

# Iceland Votes To Recognize Lithuanian State

*Reuters*

REYKJAVIK, Iceland — Iceland's Parliament voted yesterday to recognize Lithuania as an independent state and instructed the government to set up diplomatic ties as soon as possible.

It was the first such move by a Western country since Lithuania declared itself independent from the Soviet Union last March.

The vote in the Althing — the world's oldest parliament — was 43 in favor, one against, with two abstentions and 17 members absent.

Iceland never recognized the Soviet Union's annexation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in 1940.

Several other Western nations have expressed support for the Baltic republics' drive for independence, but none has yet granted any of them diplomatic recognition.

Earlier yesterday, the Lithuanian parliament voted to make a declaration of an independent, democratic state — approved over the weekend by over 75 percent of all eligible voters — the basis of its proposed new constitution.

It also appealed to other nations to help restore Lithuania's independence.

Iceland's support for Lithuania's independence has already angered Moscow. A Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman last week condemned what he called its interference in Soviet internal affairs.