

Sailors' Uprising in Wilhelmshaven (November 6, 1918)

Abstract

Although preliminary ceasefire negotiations had already started by the end of October 1918, the German navy was ordered to set out for one last battle with British naval units on October 24, 1918. The war-weary sailors of the *Thuringia* and the *Helgoland* refused to obey this order. Around 1,000 sailors were arrested and sent to Kiel to stand trial before a military court. On November 1, 1918, the Naval Command rejected a request for the arrested sailors' release. Mass rallies and protests in support of the sailors followed on November 3. The situation escalated after demonstrators were shot by military patrols, and the rallies turned into armed uprisings. About 40,000 soldiers, sailors, and workers took part in the rebellion in Kiel and Wilhelmshaven.

The Kiel uprising was quelled on November 4, 1918, after Soldiers' Councils were formed under the leadership of Gustav Noske, a Social Democratic Reichstag delegate. But the effect of the rebellion continued – it inspired the formation of Workers' and Soldiers' Councils throughout all of Germany and led to other uprisings, which eventually culminated in the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II and the establishment of the Weimar Republic.

Source



Source: Deutsches Historisches Museum

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