



Polish American Congress

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA DIVISION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Polish November Remembrance

San Francisco, Nov. 10, 2008.

Ninety years ago, on November 11th, 1918, Germany surrendered to the Allied Powers, thus ending WW I and adding Veterans Day to the roster of western traditions.

This day is celebrated as Independence Day in Poland. One of the most powerful influences, which shaped the world after WW I, was President Woodrow Wilson's strong personal conviction that democracy requires full recognition of the principle of "national self-determination", i. e. respect for people's choices as to the country and system they want to live under. This sentiment was reinforced by Ignacy Paderewski, the famous Polish pianist and frequent White House guest who convinced the President, that it is an outrage to let three rogue powers keep Poland divided and subject to their efforts to exterminate the Polish nation. After all, Poland was the first country in Europe with native dynasty and developed a unique political system with democratic rights for all citizens, religious and political freedoms and tolerance for all residents, capped by the institution of elective kings. Some of the innovations were used in creating other democracies i.e. the principle of "no taxation without representation" so prominent in the American Constitution was passed by the Polish parliament in 1505 (260 years earlier!) as "Nihil Novi"; The Peace of Augsburg ending 30 years of religious wars in Europe contained a principle: "Religion of the monarch determines the religion of his subjects" (*cuius regio, eius religio*), while the then reigning king of Poland stated: "I will not be the judge of my subjects' consciences". By XVI century Poland was the largest, most populous and rich state in Europe. It took another 200 years to bring her down from this pinnacle and only now she finally began to recover from the shocks of barbaric WW II and 45 years of soviet indoctrination and inhumanity.

A Holy Mass will be celebrated in the intention of Poland by His Excellency Most Rev. George H. Niederauer, Archbishop of the San Francisco Archdiocese, on November 16, 2008 at 11:00 a.m. at the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption (1111 Gough Street in San Francisco). After the Mass all attendees are invited to snacks and remarks by Dr. Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, Professor of History and Dean of the Tadeusz Kosciuszko Chair at the Institute of World Politics, Washington, DC.

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