

Sen. Mikulski announces Senate passage of Resolution Commemorating the 10 Year Anniversary of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary joining NATO

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.) today celebrated the Senate's unanimous passage of a resolution to celebrate the 10-year anniversary of the accession of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary as members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Senator Mikulski was a vocal proponent in the Senate debate of welcoming these former Soviet bloc countries into NATO. She is an original co-sponsor of this resolution.

"Since joining NATO, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic have contributed immensely to the security of the United States and the mission of NATO," Senator Mikulski said. "I am proud to cosponsor this resolution to commemorate the 10-year anniversary of their entry into the NATO alliance."

The Czech Republic, Republic of Hungary and Republic of Poland were the first Warsaw Pact nations to join NATO. In the 10 years since they joined NATO, all three countries have contributed to the security of the United States and fellow alliance members, as well as NATO efforts in Europe and throughout the world.

They supported NATO efforts to stabilize and secure the Balkans region by contributing to the NATO-led Kosovo Force, and they continue to support NATO

's effort to meet the global challenges of the 21st century, including the threat of terrorism, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, instability caused by failed states, and threats to global energy security. All three countries have also provided critical participation in NATO's International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

Senator Mikulski added, "As the great-granddaughter of Polish immigrants, this resolution holds special resonance for me. Growing up as a Polish American in East Baltimore, I learned about the burning of Warsaw at the end of the second World War. I learned about the Katyn massacre - where Russia murdered more than four thousand Polish military officers and intellectuals in the Katyn Forest at the start of the second World War. For 40 years, I watched the people of Poland live under brutal, communist rule. They did not choose communism -- it was forced upon them. These tragedies are etched on my heart. That is one reason why I have fought so long and so hard for Poland and the others to be part of the western family of nations."

For the full text of the resolution, go to: http://mikulski.senate.gov/_pdfs/Press/NATOResolution.pdf

Polish American Congress
1612 K Street, N.W. Suite 410
Washington, D.C. 20006
Tel: (202) 296-6955
Fax: (202) 835-1565
Web: www.polancon.org

Beginning Polish Language Study Group

Meet at Hastings Library
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Pasadena, CA, 91107
Beginning Saturday September 20th
from 1.00 PM to 4.30PM.
For info: Ronald Small 818-785-4094.
E-Mail dazyron@earthlink.net
Richard Lis 626-799-7930

Profile of a distinguished Sybirak - Walter Ciszek (1904-1984) †

http://catholiceducation.org/articles/catholic_stories/cs0175.htm

Before there was an Armistice Day, Walter Ciszek was born on November 11, 1904, and lived through a crucified century. Death came gracefully in 1984 on the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

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In boyhood he was a bully in a gang on the gritty streets of Shenandoah, Pennsylvania, and Ciszek's Polish immigrant father dragged him to the police station, hoping to put him into a reform school. Everyone thought he was joking when the eighth grader announced that he would enter the Polish minor seminary. The seminarian swam in an icy lake and rose before dawn to run five miles, pummeling the body like his forebear in holy belligerence, Saul of Tarsus. A biography of St. Stanislaus Kostka inspired him to go to the Bronx in 1928, where he told the Jesuits he wanted to join up.

Guileless Ciszek then informed his superiors that God wanted him to go to Russia, where in ten years more than 150,000 Russian Orthodox priests had been wiped out. They sent him to study in Rome at the "Russicum," the Jesuits' Russian center, and finally in 1937 he celebrated his first Mass in the Byzantine rite. Aiming to infiltrate Russia through Poland, he taught ethics in a seminary in Albertyn.

But in 1939 Hitler invaded from the west and then the Russians came from the east, despoiling the seminary, and so the young alter Christus was on the cross between two thieves. In 1940 the Ukrainian Archbishop of Lvov permitted him to enter Russia, and he headed for the Ural Mountains, a two-week trip in a box car with 25 men.

While hauling logs in a lumber camp, he said Mass furtively in the forest. Secret police arrested him as a Vatican spy when they found his Mass wine, which they called nitroglycerine, and kept him in a cell 900 feet square for two weeks with 100 other men.

After six more months, beaten with rubber truncheons, starved, and drugged, he signed a confession, and this he called one of the darkest moments of his life. On July 26, 1942, he was sentenced to 15 years' hard labor, starting with five years of solitary confinement in Moscow's hideous Lubyanka prison, and then off to Siberia. After a slow 2,500-mile trip to Krasnoyarsk in a sweltering boxcar, he was sent on a barge to Norilsk, 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle, and worked 12-hour days shoveling coal into freighters, with rags for shoes. In hushed tones he said Mass for Polish prisoners using a vodka glass for a chalice and wine made from stolen raisins. Having been transferred to work in the coal mines for a year, he became a construction worker in 1947, returning to the mines in 1953.

