

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this tenth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 6936 of October 10, 1996

General Pulaski Memorial Day, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On October 11, we observe the 217th anniversary of the death of a great military hero from American history, General Casimir Pulaski. Every year on this date, Americans and Poles together honor this valiant soldier, who spent his life fighting for freedom on both sides of the Atlantic. General Pulaski's life and career are a vivid reminder of the strong historical bonds between Poland and the United States. These bonds have been forged not only by the millions of Polish Americans who have helped make our country great, but also by our two countries' shared dedication to the principles of liberty and independence.

Pulaski, born into a family of nobles, first fought oppression at his father's side, battling the forces of Prussia and Imperial Russia to preserve the liberty of his Polish homeland. Exiled by the Russians, he was recruited into the American colonies' Continental Army by Benjamin Franklin and brought his bravery and passion for freedom to numerous battles during the Revolutionary War. General Pulaski sacrificed his life for the cause of liberty during the siege of Savannah as he protected American troops.

In our own time, we have seen the Polish people follow the example of General Pulaski and renew their dedication to freedom—rebuilding their homeland in spite of Nazi oppression and, later, communist tyranny. Today, Poland has regained its sovereignty and fashioned a sturdy representative democracy. For Americans and Poles alike, Casimir Pulaski's sacrifice for independence remains a model of courage and commitment that can stir us to reach new heights of democratic justice and liberty.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, 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 Friday, October 11, 1996, as General Pulaski Memorial Day. I encourage Americans everywhere to commemorate this occasion with appropriate ceremonies and activities paying tribute to Casimir Pulaski and honoring all those who carry on his mission.

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