

**January 19, 1990**  
**USSR: Foreign Ministry Says Baltics to be  
Independent**□□□

**Citation:**

"USSR: Foreign Ministry Says Baltics to be Independent", January 19, 1990, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Approved for Release by the Central Intelligence Agency, October 29, 2019. <https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/209533>

**Summary:**

An analysis of the Soviet Foreign Ministry's position to establish an eight-year transition period for Baltic states' independence and to refrain from using force.

**Original Language:**

English

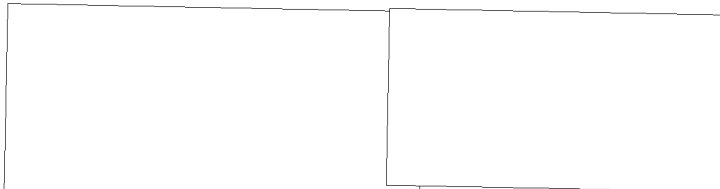
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USSR:

**Foreign Ministry Says Baltics To Be Independent**

The MFA expects both republics to declare independence after republic elections in February and March and hopes an eight-year transition period can be worked out during which agreements can be reached on such defense and foreign policy issues as the stationing of troops and basing rights in the republics. Moscow will not use force to prevent independence in the Baltics.

The MFA fears that Lithuanian extremists will push for complete independence in two to three years, making negotiations difficult. sharp differences in the Latvian leadership on the issue of independence, implying Latvia will move toward independence more slowly than the other two Baltic republics.

**Comment:**

key elements of the Soviet leadership are becoming reconciled to the likelihood of secession by the Baltic states. probably reflects President Gorbachev's assessment of the situation in the Baltics in light of the recent groundswell of Lithuanian public support for independence and his reluctance to use force. Moscow's eight-year timetable may be acceptable to Latvia, but a shorter transition period undoubtedly will be necessary for Lithuania and Estonia.

~~Top Secret~~TCS 2715/90  
19 January 1990

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