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use force or military coercion, however: such a move, including the dropping of leaflets, arrests of draft dodgers, and replacement of the republic procurator probably would lead to terrorist acts against Moscow-appointed republic authorities and even against authorities in Moscow. In effect, Moscow may have to choose between stopping at economic sanctions and political rhetoric, which would not stop the independence drive in Georgia, or escalate the conflict to include significant military coercion. [redacted]

The Events in Lithuania: Repercussions in Georgia

Both moderate groups have said that they are using the Lithuanian drive for independence as a model, and Georgians have been watching carefully the events in Lithuania. A large demonstration was held in Tbilisi on 24 March in support of Lithuania. Demonstrators condemned Moscow's behavior and demanded that the Georgian government officially declare Georgia has no economic claims on Lithuania. [redacted]

Gorbachev's reaction to the Lithuanian situation will have different implications to different groups of Georgian nationalists. The moderates are likely to see his hard line as further evidence that independence should be achieved gradually through negotiations, and that precipitate steps should not be taken. They would therefore not change their basic platform. Radicals, however, may perceive these events as proof that Moscow will never willingly allow a republic to secede and that Lithuania's peaceful approach was inherently faulty. They may therefore step up efforts to put teeth in Georgia's independence moves, by spearheading a drive to block military conscription in Georgia, pressing for dissolution of the republic Soviet as illegitimate and agitating--possibly violently--for withdrawal of the Soviet "occupation army" in Georgia. [redacted]

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