

Benjamin Disraeli:

Benjamin Disraeli was a British Conservative politician, who is considered one of Great Britain's most memorable Prime Ministers. He had a huge role in the creation of the modern Conservative Party, as he defined its policies. In the late nineteenth century, hoping to get more working people to vote for Conservatives, he passed the Reform Bill of 1832. The Reform Bill of 1832 is important because it granted suffrage to many white males, who then voted for Conservatives- just as Disraeli predicted. Disraeli is also known for his rivalry with Liberal leader William Gladstone, who was also a great Prime Minister; his Liberal threat led to the passing of the Reform Bill. He is also known for his obtaining of the Suez Canal, which hurt the French and gave Britain more opportunities. Benjamin Disraeli is important because of his reform Bill of 1832 that granted many men suffrage and the right to vote. He is also important because of his obtaining of the Suez Canal for the British.

Alexander II:

Alexander II was the Emperor of Russia during the mid-nineteenth century and also had the titles of the King of Poland and the Grand Prince of Finland. Alexander "the Liberator" was the most successful reformer since Peter the Great, as he was responsible for emancipating the serfs in 1861. The tsar was responsible for other reforms including reorganizing the judicial system, setting up elected local judges, abolishing capital punishment, endorsing the zemstvo system, imposing universal military service, and promoting universities. Despite these relatively positive reforms, his secret police, known as the Third Section, sent thousands into exile in Siberia. Alexander II was assassinated in 1881 in an explosion. Alexander II was important because of his work emancipating the serfs in 1861, earning his nickname of "the Great Emancipator" as he helped bring about modern times to Russia.

Giuseppe Garibaldi:

Giuseppe Garibaldi was an Italian general and politician in the mid-nineteenth century who played a large role in the history of Italy. After the dominant statesman in Sardinian government, Camillo Benso di Cavour, was able to unify Northern Italy, Garibaldi hoped for the entire Italian Peninsula to be united. The movement to unite Italy into state was known as the Risorgimento, and Mazzini and Garibaldi at first failed to create an Italy united by democracy; however, Garibaldi and his Red Shirts eventually returned as the Thousand and won battles, gained volunteers, and liberated areas- including Sicily and Naples. Cavour attempted to stop him from invading the Papal States by putting soldiers there. Cavour then organized popular votes to annex Naples to Sardinia and Garibaldi returned the territories to Cavour in the name of Italian unification. In 1861, Italy was declared a united nation-state under the Sardinian king Victor Immanuel II. Giuseppe Garibaldi is important because he was able to bring unification to Italy through the use of nationalism.

Paris Commune:

The Paris Commune was a revolutionary socialist government that ruled Paris for a few months in 1871. After the Germans beat France badly in the Franco-Prussian War, France surrendered Alsace and Lorraine to Germany. Frustrated Parisians, whose district did not meet collectively in the past, proclaimed the Paris Commune in March of 1871. Those in the Paris Commune were more radical than those living in the countryside, and thus did not want to be interfered with by them. As the National Assembly, led by Adolphe Thiers, crushed the Commune, twenty thousand Frenchmen perished. Paris spent the next five years under martial law. As a result of all of this, France was brought together. Moderate republican Leon Gambetta helped bring about this as he preached a republic of equal opportunity. By 1879 both houses of the National Assembly were controlled by moderate republicans who were later split among parliamentary groups and eventually different parties. This was the beginning of coalition politics. Coalition politics describes a situation in which a major party has a high influence yet not enough votes or power to have control. In order to gain control and an advantage over their rival parties, these larger political groups will work together- usually through some sort of compromise or common goal- in order to form a majority. The smaller groups agree to this arrangement in order to get some of what they want passed; where their chances of achieving this were low before, these guarantees in turn for their support causes them to work together with other groups. Groups may shift alliances in order to best benefit themselves, meaning that a nation's majority may change. The Paris Commune is important because it helps bring France together and also paves the way for coalition politics.

Zollverein:

The Zollverein, also known as the German Customs Union, was a union of German states who were formed by the Zollverein treaties on 1833. Led by Prussia, its purpose of it was to manage tariffs and economic policies within the German territory and grew to include most of the German states by the mid-nineteenth century. Austria, however, did not join the union because of its protected industry and the disapproval of Prince von Metternich. This worsened the rivalry between Austria and Prussia during this time. After the German Empire was created in 1871, the empire assumed control of the union and eventually all states. The Zollverein is important because it was the first time that independent states created a successful economic union without creating a unified state or confederation at the same time. While Austria is excluded, Prussia emerges as a powerful leading German state. This would later lead to German unification at the expense of Austria.