

of devotion — that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain — that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

### READING AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In what ways does Lincoln tie his policies to the past in this speech? In what ways does he look to the future?
2. What is the basis of Lincoln's argument for asserting federal power (abolishing slavery) and continuing the conflict with the Confederate forces?

### DOCUMENT 25-3

OTTO VON BISMARCK

### *Speech Before the Reichstag: The Welfare State Is Born*

1883

Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898), minister-president of Prussia and eventual chancellor of the German nation, was an aristocratic conservative who believed that those in power had an obligation to those they ruled. Caught between liberals who argued for few restrictions on economic behavior and socialists who wanted to strip the reins of power from the upper class, Bismarck outlawed the socialist party but implemented many of their reforms on his own terms. Under his leadership, Germany enacted a series of laws between 1883 and 1889 that created a comprehensive system of insurance and pensions to care for workers' needs, hoping to earn the loyalty of the working class in return.

Otto von Bismarck, "Speech Before the Reichstag," in J. Salwyn Shapiro, ed., *Liberalism: Its History and Meaning* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1958), 174.

Deputy Richter<sup>2</sup> has called attention to the responsibility of the state for what it does, in the area now concerned. Well, gentlemen, I have a feeling that the state may also be responsible for its omissions. I am not of the opinion that "laissez faire, laissez aller,"<sup>3</sup> "pure Manchesterism"<sup>4</sup> in politics, "as you make your bed, so you must lie," "every man for himself, and Devil take the hindmost," "to him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath," have applicability in a state, especially a monarchical, paternalistic state; on the contrary, I believe that those who thus condemn the intervention of the state for the protection of the weaker are themselves suspect of wishing to exploit the strength they have, be it capitalistic, be it rhetorical, be it what it may, to gain a following, to oppress others, to build party dominance, and of becoming annoyed as soon as this understanding is disturbed by any influence of the government.

### READING AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does Bismarck view the relationship between the state and those it governs? Does he seem to be in favor of democratic government?
2. Given that most political parties were his opponents, what view does Bismarck take of political organization in Germany?

<sup>2</sup>Deputy Richter: Eugen Richter, a socialist radical member of the German Reichstag (Parliament) and Bismarck's personal and political opponent. Richter thought the proposed legislation did not go far enough.

<sup>3</sup>"laissez faire, laissez aller": In French, literally "let it go, let go." The phrase originated with a group of French economists in the eighteenth century who argued that the government's best policy toward agriculture was to leave it alone.

<sup>4</sup>Manchesterism: The "Manchester school" of economics, led by Richard Cobden and John Bright, argued for no state involvement in economic affairs. Cobden and Bright led the opposition to the Corn Laws, Britain's 1815 laws placing high import taxes on foreign grain, on these grounds (see Document 23-3).