



POLISH AMERICAN News

The Polish American Cultural Center Museum at 308 Walnut Street in the Heart of America's Most Historic Square Mile Welcomes Tourists Across America and Around the World. The Museum Exhibit Hall is Marking its 30th Anniversary in August, 2018.

Poland and America Held the Same Ideals as is Seen in the Comparison of the World's First Democratic Constitutions

The Constitution of the United States of America was the world's first democratic constitution. Poland's Constitution of May 3, 1791, became the world's second and Europe's first constitution. Although Poland's parliamentary system of representative government began in the early 1400's, it was not until 1791 that political leaders achieved democratic reform of the government, nearly two years after the ratification of the American constitution. Both constitutions were drafted in secret and later publicly ratified.

Following the American model, the Polish constitution established a system of checks and balances with three independent branches of government - executive, legislative and judicial. Both constitutions stressed the principles of equality, tolerance, liberty, secret ballot and rule by majority.

Both constitutions established an executive branch, a king in Poland and a president in America, each with specific privileges and limitations, monitored by a two-house legislative branch: the Polish general assembly, or Sejm, with an upper Chamber of Senators and a lower Chamber of Deputies, and the U.S. Congress with a Senate and House of Representatives. The American vice president presided over the Senate and the Polish king presided over the Chamber of Senators, each casting the tie-breaking vote when necessary. The king and president served as commanders-in-chief of the armed forces and chief guardians of the law and appointed persons to high offices in government, such as chief advisors or ministers, ambassadors and supreme court justices. Unlike the U.S. Congress, however, the Polish Sejm had the power, by two-thirds majority of the combined houses, to force the King to remove an undesirable appointed official.

Both constitutions made provisions for change, amendments in the U.S. and a review of the constitution every twenty five years in Poland.

Also each nation's chief executive was selected by indirect election. U.S presidents were chosen by electors selected by state legislatures (the Electoral College), and the Polish king came from a prominent family selected by the Sejm. Only the House of Representatives and the Chamber of Deputies were elected directly by popular vote. Also, initially, American states selected federal senators and the Polish king appointed senators.

Both constitutions, landmarks in world history, were ultimately inspired by the principles of limited government, or shared authority, of John Locke and power to the people of Henri Rousseau.

next column -->



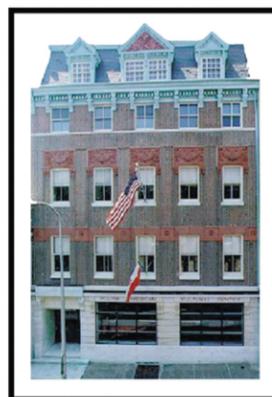
United States Constitution - First Democratic Constitution in the World
Drafted on September 17, 1787 - Ratified in 1789



Poland's Constitution - Second Oldest Written Democratic Constitution in the World
Drafted in 1788 - Enacted on May 3, 1791

"We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union...do ordain and establish this Constitution..." (U.S. Constitution, 1789)

"All authority in human society takes its beginning in the will of the people." (Polish Constitution of May 3, 1791)



Polish American Cultural Center

308 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106
(215) 922-1700

When You're in Philadelphia's Historic District Visit The **Polish American Cultural Center Museum Exhibit Hall**

308 Walnut Street
Featuring Polish History and Culture
Open 10 AM to 4 PM
FREE ADMISSION

January through April
Monday to Friday

May through December
Monday to Saturday

Gift Shop is Open During
Regular Exhibit Hall Hours

Closed on Holidays

Internet at: PolishAmericanCenter.com

PolishAmericanRadioProgram.com

Let Everyone Know You're



Join the
Polish American Congress
Eastern Pennsylvania District



POLISH AMERICAN News

308 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Telephone: (215) 922-1700
PolishAmericanCongress.com

April / May 2018

Read the Polish American News Online at:
PolishAmericanNews.com