



EDX.WN11 The Events and Failure of the Munich Putsch, November 1923

EDEXCEL 1HI0 · Calculators not allowed · about 60 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Answer ALL questions. Write in full sentences for Questions 9 to 16. You are advised to spend about 60 minutes on this pack.

1 Give the year in which the Munich Putsch took place.

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 Name the leader of the Nazi party who led the Munich Putsch.

(Total for Question 2 is 1 mark)

3 Give the name of the senior World War I general who joined Hitler in the putsch and marched with him to the Feldherrnhalle.

(Total for Question 3 is 1 mark)

4 Name the Munich politician whose meeting at the Burgerbraukeller was interrupted by Hitler on 8 November 1923.

(Total for Question 4 is 1 mark)

5 State one location in Munich that played a central part in the putsch, where the marchers were fired on.

(Total for Question 5 is 1 mark)

- 6** Give two ways in which Hitler attempted to present the putsch while speaking at the Burgerbraukeller on the evening of 8 November 1923.

(Total for Question 6 is 2 marks)

- 7** State two things the Bavarian state authorities did overnight that undermined the putsch after the Burgerbraukeller events.

(Total for Question 7 is 2 marks)

- 8** Source A: From a short report written by an unnamed Munich baker who watched the events from a side street near the Feldherrnhalle, 9 November 1923.

"I heard shouting and then the sound of shots. Men ran in every direction. I saw a line of men with brown uniforms fall back and some of them lie still on the paving. The policemen stood behind their rifles and did not move forward. Later we heard that many of those who marched had been killed."

Give two things you can infer from Source A about what happened at the Feldherrnhalle on 9 November 1923. For each inference, give the detail in the source that supports it.

(Total for Question 8 is 4 marks)

9 Explain why the Munich Putsch failed within a few hours on 9 November 1923.

You may use the following in your answer:

- the withdrawal of Bavarian state support overnight after 8 November
- the decision of the police to confront the marchers at the Feldherrnhalle

You must also use information of your own.

(Total for Question 9 is 12 marks)

10 Source B: From a short memorandum written by a Bavarian state official, dated 9 November 1923, describing the morning after the Burgerbraukeller events.

"By dawn it was clear that the earlier declarations at the beer hall could not stand. The minister-president refused to be part of any illegal seizure of power. Orders were sent to police units to maintain public order and to prevent any armed band from taking the streets. We acted to defend the constitution of the state."

Source C: From a letter written by a supporter of the putsch, sent to a friend in Berlin on 10 November 1923.

"We were certain that the men of Bavaria would stand with us after the speech, but during the night those in charge betrayed us. At the march the police fired without warning and many good comrades fell. We had the courage but not the support we expected."

How useful are Sources B and C for an enquiry into why the Munich Putsch failed on 9 November 1923?

(Total for Question 10 is 8 marks)

- 11** Study Interpretations 1 and 2. They give different views about who was most responsible for the rapid failure of the Munich Putsch on 9 November 1923.

Interpretation 1: From Dr Anna Becker, *The Bavarian Crisis and the Putsch*, 1999.

"The decisive factor in the putsch's failure was the withdrawal of support by Bavaria's leading officials. Kahr and his colleagues made clear by their actions that they would not legitimise an illegal seizure of power. Without that state backing the putschists were isolated and could not hope to seize control of Munich."

Interpretation 2: From Professor Markus Heller, *Violence and Politics in Weimar Bavaria*, 2014.

"The putsch failed because Hitler and his followers made a catastrophic tactical error by marching into the city centre against prepared police units. The shooting at the Feldherrnhalle destroyed the putsch's momentum and led directly to its collapse."

What is the main difference between these views?

(Total for Question 11 is 4 marks)

- 12** Suggest one reason why Interpretations 1 and 2 give different views about who was most responsible for the rapid failure of the Munich Putsch.

(Total for Question 12 is 4 marks)

- 13** How far do you agree with Interpretation 1 that the withdrawal of Bavarian state support was the main reason the Munich Putsch failed on 9 November 1923? Explain your answer. 4 marks are available for spelling, punctuation and grammar and the accurate use of specialist terms.

Interpretation 1: From Dr Anna Becker, *The Bavarian Crisis and the Putsch*, 1999.

