

Lithuanian Commemorative Coins

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50 LITAS COIN

ISSUED TO MARK THE 10th

ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE



Silver 925

Diameter 38.61 mm

Weight 28.28 g

The words on the edge of the coin:

FREEDOM IS AN ETERNAL WEALTH OF A NATION

Designed by – sculptor prof. Gediminas Karalius

Mintage 3 000 pcs

Issue 2000



At the start of World War II the independent state of Lithuania was occupied by the Soviet Union. The occupation, which lasted for more than half a century, imposed the Soviet way of life, repression, it suppressed the nation's memory, and destructed the cultural heritage. Once in the communist ghetto, the country faced the threat of being left on the roadside of civilisation. The progress achieved by the Republic of Lithuania in the pre-war period, intolerance towards Nazi and resistance to Bolshevik occupations were the key sources to arouse national self-consciousness and develop patriotic feelings. The patriotic activities of the Lithuanian émigré community and the non-recognition policy of Soviet occupation conducted by the world's most powerful states also stirred up the political consciousness of the people in the country.

Lithuania's national revival was embodied in the *Sajūdis* movement. It was the nation's natural reaction to the long decades of communist oppression and spiritual stagnation. In the summer of 1998 the movement turned into a nation-wide front in the fight for Freedom, Democracy, and Independence. The *Sajūdis*, led by scientific, artistic and social figures, strengthened its authority, and the participation of hundreds of thousands of people in mass events showed the power of the movement. The *Sajūdis* led the nation towards the parliamentary way to restore Lithuania's statehood.

The first democratic election to the Supreme Council of the Lithuanian SSR in February through March 1990 became the apogee of the fight for the restoration of the state of Lithuania. The results of the election showed that the majority of the population was self-determined in favour of Lithuania's independence and ready to give to the delegates elected the mandate of national representatives to restore it. The representatives nominated and supported by the *Sajūdis* received the majority of votes. In a short time, they prepared a package of documents and laws that restored the historical, legal and political grounds for Lithuania's statehood.

The session of the democratically elected Supreme Council of the Lithuanian SSR began on March 11, 1990 under the conditions of a growing menace from the East. Moscow did everything to stop the national movement and bar the way to the unitary state falling to pieces. The Supreme Council of the Lithuanian SSR faced a great challenge of adopting the documents on the restoration of the state and justifying the continuity of the Republic of Lithuania.

LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS AUKŠČIAUSIOSIOS TARYBOS

A K T A S

DĖL LIETUVOS NEPRIKLAUSOMOS VALSTYBĖS ATSTATYMO

Lietuvos Respublikos Aukščiausioji Taryba, reikšdama Tautos valią, nutaria ir iškilmingai skelbia, kad yra atstatomas 1940 metais svetimos jėgos panaikintas Lietuvos Valstybės suvereninių galių vykdymas, ir nuo šiol Lietuva vėl yra nepriklausoma valstybė.

Lietuvos Tarybos 1918 m. vasario 16 d. Nepriklausomybės aktas ir 1920 m. gegužės 15 d. Steigiamojo Seimo rezoliucija dėl atstatytos Lietuvos demokratinės valstybės niekada nebuvo nustoję teisinės galios ir yra Lietuvos Valstybės konstitucinis pamatas.

Lietuvos valstybės teritorija yra vientisa ir nedaloma, joje neveikia jokios kitos valstybės konstitucija.

Lietuvos valstybė pabrėžia savo ištikimybę visuotinai pripažintiems tarptautinėms teisės principams, pripažįsta sienų neliečiamumą, kaip jis suformuluotas 1976 metų Europos saugumo ir bendradarbiavimo pasitarimo Helsinkyje Baigiamajame akte, garantuoja žmogaus, piliečio ir tautinių bendrijų teises.

Lietuvos Respublikos Aukščiausioji Taryba kaip suvereninių galių reikėja šiuo aktu pradeda realizuoti visą Valstybės suverenitetą.

LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS AUKŠČIAUSIOSIOS TARYBOS PIRMININKAS

LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS AUKŠČIAUSIOSIOS TARYBOS SEKRETORIUS

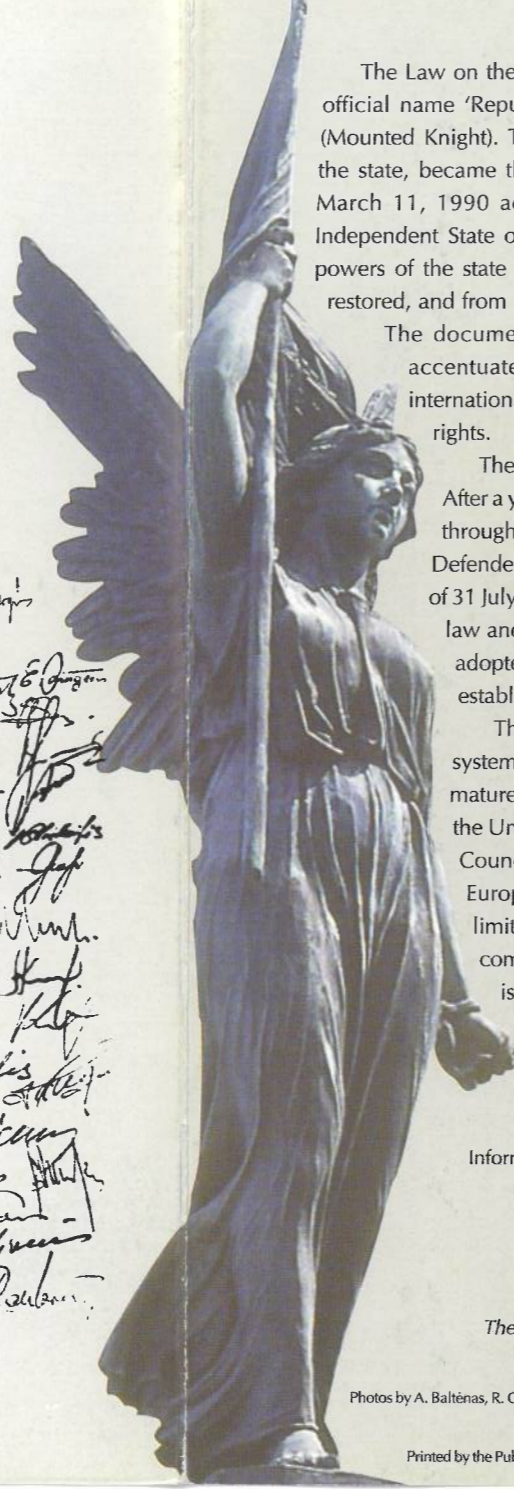
Vilnius, 1990 m. Rovo 11 d.

Vytautas Landsbergis

V. LANDSBERGIS

L. ŠABUTIS

Handwritten signatures of various Lithuanian officials and members of the Supreme Council, including names like Vladas Adamkus, Vytautas Landsbergis, and others.



The Law on the Name of the State and its State Emblem re-established the official name 'Republic of Lithuania' and reinstated the State Emblem, Vytis (Mounted Knight). The Soviet Supreme Council, upon authorisation to restore the state, became the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania and on March 11, 1990 adopted ceremonially the Act on the Restoration of the Independent State of Lithuania. The act stated that 'the exercise of sovereign powers of the state of Lithuania abolished by foreign force in 1940 is hereby restored, and from now on Lithuania is an independent state again'.

The document stressed the integrity and indivisibility of the state, accentuated the loyalty to the universally accepted principles of international law, and guaranteed human, civil and national community rights.

The Act of March 11th restored Lithuania's statehood *de facto*. After a year and a half of confrontation with the USSR, having survived through an economic blockade, the stressful tragedies of Freedom Defenders of 13 January 1991 and Medininkai border crossing point of 31 July 1991, the state of Lithuania became a subject of international law and politics. The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania was adopted in a national referendum on 25 October 1992 thus re-establishing the institution of the President as the head of the state.

The ten years of Independence witnessed the parliamentary system to become firmly established in Lithuania, civic society to mature, and a free market economy to develop. Lithuania joined the United Nations Organisation in 1991, became a member of the Council of Europe in 1993, and an associated member of the European Union in 1998. Lithuania has signed the treaties of limits with the neighbouring countries; it honours its international commitments and conventions in force. The Republic of Lithuania is associated with over 120 foreign states through diplomatic relations.

Dr Česlovas Bauža

Information is available at the Bank of Lithuania
Tel. (370 2) 68 03 16
Fax (370 2) 68 03 14
http://www.lbank.lt



The coin was minted at the Mint of Lithuania

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Photos by A. Baltėnas, R. Ginitaitis, S. Narkelūnaitė (from the collections of the National Museum of Lithuania)

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