

Ambassador Feinstein's Remarks  
"Let Poland be Poland" at Dom Spotkan z Historia  
Tuesday, January 31, 2012

Thirty years ago today, "Let Poland be Poland" was broadcast for the first time. Looking at Charlton Heston's wide shirt collar and ties, it is clear how much time has passed. But sitting down with this video, as I have and as you will have the chance to do this evening, you will see how ahead of its time it was.

Here just off Nowy Swiat in modern, bustling, prosperous Warsaw it is still not difficult to imagine the significance of this film. We have with us here on this panel tonight, people who fought for Poland's freedom and were imprisoned for that fight. The purpose of a film like this is to let such people, people who are fighting for their dignity, know that they are not alone; so that they know the wider world understands what is happening

in their country; and that people outside their borders support them.

It is one of the great achievements of recent history that in the space of thirty years, Poland has transformed itself into a thriving democracy and that it is Poland which now is the source of hope and practical advice to those seeking better lives for themselves, whether in Belarus or Benghazi.

The mass movement here in Poland was unique in the former Soviet bloc in mobilizing huge numbers of Poles against communism. This film reminds us that the revolution here also mobilized the world against oppression in Poland: Trade Unionists and Union critics. Republicans, like the Great Communicator, President Reagan, and Democrat leaders. Glenda Jackson and Charleton Heston. Artists and Politicians. Crooners and Poets.

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Americans who have watched this film are especially moved by what the nonviolent civil rights activist, the late Bayard Rustin said: “If they can win that fight, they are saving all of us.”

That indeed is what America felt about the struggle for freedom and human dignity in Poland.

Thank you.