"The decisive factor in the putsch's failure was the withdrawal of support by Bavaria's leading officials. Kahr and his colleagues made clear by their actions that they would not legitimise an illegal seizure of power. Without that state backing the putschists were isolated and could not hope to seize control of Munich."

(Total for Question 13 is 20 marks)

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- 14** Give the number of Nazis and putsch supporters who were killed when the police opened fire at the Feldherrnhalle on 9 November 1923.

(Total for Question 14 is 1 mark)

15 Give the date on which the main march to the Feldherrnhalle took place during the Munich Putsch.

(Total for Question 15 is 1 mark)

16 Give an approximate number of Nazi marchers who took part in the march to the Feldherrnhalle on 9 November 1923.

(Total for Question 16 is 1 mark)

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Question 1

- **B1** 1923
- **Answer:** 1923

Question 2

- **B1** Adolf Hitler
- **Answer:** Adolf Hitler

Question 3

- **B1** Erich Ludendorff
- **Answer:** Erich Ludendorff

Question 4

- **B1** Gustav von Kahr
- **Answer:** Gustav von Kahr

Question 5

- **B1** the Feldherrnhalle
- **Answer:** The Feldherrnhalle

Question 6

- **B1** He proclaimed a national revolution and declared that he had the support of the Bavarian government
- **B1** He named himself head of a provisional government and demanded loyalty from those present
- **Answer:** He proclaimed a national revolution and claimed Bavarian government support; he declared himself head of a provisional government and demanded loyalty.

Question 7

- **B1** They withdrew their apparent support for Hitler and refused to back his seizure of power
- **B1** They ordered police and other state forces to act against the putsch, removing the appearance of official backing
- **Answer:** They withdrew support for Hitler and ordered police and other state forces to oppose the putsch.

Question 8

- **B1** Inference 1, e.g. some marchers were killed, supported by the phrase 'many of those who marched had been killed' or 'lie still on the paving'
- **B1** Inference 2, e.g. the police fired and held their ground, supported by 'the sound of shots' and 'policemen stood behind their rifles and did not move forward'
- **B1** Inference 1 second box, clear linking of inference to supporting words, e.g. 'men with brown uniforms fall back' supports that marchers were driven back by gunfire
- **B1** Inference 2 second box, clear linking of inference to supporting words, e.g. 'did not move forward' supports that police maintained position and used firearms to stop the march
- **Answer:** Inference examples: 1) Some marchers were killed, supported by 'many of those who marched had been killed' and 'lie still on the paving'. 2) The police fired on the marchers and held their ground, supported by 'the sound of shots' and 'policemen stood behind their rifles and did not move forward'.

Question 9

- **Level 1** (1-3): Identifies one or two simple reasons for the putsch's failure with little or no supporting detail.
- **Level 2** (4-6): Identifies and begins to explain at least two reasons, with some relevant supporting detail.
- **Level 3** (7-9): Explains several reasons for the failure, supported by accurate and relevant detail, and shows some links between reasons.
- **Level 4** (10-12): Provides a well-developed and balanced explanation of the putsch's failure, using precise and accurate detail and showing clear analysis of how reasons combined to end the putsch quickly.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Bavarian state withdrawal of support: Kahr and others reneged on earlier apparent backing for Hitler, meaning the putsch no longer had the crucial official endorsement and so lacked legitimacy and resources.
 - Police decision to confront: the Bavarian police were ordered to oppose the march and were prepared to use lethal force at the Feldherrnhalle, which directly caused the shooting that ended the march.
 - Poor planning and lack of wider support: Hitler overestimated the willingness of key figures to support a coup and had not secured backing from the Reichswehr or wider political elites, leaving the putsch isolated.
 - Confusion and incoherent leadership on the ground: after Kahr, Seisser and Lossow withdrew support, there was no unified command for the rebel forces; mixed orders and uncertainty among marchers reduced their effectiveness.
 - Underestimation of resistance: the marchers, c2000 strong, were poorly armed and not trained as a disciplined military force against organised police units.
 - Immediate tactical failure at the Feldherrnhalle: the decision to march into a guarded urban location where police could concentrate fire meant the putsch collapsed rapidly once shots were fired and casualties occurred.

