. The Orleanist monarchy which claimed not unjustifiably a modicum of popular support was subsequently overthrown in 1848. The revolution led to the establishment of the Second Republic which was however riven with internal conflicts from the beginning.

The result was the election in December 1848 of the nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte as the President of the Republic. Despite constant deprecation by the aristocrats and the monarchists, the Bonapartist pretender enjoyed substantial popular support without any effective organisational network. Since his opponents among the monarchists failed to reach an agreement about a presidential candidate, it eventually became easy for Louis Napoleon to defeat Cavaignac, the candidate of the republican party. As the different political parties fought bitterly with each other, the Bonaparte posed as a leader who was above existing party struggles. The Bonapartist legend was a source of great strength to him as well, particularly among the peasants. It was the rural vote that provided the bed rock of Louis Napoleon's popular support during this election and also afterwards. It was primarily with rural support that Napoleon III succeded in establishing his plebiscitory dictatorship in France; mass politics gave him the required popular legitimacy.

Check Your Progress 1

1) What did make Britain the earliest modern democracy ? Answer in 100 words.

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2) Identify the factors responsible for different responses to democratisation in Europe. Answer in five sentences.

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7.3 BONAPARTISM

Historians are generally divided over their assessment of the Bonapartist regime of Louis Napoleon. During the 1930's when Europe was plagued by Fascism he was identified as its precursor. Later historians' interest shifted to the contribution of this regime to French industrialisation particularly in the creation of a modern transport infrastructure. There is general agreement that the establishment of the conditions for rapid economic growth was a great advantage for the French bourgeoisie, even though their political aspirations might have been thwarted by the dictatorial regime. The considerable personal power that Napoleon III as the dictator came to enjoy was certainly an important feature of the compromise with the bourgeoisie; but at a fundamental level it was a consequence of continuous efforts to reinforce his authority by a direct appeal to the people. Electoral devices such as plebiscite remained a very important element in his political manipulations. On one occasion he spelt out his objectives by underlining the necessity of satisfying 'the interests of the masses and of securing 'the loyalty of the upper classes' in order to eliminate the party divisions created by the French Revolution which he held as responsible for political instability. He saw himself as the incarnation of national unity at a time when the nation was torn asunder by party divisions.

In this regard there are striking similarities between the conditions that had led to the establishment of the Second Empire and those preceding the rise of the Fascist regimes about a century later. Like the latter, the Second Empire can be seen as a response to general political crisis and wide spread fear of instability Its aim to achieve stability through the establishment of an authoritarian regime with popular ratification also has close parallels with what came to happen in Europe in the early twentieth century. The

authority of the emperor was legitimised by democratic suffrage. Doubtless Napoleon III was committed to safeguard public order; his rule, however was distinguished by an apparent commitment to popular sovereignty. Periodic plebiscites were intended as a method of obtaining popular ratification of the empire's policies, at the same time reaffirming the link between the emperor and the people. This strategy - which is usually regarded as the most important element in Bonapartism - enabled Napoleon III to reduce systematically the powers of the representative assemblies, tactfully combining the appeal to popular sovereignty with strong authoritarian centralised government.

Louis Napoleon's intentions were clear from the time of the Presidential elections of December 1848. Against the backdrop of intense factional conflicts among the political elites of both monarchist and republican varieties, Louis Napoleon, as if to re-enact the Bonapartist regime of the 1790s, projected himself as a leader above existing party conflicts. After his election he emphasised the necessity to re-establish political and social order. At one level, attempts were made to strengthen once again the social power of the Catholic church; at another repressive measures were directed against left-wing activists. Subsequently about one third of the electorate was disqualified by new electoral laws to eliminate the main sources of political support to the left-wing parties in the industrial and urban areas. Most of these measures were results of initiatives by the monarchist majority in the French parliament to ensure their electoral victory in the ensuing parliamentary elections. They were, however unable to weed out radical opposition. On the contrary repression created a militant underground heightening the anxiety of the French officials about secret plots to seize power through a revolution.

It was in this larger context of a fear of radical electoral victory that the propertied classes looked to the President for the creation of a permanent framework of order and stability and since the constitution ruled out a second term for the President, Louis Napoleon was encouraged by existing conditions to attempt a coup d' etat in December 1851 from a position of strength. The regime came to acquire an anti-republican character in view of general conservative sympathy for the President's seizure of power, even though there was some amount of resentment about the new regime among the monarchists as well. Apart from some short lived demonstrations there was not much resistance. Sporadic left-wing insurrections provided justification for wide spread repression and arrests of republican leaders. The press was subjected to rigorous control. And finally on 20 December 1851 a plebiscite was held on the question of extending the authority of the President, in which coercive measures were employed to ensure a majority. This procedure became an indelible feature of the new regime, whenever crucial political decisions required a degree of popular mobilisation in their support.

The establishment of the Second Empire a year later was followed by some important changes in the economy and innovations in the system of government. The immediate objective was to create a strong and stable government which was capable of promoting economic growth while popular sovereignty - a legacy of the republic - would itself survive through the periodic plebiscite. Parliamentary institutions were restructured with the creation of a nominated Senate in which senators for life were appointed from influential classes. There was in addition a legislature of 260 members elected by manhood suffrage. It had the right to deliberate on legislative and taxation proposals without, however, the power to initiate legislation, which remained the Emperor's prerogative. During the Second Empire there was of course a fair degree of improvement of living standards and economic modernisation. Even if these achievements were coincidental, they none the less inculcated a greater sense of loyalty to the regime.

The political system of the authoritarian empire centred around a centralised hierarchical administration, which, though, was only apparently monolithic. Officials were constantly subjected to pressures of interest groups. Apart from the usual manipulations during plebiscites and elections, another distinctive feature was the so called system of 'official candidature', by which the government usually declared its support for some candidates and announced its hostility to others to ensure election of representatives who would be more trustworthy and pliable. From 1860 however things began to change in the direction of what has been described as the liberal empire. Although the restrictions on public meetings and newspapers were removed only at the end of the decade, in a significant move in November 1860 the government conceded to the legislature the right of independent discussions. Greater parliamentary control over the budget was also permitted. Apart from such extension of parliamentary influence, the regime became more

tolerant about the press and public meetings. Such liberalisation, to a large measure might have reflected imperial confidence in the stability of the regime; yet the survival of the liberal opposition and its growing influence during the 1860's certainly contributed to the process of liberalisation. The results of the elections of May 1863 were clear pointers to the resilience of the liberal opposition rendering the government's election management ineffective to the degree that even the so-called official candidates regarded administrative support as counterproductive. The elections of 1869 revealed that the empire had managed to retain the bulk of its rural support but was progressively losing its control in the urban areas with the result that a clear majority in the legislature was no longer possible. Shortly after the election the demand for responsible government was raised. Emphasis from now on came to be placed on a working relationship with parliament. With this objective the system of official candidature was abandoned. All these measures received plebiscitory approval in May 1870 which was looked upon as an overwhelming success of the regime giving 'a new baptism to the Napoleonic Dynasty'.

In this situation, the collapse of the 'democratic ceaserism' of Napoleon III immediately after the military defeat in the battle of Sedan (between Prussia and France in 1870) in the same year has baffled historians. This is none the less indicative of a fundamental malaise in this kind of populist authoritarianism. The legitimacy of such regimes depended largely on continuous success in foreign policy which was why the Second Empire failed to survive, despite liberalisation when military defeat and a feeling of national ignominy destroyed its legitimacy.

