

General Pulaski Memorial Day, 1989

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Forced to flee his native Poland after fighting in its unsuccessful struggle for independence, General Casimir Pulaski later became a hero of the American Revolutionary War. Benjamin Franklin once praised him as a man "famous throughout Europe for his bravery and conduct in defense of the liberties of his country." In the ultimate expression of that bravery, and in solidarity with the American colonists, Pulaski volunteered for the Continental Army and eventually became the leader of his own cavalry unit. While leading a charge during the siege of Savannah on October 9, 1779, this dauntless freedom fighter was mortally wounded. He died 2 days later.

Each year, on the October 11th anniversary of his death, we Americans pause to remember General Pulaski and the heartfelt convictions for which he gave his life. General Pulaski clearly understood that liberty is the God-given right of all men. He believed that the cause of freedom is universal, and, like many of his contemporaries, viewed the American struggle for independence as a decisive battle for the future of all freedom-loving peoples. The American Revolution, if successful, would be a resounding victory for the principles of individual liberty and representative government.

With the generous assistance of brave and selfless allies like General Pulaski, the American colonists did succeed in their quest for independence. And today, more than 2 centuries later, the triumphant call for freedom and self-government continues to reverberate throughout the world.

That call can be heard clearly in General Pulaski's homeland, where—despite years of repression by ruling Communist officials and Soviet military intervention in 1981—the Polish people have continued to demonstrate their fervent belief in the principles of freedom and self-determination. With faith, courage, and persistence, they have begun to reap the rewards of their efforts to obtain free elections, as well as political and economic reforms.

Today, we Americans offer our support and our prayers for the people of Poland as they continue seeking the blessings of freedom and representative government—blessings that General Casimir Pulaski helped win for us 210 years ago.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Wednesday, October 11, 1989, as General Pulaski Memorial Day, and I direct the appropriate government officials to display the flag of the United States on all government buildings on the day. In addition, I encourage the people of the United States to commemorate this occasion as appropriate throughout the land.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourteenth.

Cy Bush