

Philipp Scheidemann Giving a Speech from a Window of the Reich Chancellery (November 9, 1918)

Abstract

On the morning of November 9, 1918, Reich Chancellor Max von Baden proclaimed the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II and handed over the office of reich chancellor to SPD party leader Friedrich Ebert. Baden hoped these actions would pacify the insurrectionary masses and prevent a bloody revolution such as had occurred in Russia in October 1917. A democratically elected national assembly was then supposed to negotiate what constitutional form the German Empire would take. At 2:00 p.m., Reichstag deputy and SPD party executive Philipp Scheidemann proclaimed a democratic republic from a window of the Reichstag. Ebert, who had not been consulted about the highly symbolic act, was not pleased, but Scheidemann had not acted on revolutionary zeal alone. He had intended to beat Karl Liebknecht's proclamation of a socialist republic to the punch. In other words, the German republic's hour of birth manifested a significant political division within the revolutionary movement. This photograph shows Scheidemann making another speech the same day, this time from a window of the reich chancellery.

Source



Source: Berlin, November Revolution, proclamation of the republic on November 9, 1918. Philipp Scheidemann standing in a window of the Reich Chancellery, November 9, 1918. Photographer: unknown. BA, collection of repro negatives, Bild 146-1972-030-51, available on Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_146-1972-030-51,_Berlin,_Reichskanzlei,_Philipp_Scheidemann.jpg

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