In the Second Empire, as in other Bonapartist regimes, repression was finely blended with a deft mobilisation of popular support. The plebiscitary element in the Bonapartist state however made it somewhat distinct from the Fascist dictatorships of the twentieth century, even though in both systems there was an underlying motive to transcend the limitations of a representational polity in which class and sectional rivalries and competitions apparently were sources of major weaknesses for the state. The debate on the character of the Second Empire touches on the argument inspired largely by the marxist theory that in certain situations the state, contrary to what Marx had visualised in the Communist Manifesto, did not represent directly the dominant classes. Yet it was in their interest that the repressive machinery of the state functioned. Louis Napoleon's seizure of power caused problems for Marx. For it represented an apparent abdication of power by different sections of the bourgeois which certainly constituted the dominant class, in favour of the Bonapartist dictatorship. In this manner the state seemed to have achieved a degree of autonomy, even though by ensuring stability and order it protected the interests of the ruling classes whose social interest in the guaranteed protection of property was never compromised under this authoritarian state. The solution to this problem was the argument that elites who had a share in social and political power in a moment of political crisis accepted the authoritarian state as an unavoidable contingency.

Check Your Progress 2

1) How would you explain the rise of Napolean III ? Answer in 100 words.

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2) What led to the failure of the Second Empire ? Answer in five sentences.

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7.4 BISMARCKISM

In certain situations as in Germany in the later half of the 19th century the acceptance of authoritarian structures of power happened to be more habitual than is implied in the perception of such regimes as a matter of contingency during abnormal circumstances. The experience of the German empire after its foundation in 1871 as a result of Prussian victory against the Second French Empire tells the story of how an authoritarian government legitimised by popular support had to take recourse to imperial expansion as a measure aiming at domestic political stability. The root of this problem, as far as Germany is concerned goes, back to the early 1860's, almost a decade before the German nation state in the guise of the empire was founded through the successful pursuit of Prussian militarism and a hegemonic foreign policy in Central Europe.

The man who successfully outlined the basic framework of this policy was Otto von Bismarck who became the Minister-President of Prussia in 1863 and subsequently held the position of Imperial Chancellor after the unified German state came into being in 1871. In fact in 1863 Bismarck was summoned from his estate in East Prussia by a besieged Prussian monarchy to solve the political and constitutional crisis caused by the rift between the liberal majority in the Prussian parliament (Landtag) and the government over the extremely contentious issue of army expansion. While the liberals wanted to exercise parliamentary control over the way the army was to be managed, the war ministry under von Roon sought to create barriers against 'illegitimate' parliamentary intervention in the government's prerogatives. The confrontation first took shape in 1860 when a new law was laid before the Landtag for financial approval of the war ministry's plans of army expansion. The liberal majority saw this as a step towards the further militarisation of society. They feared that the expansion of the regular army at the expense of the citizens' militia would become a weapon of repression in the hands of Prussians despotism. In this context when the Prussian government failed to ensure the election of government supporters, the Kaiser (King of Prussia) for a moment contemplated abdication in favour of his son who had liberal leanings and was more suited to lead a constitutional monarchy. The choice was between a constitutional monarchy and a despotism based on plebiscitory approval. The conservative landholders who provided the main stay of the monarchy's support ultimately opted for the latter by successfuly projecting Bismarck as the charismatic leader of the German nation. After his appointment as Prussia's Prime minister he ruled without parliamentary approval of the budget, muzzled the oppositions and imposed an unabashedly authoritarian regime to salvage the monarchy out of this crisis. The compensation came by way of success in foreign policy which cleared the way for German unification. To the degree that Prussian victory in the battle of Sadowa (between Prusia and Austria in 1866) fulfilled the liberal dream of national integration under Bismarck's leadership, the Prussian liberals were even agreeable to giving retroactive sanction to Bismarck's budgetless regime of the early 1860's by condoning the excesses of the great leader who was increasingly looked upon as a white revolutionary in liberal circles.

