

Erase the former Soviet debt!

Frankly speaking, sometimes the great search for Ivan Ivanovich among the forests and steppes of Russia seems strange.

Is it possible that it would please the West to see a reborn Soviet Union, greatly in debt and again a threat?

Is it possible that the erasing of all those debts would be too great a price for peace?

Is it possible that the choking of Russia with debts, while at the same time doing little to help it, really pays? So that some sort of Zhirinovskiy arises and sends western creditors to farther places than even Lenin or Stalin sent them?

Lithuania is observing the strangeness of the world and attempting not to add to it. Lithuania is working, reforming an economy, and creating a democratic state. And Lithuania thinks—and has said this more than once—that in those instances in which its factories or other concrete economic projects have used western credits, these debts, Lithuania would agree to repay. Not as an inherited obligation of the Soviet occupation, but in good faith—*ex gratia*.

We know that some western investors may be held back in the inflexibility of our laws, especially the reluctance to sell our land. We are thinking, discussing, these matters in parliament and in society. But when we hear today the question of the westerner: Is it completely safe or not? Will not the Soviets come again?—one desires to awake from the grotesque dream of paradise or desires that the questioner finally awake.

This history of our integration into the European free market can be continued. We are told: You will not get serious investments until you introduce your own currency. We tell them: Help us in introducing our own currency. We have already printed it. Extend a guarantee for our currency—a stabilization fund. Perhaps it will never be necessary like for Poland, but extend it nevertheless. It is not that large of a risk. We are told: Wait. The routine does not allow us to help you now. Stabilize on your own. That is your own problem.

The routine prescribes one should wait. The routine does not allow assistance at present, but the routine allows one to coldly watch from the other side of the barrier: Now what will follow in that Lithuania?

And I sometimes think—is it inevitable that we must divide into: we, they, you?

Is it that difficult to say “we” and to sit at a table that is stable enough for everyone?

Let all types of things be important to us.

Not only capital and guaranteed benefits, but moral investment, the security and proliferation of democracy, a common European future.

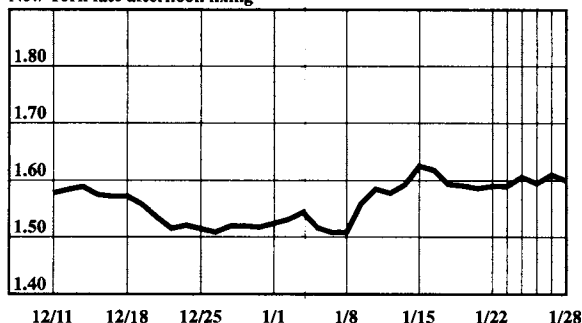
To invest carefully, to achieve guaranteed earnings, is very intelligent and important, but that is not the most interesting way to live.

Let us search for creativity in our lives.

Currency Rates

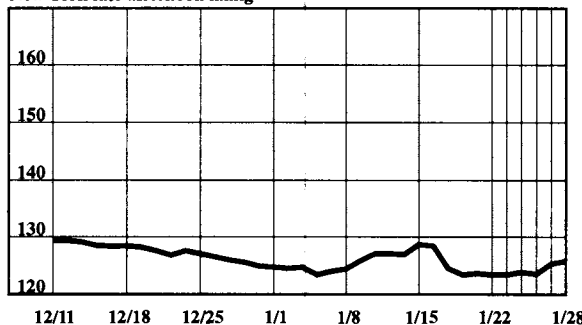
The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



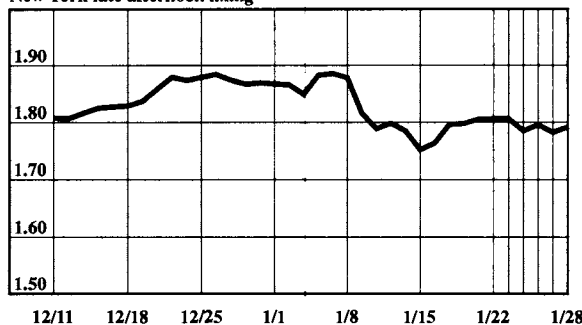
The dollar in yen

New York late afternoon fixing



The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing



The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing

