

# CONTROVERSY AROUND

# NOVEMBER 11

**I**n the Second Polish Republic, there were sharp disputes over which date should be considered the day of Poland regaining independence. It was only in 1937 that November 11 became a public holiday.

The date of the holiday commemorating the rebirth of Poland was the subject of numerous controversies in the interwar period. Political forces differed as to which day of the fall of 1918 to celebrate. Until 1937, the only public holiday established by the Legislative Sejm in 1919 was the anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of May 3. The first public holiday took place only in 1937. It was established by the Sejm by an act in which it was written: The leader of the nation in the fight for the freedom of the homeland - it is a solemn Independence Day. It was a day off from work and schooling.

## The Celebration

On November 11, mainly military ceremonies were held. On that day, the transfer of military power to Józef Piłsudski by the Regency Council was celebrated. The signing of a ceasefire by Germany ending World War I in Compiègne, France was also celebrated. It was a solemn day, there were military parades, masses for the homeland, patriotic academies, state ceremonies, and the presentation of orders. Formally, November 11 was recognized as the date of regaining independence in 1926. Józef Piłsudski, who was then the prime minister, wrote in the ordinance that the Polish nation will celebrate "the eighth anniversary of the shedding of the yoke of slavery." Especially on the tenth anniversary, there was a solemn celebration, there was a solemn celebration of the army. Before the war broke out, the Independence Day



President Ignacy Mościcki during the Independence Day in 1938



The year 1926. Marshal Józef Piłsudski on horseback welcomes the army parade on Saski square

## IN THE COLOR OF POPPIES AND CORNFLOWERS

Great Britain, like several other Anglo-Saxon countries, commemorates this day of those who died in World War I. Red poppies are the symbol of remembrance in the UK. "Remembrance Day" is a day of reflection and reverence. At 11.00 am the memory of the fallen is honored with two minutes of silence. November 11 is also the national holiday of France and Belgium, the French symbol of the holiday is the cornflower. The main celebrations take place in Paris at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier under the Arc de Triomphe. In the United States, November 11 is celebrated as Veterans Day. It is both a national and state holiday. On this day there are ceremonial masses, parades, and volleys of honor are given in war cemeteries.



Slawoj Składkowski.

Supporters of Marshal Piłsudski considered the Marshal's arrival to Warsaw on November 10 from the Magdeburg Fortress proposed the day of November 5, referred to the establishment of the Kingdom of Poland by the emperors regaining independence. They also took into account the next day, when the Regency Council established the Provisional People's Government by the Austrian and German invaders gave him command of the army, or on November 14, when Piłsudski took over from the Council full political power. Conservative circles recognized that Poland became an independent country on October 7, when the Regency Council announced its independence. They also proposed the day of November 5, referred to the establishment of the Kingdom of Poland by the emperors regaining independence. They also took into account the next day, when the Regency Council established the Provisional People's Government by the Austrian and German invaders gave him command of the army, or on November 14, when Piłsudski took over from the Council full political power.

## Troublesome date

The May coup by Piłsudski ended the times of parliamentary-cabinet rule. Power was taken over by a group of politicians gathered around the Marshal. This camp, called Sanacja, wanted the independence celebration on November 11 to be of a state nature. However, Piłsudski himself was against it, he did not want to exacerbate the existing conflicts between political parties. He was afraid of the opposition's protests against spreading his followership.

## PIŁSUDSKI WAS AGAINST IT

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success of Greater Poland - and part of Gdansk Pomerania without the Free City of Gdansk. However, the fate of Warmia and Mazury and Upper Silesia, in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles, were to be decided by voting. The election in Warmia and Mazury took place on July 11, 1920 and was unfavorable for Poland. Only 3 percent, people were in favor of incorporating this area into Poland. As a result, the young state was granted only eight communes of Warmia and Mazury.

(March 20, 1921), which did not bring victory to Poland. 479 thousand people were in favor of the merger with Poland, and 708 thousand for staying within Germany. The reason for this result was that all people born in Upper Silesia and not only living there were allowed to vote. On October 20, 1921, by the decision of the Council of Ambassadors, 29 percent of plebiscite area and 46 percent of population were joined to Poland. The new Polish territory included, among others Katowice, Świętochłowice and Krolewska Huta (today's Chorzów).