The compromise that was finally reached between Bismarck and his liberal critics determined the character of the German Empire. The constitution of 1871 created a national parliament (Reichstag) to be elected on the basis of universal manhood suffrage, but this democratically elected parliament was deprived of any effective control over government. Although its assent was required for most crucial legislation, the Reichstag could not initiate legislation, nor were the Emperor's ministers responsible to it. The governmental system was basically an extension of the Prussian system in which the privileges and power of the military aristocracy remained insulated from popular intervention. This was how the power of the pre-industrial landed elite could be maintained in an age when the social basis of their political dominance was systematically undermined by industrialisation and the consequent rise of the middle classes and the bourgeoisie as a potential challenger to their power. The survival strategy of the military aristocracy based as it was on the Bismarckian formula of 1866 involved a certain accommodation with the upper echelons of the middle class society who generally had moderate positions on constitutional government, were more tolerant about the monarchy and existence of the military aristocracy as the principal repository of power. The power of the pre-industrial landed aristocracy which continued to control appointments in the civil bureaucracy and the army could also be maintained through a strategy of turning the conservative landholders into popular political figures in the rural localities where they

were expected to create solid political combinations of agrarian classes by leading the peasantry in their economic struggle in order that the electoral dominance of the urban liberals could be undermined to create a more pliable parliament for the conservative establishment. Bismarck actively sponsored such political manoeuvrings from the middle of the 1870s so that during the elections of 1878 and onwards the liberal dominance in the Reichstag was eroded with the rise of a rejuvenated conservative party deriving its strength from the agrarian combination.

The success of this Bismarckian strategy of rallying parliamentary support for the conservative regime through electoral mainipulations ultimately depended on his skill 'for running internal politics on the steam power of foreign affairs'. The prophecy that he would 'overcome domestic difficulties by a bold foreign policy' was soon fulfilled. As the constitutional crisis of the 1860s had been resolved through a successful foreign policy, imperial expansion began to figure on the agenda of the Bismarckian state from around the same time when he was busy in promoting an industrial - agrarian combination against the liberal opposition. Certainly different interest groups connected with German industry accounted for the motives behind imperialism. But they represented only one element. There was, in the opinion of German historians like Hans-Ulrich Wehler or Volker Berghahn an equally important desire to legitimise the status quo and the political power structure by a successful expansionist programme. This strategy at least could divert attention from movements for fundamental political reform unleashed by the liberal opposition and the socialist workers' movement, where the latter was becoming a potent threat from the 1880s. Seen from this angle this was a defensive strategy to protect the traditional structures of power from the dangers posed by the middle classes and the workers. National prestige was one consideration which could turn critics into supporters. This strategy remained unchanged even after Bismarck's rule came to an end in 1890. The 'Welt politic' of Kaiser William II was a continuation of the same instrument of expansionism for the sake of stabilising and legitimising political domination of Germany's military aristocracy.

The inevitable consequence of this strategy was a certain kind of ultra nationalist popular mobilisation along racist lines anticipating in a way the basic features of Fascist mobilisation of the early twentieth century. The phenomenon of the charismatic leader which was an important feature of Bonapartism continued to inform Fascist mobilisation at a later date. In Nazi Germany, the Fuehrer (title used by Hitler) demanded complete obedience and surrender to the leader. In addition much of the racist ideologies in the Nazi movement were derived from the racial theories that the German ruling classes had earlier deployed (in the late 19th century) to bolster the extremist nationalist sentiments. Central to this racist and ultra-nationalist mentality was Social Darwinism which transferred to the human sphere the biological theories of natural selection and an equally volatile notion of, 'survival of the fittest'. The whole argument implied that competition between different nations for achieving dominance in the world is endemic in which only the strongest will survive. The theory fitted in well with the imperial ambitions of the German state. More importantly, these ideas were relayed downwards to the popular level by associations like the Navy League, Colonial League and Pan German league. While the former pleaded for building a strong navy to establish a large colonial empire by achieving parity with the dominant colonial powers the Pan German league popularized the notion of Germanisation of Europe, particularly the continent's eastern reaches inhabited by ' inferior Slavonic people'. Civilising them was looked upon as the great mission of the Teutonic (Anglo-Saxon, Dutch, German and Scandinavian) race. Pamphlet writers demanded self-sacrifice by the Germans in the service of this noble mission.