Release came in 1955 and he got news to his sisters for the first time since 1939 that he was alive. In Krasnoyarsk he quickly established several parishes. Then came four years just south in Abakan, working as an auto mechanic. In 1963 the KGB hauled him back to Moscow and handed him over to the American consulate in exchange for two Soviet agents. As the plane flew past the Kremlin, he related, "Slowly, carefully, I made the sign of the cross over the land that I was leaving."

In New York, undeterred by arthritis and cardiac ailments, he gave spiritual direction at Fordham University in a residence now named for him, writing his monumental books *With God in Russia* and *He Leadeth Me*. One summer day I

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A Pol-Am Easter story

To Cheektowaga for a Polish Easter

By: **Robert Strybel**,
Polish/Polonian Affairs Writer

Cheektowaga native Keith Wiśniewski was in a quandary. After receiving his Master of Criminal Law degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo, he had landed a good job in law-enforcement in Atlanta. He had made friends there and enjoyed the mild Georgia climate, quite unlike that of his snow-belt hometown. Of course, he didn't like everything about it, because life is almost never perfect.

Back home he was Vishnyefski to everyone - something even non-Polonians could usually manage once they were corrected. But in Atlanta, his tri-syllabic surname seemed to freak many people out. They would call him Wiznooski, Wizzy, the Whiz Kid or even Dubya. The latter really drove Keith up a wall, because he had never been at great fan of the former President Bush.

But that was not really on his mind right now. Keith's dilemma was whether to spend the holidays in Atlanta, where a friend had already invited him over for Easter dinner, or fly home to Buffalo. Last February's crash of a Buffalo-bound plane from Newark was a bit of a turn-off, but he remembered what his dad had told him: "When your number is up, it's up, no matter where you are or what precautions you take!" Secondly, despite the dinner invite, Easter in Atlanta wouldn't be all that great with his girlfriend Linda away on a junior-year-abroad program in Italy. On the other hand, he could get only five days off and would have to be back at his desk bright and early on Wednesday, April 15th.

Was it worth all the time, money and hassle? Peter Cotton Tail is what made

him decide. While he was debating, he heard "Hopping down the bunny trail" and "Easter Parade" blaring from a shopping-mall loudspeaker for the one-zillionth time that season. To him those ditties symbolized the commercial overkill of Easter - the fake green-paper grass, marshmallow eggs and all the cheap, tacky "Made in China" bunny gadgets flooding the market. That contrasted with his memories of "real" holiday celebrations back home, coupled with fears that this might be the last Easter for "babci", Keith's beloved, now ailing maternal grandmother.

Easter in Buffalo was something else. It has always involved that annual spring "pilgrimage" to Broadway Market, a unique shopping experience that has attracted customers from across Western New York, neighboring Ontario and beyond. The Wiśniewskis of Cheektowaga always stock up there on their ham, kielbasa, kiszka and pierogi at Malczewskis and regret that Redliński no longer was an outlet there. And the babki, placki, pączki, chruściki, chałki and rye bread from White Eagle Bakery and E.M. Chruściki are out of this world. And naturally Broadway Market is where they pick up their butter lamb and other święconka fixings, not to mention the pussywillows for Dyngus Day.

Keith's mom filled a large crystal vase from Poland with an armload of pussywillows as a traditional Polish holiday symbol that stood on the dining-room buffet overlooking the festive breakfast, although a few branches would always disappear for the Easter Monday leg-thrashing. After Easter Mass at Assumption on Amherst, their old parish before they moved to Cheektowaga, the smoky, garlicky scent of roast kielbasa and the other Easter treats really made everyone's mouths water.

Used to be babci would first go up to

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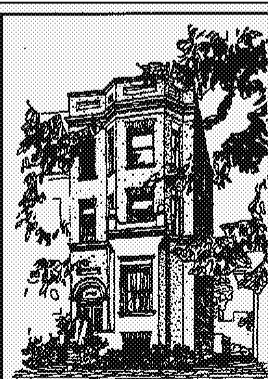
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Many people talk about leaving their will to worthy causes, but don't have a will, and do not realize it requires a will to do so. The laws of most states make it clear that personal property goes automatically, by law, to your nearest relative, even if they are quite distant ones, unless you have a legal will that says otherwise. If you have no relative, it goes to the state. More than half of all adult Americans die without having made their wills. Most of them undoubtedly planned to do so, but never got around to it. Some had wills but didn't keep them current. When you have a will, you should update it every few years as conditions change. Also, always name an executor who will carry out your wishes. Besides money, non-cash possessions can also be used an contributions and various donation plans can be carried out. Be a philanthropist: leave your stocks, bonds, real estate, art, valuable collection or insurance to continue the Polish - American traditions. Your will is the most important way of giving. When you're gone, it is a legacy that is not forgotten. In your will, you can specify what you would like your donation to be used for. For help in making your will, contact a competent lawyer. **The American Center of Polish Culture, Inc.** is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that needs your help and legacy.

The American Center of Polish Culture, Inc.
2025 "O" Street, NW • Washington, DC 20036

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