### ... and the southern border

There was also a dispute with Czechoslovakia over Cieszyn Silesia, Orawa and Spisz. In

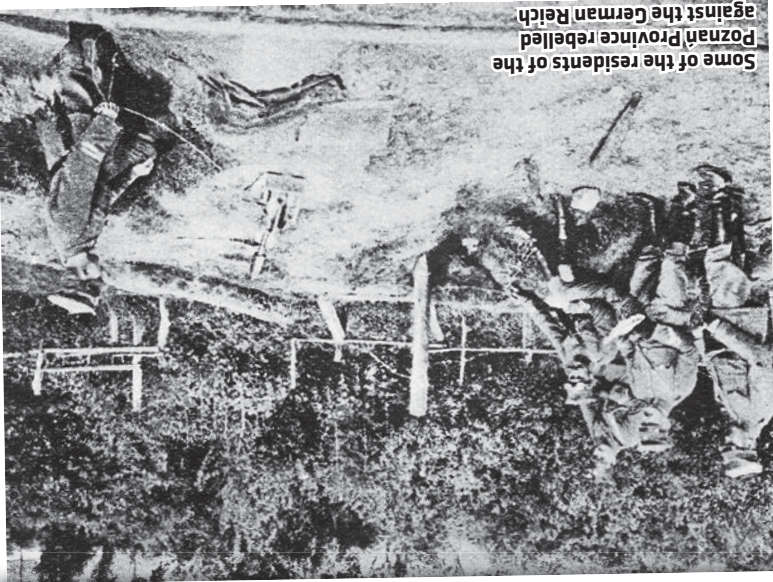
November 1918, the local authorities concluded an agreement on the division of the territory. The government in Prague did not recognize these decisions and in January 1919 Czech troops entered the disputed territory. Western powers joined the conflict. On July 28, the Council of Ambassadors granted Poland the eastern part of Cieszyn Silesia, also part of Spisz and Orawa.

Eastern Galicia was based on the line of the Zbrucz River, leaving Lviv, Tarnopol and Stanisławów on the Polish side. The signing of the Treaty of Riga (March 18, 1921) by Poland, Soviet Russia and Soviet Ukraine ended the Polish-Bolshevik war of 1920. According to the agreement, Poland regained the western part of Volhynia and Polesie

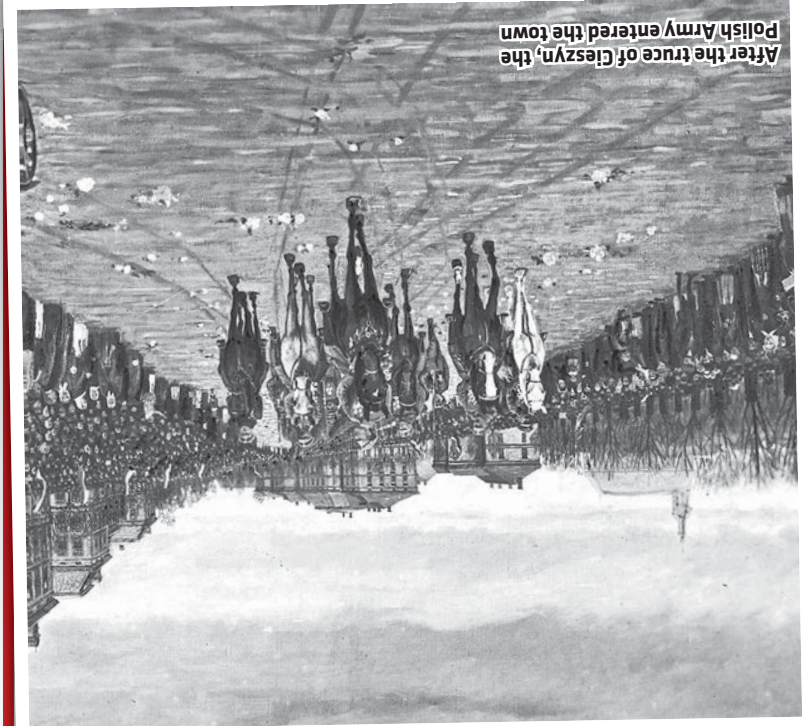
with Brest, Pinsk and Lutsk and the former lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with Grodno and Niasvizh. And in 1922, as a result of the decision of the Sejm of Central Lithuania, the Vilnius Region and Vilnius were incorporated into Poland. Finally, the Polish eastern border was approved by the Council of Ambassadors on March 15, 1923.



A poster from the beginning of the 20th century with the slogan "The Motherland is calling you!"



