

# Martial Law

<http://martiallaw.pl/swe/history/7444,History.html>  
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On December 13, 1981 the Military Council of National Salvation, which is headed by General Wojciech Jaruzelski, imposed martial law in Poland. On this day, the hopes of millions of Poles were crushed, while the chance of introducing democratic changes was lost for many years. For thousands of people and their families, martial law brought great suffering – isolation in internment camps, imprisonment, loss of employment, and numerous other repressions; what is more, tens of innocent citizens lost their lives.

History creates our identity. In the modern history of our country there was no other event that affected contemporary reality as forcefully as Martial Law. The experience of the illicit actions of the communist regime and the extremely widespread opposition to the dictatorship is still fresh in people's minds.

A broad social discussion continues, focusing first and foremost on the issue of whether the introduction of martial law and the crimes connected with this event may in any way be justified. A dispute still rages as to whether Poland in 1981 was threatened by the intervention of Warsaw Pact armies. The Institute of National Remembrance would like to facilitate the debate by presenting the basic facts, chronology of events, and testimony of witnesses on this website, as well as to enable a perusal of scientific publications and documentary films.

**History creates our identity. We study it in order to understand ourselves better.**



The genesis  
of Martial Law

The imposition  
of Martial Law

"Solidarity"  
goes underground



The apparatus of power  
during Martial Law