

For Your Freedom and Ours

by Arthur Chrenkoff

There is an old Polish motto that says "For your freedom and ours." Many who live in advanced Western societies take their security and prosperity for granted. Poles, who have experienced so little of either over the past two centuries, are much more aware of how precious and precarious freedom is. They also understand that freedom is indivisible; that increasing it even in the remotest corner of the world enriches the whole of humanity. And so, for the past 250 years, Polish immigrants and exiles have been involved in many a struggle for independence and liberty around the world fighting for your freedom and if they weren't always able to fight for theirs.

You might be familiar with Pulaski Day, named after a Polish general who had died in the American War of Independence. History buffs might even be aware that the Texan artillery at Alamo was in the hands of Polish gunners, exiles from the failed Polish uprising of 1831. Australia's highest peak, Mt Kosciuszko, is named after a general and a freedom-fighter both in his native Poland and in the United States. And the American, British and Australian veterans of World War Two will remember fighting alongside Poles at Narvik, Tobruk, Monte Cassino, Arnhem, on the North Atlantic and in the Battle of Britain.

-- With permission from Arthur Chrenkoff --

Arthur Chrenkoff, Brisbane, Queensland, was born in communist Poland in 1972. He's a non-practicing lawyer currently working in politics.