**Some of the residents of the Poznań Province rebelled against the German Reich**



**After the truce of Cieszyn, the Polish Army entered the town**



**Polish legionnaires** in Lviv in 1918

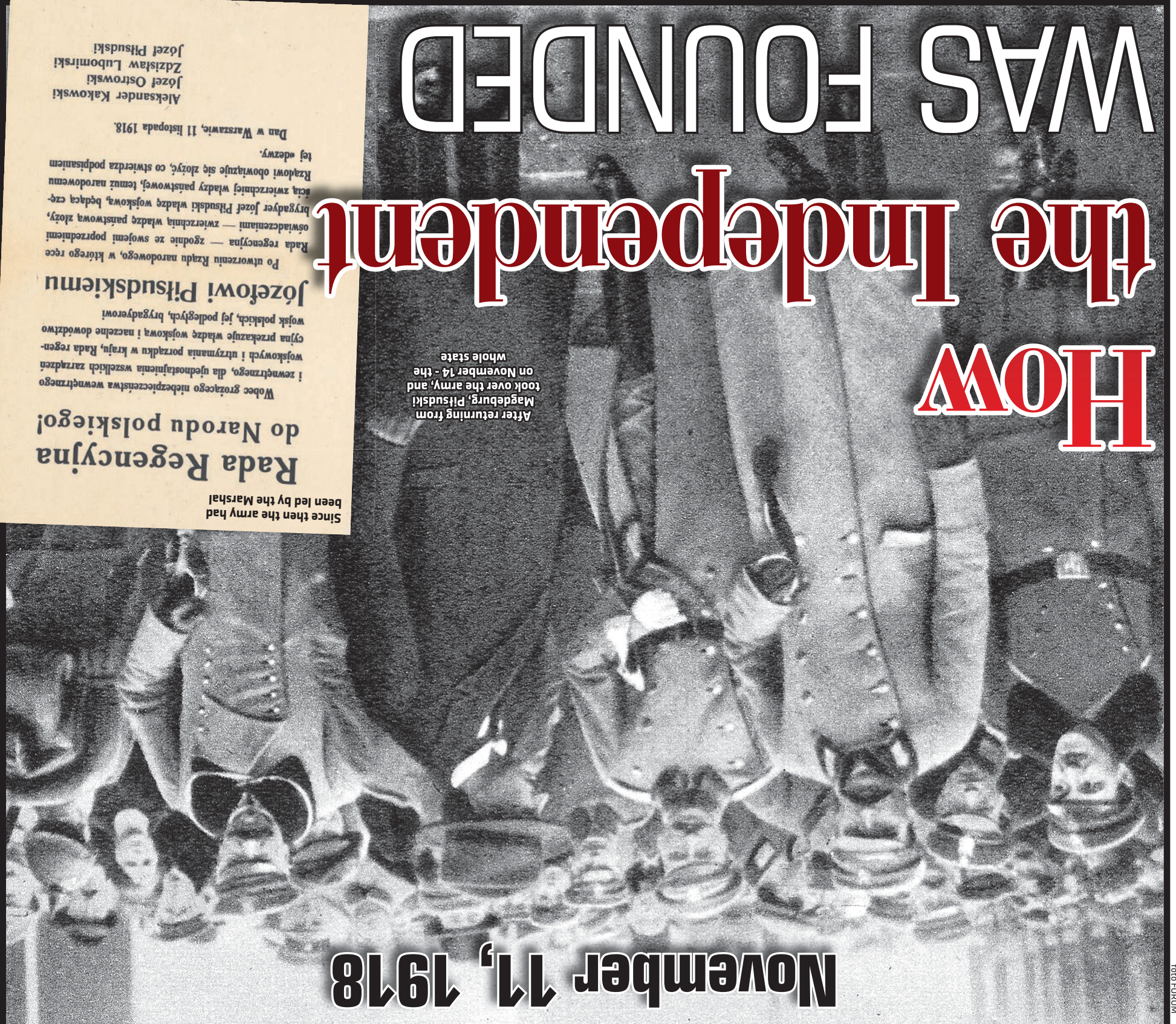






# THE SUPER STORY

November 11, 1918



## How the Independent WAS FOUNDED

After returning from Magdeburg, Piłsudski took over the army, and on November 14 - the whole state

**Rada Regencyjna do Narodu polskiego!**

Wobec grożącego niebezpieczeństwa wewnętrznego i zewnętrznego, dla ujednolicienia wszelkich zarządzeń wojskowych i utrzymania porządku w kraju, Rada regencyjna przekazuje władzę wojskową i naczelną dowództwo wojsk polskich, jej podległych, brygadierowi

**Józefowi Piłsudskiemu**

Po utworzeniu Rządu narodowego, w którego ręce Rada regencyjna — zgodnie ze swoimi poprzednimi oświadczeniami — zwróciła władzę państwową, będącą częścią, zwierzchniej władzy państwowej, temuż narodowemu Rządowi obowiązuje się złożyć, co stwierdza podpisaniem tej udezw.

Dan w Warszawie, 11 listopada 1918.

Aleksander Kakowski  
Józef Ostrowski  
Zdzisław Lubomirski  
Józef Piłsudski