Pseudo-scientific theories about race and ethnicity counterposed the strength of character of the Teutonic race against the feeble mindedness and the depravities of the inferior people. Among the latter figured the Jews whose dominant position in the business world evoked animosities from the German artisans and petty traders. Not unnaturally the latter were among the most strident votaries of anti-Semitism. The anti-Semitic ideology , which was substantially reinforced by the activities of the Pan German league since the 1890's reached a bloody climax in Nazi Germany. The rise of Nazism which displayed undoubtedly the features of 19th century Bonpartism has been linked by historians to the existence of certain antidemocratic structures in the German polity. There is some sense of course in the argument that there are significant elements of continuity between the Bismarckian Reich (German state) and the Third Reich. Yet the intensity of repression the Nazis carried out made the authoritarianism of the earlier variety somewhat distinct from what would happen in the early 20th century.

Check Your Progress 3

1) How did Bismarck control the liberal critics ? Answer in 100 words

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2) Why did the German rulers adopt the policy of expansionism ? Answer in five sentences.

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7.5 LET US SUM UP

In this Unit you have been introduced to the transformation in European political system. Revolutionary movements and growing influence of liberalism and nationalism had significant role in democratizing the European governments. Nature of democratization varied from country to country. Britain with its parliamentary form of government represented one model, while in France and Germany dictatorship legitimised by popular support was established.

7.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

1) English revolution, abolition of royal absolutism, expansion of suffrage, industrial revolution, movements for reforms, etc. See Sec.7.2

2) Different political regimes, differences in the process of social change and modernisation, etc. See Sec.7.2

Check Your Progress 2

1) Political crisis, factional politics, general fear of instability, emergence of Napolean as a symbol of stability, etc. See Sec.7.3.

2) Centralised hierarchical administration, demand for responsible government, etc. See Sec.7.3

Check Your Progress 3

1) Bismarck symbolised national integration, his success in foreign policy, political manoeuvrings of Bismarck, etc. See Sec.7.4.

2) To divert demands for political reforms, to whip up popular nationalist sentiments, etc. See Sec.7.4.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

- 5th May 1789, Convocation of the Estates General at Versailles.

- 17th June 1789, the Tennis Court oath and the establishment of the National Assembly.

- 14th July 1789, storming of the Bastille fort which was considered as a symbol of despotism.

- 5th Aug. 1789, abolition of the feudal order.

- 26th Aug. 1789, Declaration of the rights of man.

- 3rd Sept. 1791, Proclamation of the new constitution.

- Sept. 1792, France was proclaimed a republic

- 1793-94, The Reign of Terror.

- July 1794, Fall of Robespierre.

- 1795-99, Rule of the Directory (Thermidorian Republic).

- 1799-1815, Napoleon Bonaparte ruled over France.

- 1814-18, The Congress of Vienna, representatives took part in the Congress were Metternich for Austria, Castlereagh for Britain, Trar Alexander 1 of Russia, Von Humboldt for Prussia, Talleyrand for France.

- 1815, The Holy Alliance among Russia, Austria and Prussia to practise solidarity in foreign affairs.

- 1818, The Congress of Aix-la-chapelle

- 1820, The Congress of Troppau

- 1821, The Congress of Laibach

- 1824-1830, The Reign of Charles X in France

- 1830, July Revolution in France, Charles X ran away and Louis Philippe belonging to Orleans family became the sovereign.

- 1815-48, Popularly called Metternich's Era in Europe, Metternich became the chancellor of Austria in 1809.

- 1848, February Revolution in France, Proclamation of Second Republic of France.

- 1852, Establishment of the Second French Empire by Napoleon III.

- 1854-56, The Crimean War.

SOME USEFUL BOOKS FOR THIS BLOCK

E.J. Hobsbawm : *The Age of Revolution, 1789-1848*

George Rude : *Revolutionary Europe*

William Doyle : *The Oxford History of the French Revolution*

D. Thompson : *Europe since Napoleon*