Question 10

- **Level 1** (1-2): Makes simple assertions about usefulness with little or no reference to content, provenance or context.
- **Level 2** (3-5): Makes valid comments on the utility of one or both sources, with some use of content and limited reference to provenance or contextual knowledge.
- **Level 3** (6-8): Provides a balanced and well-developed judgement on the usefulness of both sources, using detailed reference to their content, provenance and the wider historical context to support the evaluation.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Source B usefulness: as an official memorandum it offers direct evidence of the Bavarian government's position and orders, showing formal withdrawal of support and police mobilisation. Its provenance as an official document gives it high value for establishing state action.
 - Limitations of B: it is an official statement and may seek to justify the government's actions to contemporaries or superiors, so it could be partial or emphasise legality; students should consider whether it underplays earlier ambiguities.
 - Source C usefulness: as a contemporary letter from a putsch supporter it provides a personal perspective on morale and the sense of betrayal, illustrating how supporters experienced the withdrawal of support and the police response.
 - Limitations of C: as a partisan eyewitness letter it may exaggerate police brutality or the putsch's strength; it offers limited access to official decision-making and is emotionally coloured.
 - Combined judgement: together the sources give complementary perspectives, official and partisan, which help explain the failure by showing both state decisions and the putschists' experience, but neither alone gives the full picture so corroboration is needed from other evidence such as police reports, press accounts and later testimony.

Question 11

- **Level 1** (1-2): Identifies a basic difference between the interpretations with limited explanation.
- **Level 2** (3-4): Explains clearly the main difference between the interpretations and uses comparative language to show how the emphases differ.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Interpretation 1 blames the political withdrawal of Bavarian officials and the loss of official backing as the key cause; it emphasises political decisions and legitimacy.
 - Interpretation 2 blames the putschists' tactical and military error in marching into a prepared police force at the Feldherrnhalle; it emphasises immediate violent confrontation and operational mistakes.
 - A clear answer states that the main difference is whether responsibility lies with Bavarian officials withdrawing support or with Hitler's tactical decision to march on the Feldherrnhalle.

Question 12

- **Level 1** (1-2): Offers a simple plausible reason with little explanation.
- **Level 2** (3-4): Offers a developed reason that explains how differences in evidence or emphasis could lead to the two views.
- **Indicative content:**
 - They may be using different types of evidence: Interpretation 1 may rely more on official records and government correspondence showing withdrawal of support, while Interpretation 2 may draw on eyewitness accounts and police reports about the fighting at the Feldhernhalle.
 - They emphasise different aspects because of the historian's focus or theme: one studies political decision-making and legitimacy, the other studies violence and tactical events.
 - Partial extracts or selective use of sources could lead each historian to highlight one decisive factor while downplaying the other.

Question 13

- **Level 1** (1-4): Shows limited knowledge of the putsch's events and offers a simple, unsupported judgement about Interpretation 1.
- **Level 2** (5-8): Shows some relevant knowledge and offers a judgement that is partially supported by evidence, but explanation is limited.
- **Level 3** (9-12): Shows good knowledge and explains arguments for and against Interpretation 1, reaching a supported judgement using some evidence.
- **Level 4** (13-16): Shows precise and well-selected knowledge, offers a balanced and analytical evaluation of Interpretation 1, and reaches a sustained judgement about how far it is convincing.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Arguments supporting Interpretation 1: the overnight withdrawal of Bavarian backing removed the crucial official legitimacy the putsch needed, and official orders to the police to act against the putsch meant the state used its legal and coercive powers to stop it.
 - Supporting evidence might include the memorandum style statements of Bavarian ministers refusing to be part of illegal seizure of power and orders to police, showing decisive state action.
 - Arguments against: the immediate tactical decisions by Hitler to march on the Feldhernhalle and the ensuing shooting were the proximate cause of the putsch's collapse; even with less clear state opposition the violent confrontation might have defeated the march.
 - Other factors: poor planning, overconfidence, lack of support from the Reichswehr and the limited number of organised, armed men c2000, who were not a regular army, all contributed to rapid failure.
 - Evaluation: a balanced answer shows that state withdrawal and tactical failure were connected, and that although Bavarian withdrawal removed political legitimacy and resources, the immediate military defeat at the Feldhernhalle provided the final collapse. A strong judgement will weigh which factor was more decisive and explain their interaction.

Question 14

- **B1** 16
- **Answer: 16**

Question 15

- **B1** 9 November 1923
- **Answer: 9 November 1923**

Question 16

- **B1** around 2000
- **Answer: Around 2000**