

8 November 1923

When Hitler stormed the meeting in the 'Bürgerbräukeller' beer hall on 8 November 1923, apart from his own political goals he also faced a concrete financial dilemma: the stream of cash needed for the SA was threatening to dry up. Hitler's reputation was at stake and so he quickly turned the rumours of a putsch into reality.

The much hated Treaty of Versailles stipulated the disarmament of Germany in precise terms. In order to circumvent this, countless paramilitary groups were formed such as the 'Sturmabteilung' (SA), the 'Reichsflagge,' the 'Bund Oberland' and the 'Schützenbrigade 21', often with former military officers at their head. The associations rivalled each other for prestige, money and weapons. They were, however, united in their hatred of Jews, Marxists and democracy, and in their hostility towards the government in Berlin and 'the disgrace of Versailles'.

**“To all German radio stations:
State Commissioner General
von Kahr, General von Lossow
and Colonel von Seißer oppose
the Hitler putsch.**

**The statement extorted by
force at gunpoint in the
'Bürgerbräuhaus' has no
validity.”**

Radio telegram, in the night of 8 to 9 November 1923

Success amid thunderous applause

The most powerful men in Bavaria were in the 'Bürgerbräukeller': Ritter von Kahr, endowed with dictatorial powers, Hans Ritter von Seißer, the head of the Bavarian police and Otto von Lossow, the commander of the *Reichswehr* in Bavaria.

After Hitler's shot in the ceiling and his proclamation of a revolution, the three men were led into an adjoining room. Kahr, Lossow and Seißer were forced at gunpoint to become members of a new government.

In the west of Munich people gathered in the 'Löwenbräukeller'. When news of Hitler's supposed success reached those who supported him, cheers broke out. 'Aged men and women were in tears, young people were dancing on the tables, everyone was bursting with enthusiasm!' Heinrich Himmler's brother Gebhard recalled later.



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**“I forbid you to
doubt the word
of a German
officer.”**

General Erich Ludendorff on his decision to let Kahr, Lossow and Seißer go.

The first cracks

In the meantime, the former General Erich Ludendorff had arrived at the 'Bürgerbräukeller'. He was to lead the 'March on Berlin' if the putsch in Munich had been successful. In Hitler's absence, he gave the order to release the alleged defectors Kahr, Seißer and Lossow against a pledge of honour.

The three distanced themselves from Hitler's plans that very night. Behind his back, they alerted the *Reichswehr* and other official bodies. Neither the police nor the *Reichswehr* defected to Hitler but moved out to suppress the putsch.