

Sailors' Council on Board the Battleship *Prince Regent Luitpold* (November 1918)

Abstract

When the sailors revolted at the beginning of November 1918, workers' and soldiers' councils formed in many German cities. In the eyes of these groups, the imperial government had forfeited their legitimacy. Now the workers' and soldiers' councils would assume some of the government's most important functions: above all securing public safety and mitigating inadequate food supplies. This photograph shows the soldiers' council of the Battleship Prince Regent Luitpold's crew. The sign they are displaying reads, "Soldiers' Council of the Battleship Prince Regent Luitpold. Long live the socialist republic!" These words capture how soldiers' councils hoped for the establishment of a socialist council republic following the Russian example. (The German word for council, *Rat*, is usually translated into English with the Russian "soviet.")

Food shortages and poor treatment had already led the ship's crew to mutiny in August 1917. That was put down by force and two sailors were executed. As a condition of the armistice of November 11, 1918, this warship was interned by the British at Scapa Flow and sunk by its crew on June 21, 1919.

Source



Source: Sailors from the liner "Prinzregent Luitpold" on deck of the ship with plaque "Soldatenrat Kriegsschiff Prinzregent Luitpold. Long live the socialist republic", November 1918. photographer: unknown. BA, ADN Zentralbild, image 183-J0908-0600-002, available online on Wikimedia Commons,

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_183-J0908-0600-002,_Novemberrevolution,_Matrosenaufstand.jpg

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