

Process Paper

Last year we researched the Quiet Revolution in Quebec for our History Day project. This year while searching for topics that related to the theme, it was suggested to us to look into the Solidarity Movement. We read more about the topic and found it intriguing. We saw that, like the Quiet Revolution, it was a unique, non-violent social movement. We enjoyed researching the Quiet Revolution last year and thought that because of its similarity to the Quiet Revolution, the Solidarity Movement would be a topic that would interest us and connect to the theme.

We started our research finding online websites, and checking out books on the basic building blocks of the Solidarity Movement. As we got into our research we visited libraries such as Wilson Library at the U of M, and the Minneapolis Central Library where we were able to find primary sources, access government documents, and use resources such as microfilm. We made many visits to the East Side Freedom Library to get feedback from their insightful volunteers. We attended two Hullabaloo's at Central Library in Minneapolis where we found informative sources and received helpful feedback. In addition, in December we went to a Polish museum in Winona, MN. There, we interviewed Father Paul Breza, who worked to share Polish history throughout Minnesota. There we found a book titled, *1980*, which helped guide our research. We also interviewed a professor from Macalester College and one from the University of Michigan. In February we interviewed Dr. Igor Tchoukarine, a professor at the University of Minnesota, and he gave us context on the Solidarity Movement compared to movements in other Eastern Bloc countries.

When choosing our project type, making a documentary really stood out to us because of how creative it allowed us to be. We had done a documentary last year, and it was a fun challenge to create our project and to work with different tools and explore many different visual options. Doing a documentary is more open ended than other project types which allows you to be more expressive and not have such a tight word limit. We have enjoyed doing a project type that challenges us to be creative and is unlike what we would do with a regular school project.

During the 1970s, tensions were rising in communist controlled Poland. The Polish workforce was angered by decreasing wages and the increasing prices of necessary goods. A growing number of citizen-led, non-violent protests reflected the common frustration of the Polish people. Out of these conflicts the Independent Self Governing Trade Union "Solidarity," or NSZZ Solidarność, was founded. Solidarity grew into a larger movement that represented the Polish people and triumphantly created a democratic government. The Solidarity Movement successfully overturned the tragic oppression of Polish citizens by the authoritarian government. The effects of the Polish people's stand for democracy redefined Poland and Eastern Europe.