**Bismarck Edits the Ems Dispatch**

On July 13, 1870, William I of Prussia sent Bismarck a telegram reporting his meeting, with Benedetti, the French Ambassador, at Ems, a watering place in northwest Germany. The telegram also included a comment by the king's private secretary on later events of the day. Before releasing the dispatch to the press, Bismarck edited it so that the telegram appeared to report that the King of Prussia had treated the French ambassador in a brusque and insulting fashion. Bismarck thus hoped to goad France into a declaration of war. In the text of both telegrams "His Majesty" is William I, and "the Prince" is Charles Anthony, the father of Prince Leopold, the candidate for the Spanish throne. 'Throughout the negotiations Charles Anthony had spoken on behalf of his son.

**THE ORIGINAL MESSAGE SEN'T BY**

**WILLIAM I to BISMARCK**

"M. Benedetti intercepted me on the Promenade in order to demand of me most insistently that I should authorize him to telegraph immediately to Paris that I shall obligate myself for all future time never again to give my approval to the candidacy of the Hohenzollerns should it be renewed. I refused to agree to this, the last time somewhat severely, informing him that one dare not and cannot assume such obligations *a tout jamais* [forever!] Naturally I informed him that I had received no news as yet, and since he had been informed earlier than I by way of Paris and Madrid, he could easily understand why my government was once again out of the matter."

Since then His Majesty has received a dispatch from the Prince. As His Majesty has informed Count Benedetti that he was expecting news from the Prince, His Majesty himself, in view of the above mentioned demand and in consonance with the advice of Count Eulenburg and myself, decided not to receive the French envoy agam but to inform him through an adjutant that His Majesty had now received from the Prince confirmation of the news which Benedetti had already received from Paris, and that he had nothing further to say to the Ambassador. His Majesty leaves it to the judgement of Your Excellency whether or not to communicate at once the new demand by Benedetti and its rejection to our ambassadors and to the press.

**BISMARCK'S EDITED VERSION**

**RELEASED TO THE PRESS**

After the reports of the renunciation by the Hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern had been officially transmitted by the Royal Government of Spain to the Imperial Government of France, the French Ambassador presented to His Majesty the King at Ems the demand to authorize him to telegraph to Paris that His Majesty the King would obligate himself for all future time never again to give his approval to the candidacy of the Hohenzollerns should it be renewed.

His Majesty the King thereupon refused to receive the French envoy again and informed him through an adjutant that His Majesty had nothing further to say to the Ambassador.