

States. These treaties did not actually create the new federation; they only bound the separate States to enter into negotiations, and, as they expired on August 30, 1867, it was necessary that the new Constitution should be completed and ratified by that date. The time was short, for in it had to be compressed both the negotiations between the States and the debates in the assembly; but all past experience had shewn that the shorter the time allowed for making a Constitution the more probable was it that the work would be completed. Bismarck did not intend to allow the precious months, when enthusiasm was still high and new party factions had not seized hold of men's minds, to be lost.

He had spent the autumn in Pomerania and did not return to Berlin till the 21st of December; not a week remained before the representatives of the North German States would assemble in the capital of Prussia. To the astonishment and almost dismay of his friends, he had taken no steps for preparing a draft. As soon as he arrived two drafts were laid before him; he put them aside, and the next day dictated the outlines of the new Constitution.

This document has not been published, but it was the basis of the discussion with the envoys; Bismarck allowed no prolonged debates; they were kept for some weeks in Berlin, but only three formal meetings took place. They made suggestions and criticisms, some of which were accepted, but they were of course obliged to assent to everything on which Bismarck insisted. The scheme as finally agreed upon by the conference