



Berlin, 8 November 2018

CHRONOLOGY

Museum für Fotografie

Berlin in the 1918/19 Revolution

Photography, Film, Entertainment Culture

9 November 2018 – 3 March 2018

November 1918

11/3

In Kiel, a mutiny against a command to put the fleet out to sea escalates into an armed uprising by sailors, soldiers, and workers.

11/4

Workers' and soldiers' councils assume power in Kiel. The insurrection spreads to other towns and cities of the German Reich, where additional workers' and soldiers' councils are established.

11/7

Termination of communication links and railway traffic between Kiel and Berlin. Germany-wide occupation of public buildings, transport facilities, and armaments plants by the military.

11/9

The revolution begins in Berlin. Announcement of a general strike. Large protest marches move toward the Mitte district of Berlin; an officer shoots three demonstrators on Chausseestraße.

Toward midday, and without authorization, Reich Chancellor Max von Baden announces the abdication of Wilhelm II, who is staying at Spa in Belgium; at the same time, he surrenders his office to Friedrich Ebert (SPD). Toward 2 PM, Philipp Scheidemann (SPD) proclaims the new Democratic Republic from a window of the Reichstag; two hours later, Karl Liebknecht (USPD) proclaims the Socialist Republic from the balcony of the Royal Palace.

The SPD and the USPD agree to form a government based on parity of representation.

11/10

Friedrich Ebert, Otto Landsberg, and Philipp Scheidemann (SPD), and Hugo Haase, Emil Barth, and Wilhelm Dittmann (USPD) form the Council of People's Deputies, and hence the sitting government.

Inaugural session of the Berlin Workers' and Soldiers' Councils in the Zirkus Busch.

General Wilhelm Groener of the Supreme Army Command guarantees Friedrich Ebert the support of the military. In order to monitor the revolutionary government, the Councils in Berlin form an Executive Council.

11/11

The Spartacus League is formed from members of the USPD. Formation of the Volksmarinedivision (People's Naval Division).

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In the Forest of Compiègne near Paris, World War I comes to an end with the signing of an armistice agreement.

11/12

The Council of People's Deputies announces its government program. Among other things, it envisions the abolition of the Prussian three-class system of voting, as well as the introduction of active as well as passive women's suffrage.

11/20

Funeral for the first casualties of the revolution at the cemetery of the March Victims of the Revolution of 1848 in Volkspark Friedrichshain.

December 1918

12/6

The Guard Fusiliers shoot 16 demonstrators on Chausseestraße at the corner of Invalidenstraße.

12/10

Ceremonial marching in of the Household Troops through Brandenburg Gate, followed in subsequent weeks by further troop ceremonies, with government representatives speaking upon their arrival.

12/16–21

The Reich Congress of the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils meets in the Prussian Parliament. It consists primarily of members of the educated classes, the majority of whom support the policies of the SPD and advocate elections for a National Assembly.

12/21

Funeral for the dead of December 6 in Volkspark Friedrichshain.

12/22

Demonstration of circa 10,000 war invalids in front of the War Ministry to demand improved care and support.

12/23

Sailors from the People's Naval Division occupy the Berlin City Palace and the Royal Stud. Complaining of outstanding wage payments, they take town major Otto Wels (SPD) hostage.

12/24

Ebert demands military assistance from Groener. In the morning, the Guards Rifles Battalion attacks the sailors with heavy ordnance, but fails to defeat them. Subsequent negotiations between the People's Naval Division and the government.

12/28

The USPD members of the Council of People's Deputies exit the Council, not wishing to go along with cooperation between the SPD members of the Council of People's Deputies and the generals. Gustav Noske and

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Rudolf Wissell (SPD) take their places. As a result, the SPD enjoys absolute rule.

12/29

Funeral for the fallen of December 24 in the cemetery in Volkspark Friedrichshain.

12/30

The Spartacus League meets in the Festival Hall of the Prussian Parliament.

January 1919

1/1

Founding of the German Communist Party (KPD). The majority resolves – against the wishes of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg – to boycott the National Assembly elections.

1/4

The government removes Berlin Police Commissioner Emil Eichhorn (USPD) from his office because he favors the policies of the Spartacists.

1/5

Thousands demonstrate in Berlin for the retraction of Eichhorn's dismissal. Later, armed groups occupy the publishing building of the SPD central organ *Vorwärts* on Lindenstraße and other printing houses in Berlin.

1/6

Numerous demonstrations organized by the various parties. Gustav Noske, the member of the Council of People's Deputies in charge of the army and navy, is charged with the military suppression of the rebellion.

1/9

The insurgents call another general strike. At the same time, there are demonstrations against the bloodshed.

1/11

Early in the morning, government troops with heavy weaponry storm the occupied *Vorwärts* building.

1/12

Circa 150 people, most of them fighting on the side of the revolutionaries, are killed. Among them are the victims of massacres committed by government troops.

1/15

Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg are arrested, tortured, and murdered by soldiers from the Guard Cavalry Rifle Division. Despite judicial proceedings, their murders will ultimately remain unpunished.

1/19

Election of the National Assembly. KPD does not campaign; USPD receives only 22 seats. The victors are the Social Democrats (165 seats).

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1/25

Funeral for the more than 30 victims of the January battles, among them Karl Liebknecht, at the Zentralfriedhof in Friedrichsfelde.

February 1919

2/6

The National Assembly convenes in Weimar, which seems to offer greater security given the difficult situation in Berlin.

2/11

With 277 of a possible 328 votes, the National Assembly elects Friedrich Ebert (SPD) as President of the German Reich; Ebert charges Philipp Scheidemann (SPD) with forming a government.

2/13

Germany's first democratically-elected government consists of members of the SPD, the German Democratic Party (DDP), and the Center Party.

March 1919

3/3

Under the slogan »All Power to the Councils«, the Berlin Workers' and Soldiers' Councils call a general strike. The government responds by imposing a state of siege on Berlin and charging Defense Minister Noske with its military supervision.

3/4

Armed confrontations between government troops and insurgents at Alexanderplatz in Berlin.

3/5–8

Intensification of fighting at Alexanderplatz and in particular in front of police headquarters, which then spreads toward Frankfurter Allee/Friedrichshain, at which point heavy artillery is employed. In addition, aircraft bombs are dropped.

3/9

Following the successful circulation of a rumor according to which the Spartacists have murdered 60 police officers in Lichtenberg, Defense Minister Noske imposes martial law: any armed revolutionary who resists government troops is to be shot without trial.

3/11

During a massacre which takes place on Französische Straße, 29 insurgents from the People's Marine Division lose their lives.

3/12

The March battles end with the victory of government troops. According to a statement by Gustav Noske, the violence has led to 1200 deaths, the majority of them revolutionaries, along with government soldiers and bystanders.

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3/16
Suspension of martial law in Berlin.

May 1919

5/1
May Day celebrations take place at various locations in Berlin, as well as throughout the German Reich.

5/31
Rosa Luxemburg's corpse is found in the Landwehrkanal.

June 1919

June 13
Rosa Luxemburg is buried at the Zentralfriedhof in Friedrichsfelde. The funeral route is lined by approximately 100,000 Berlin residents.

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