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EVIDENCE OF USSR MILITARY INTENTIONS  
IN SOVIET PROPAGANDA BROADCASTS

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 Office of Reports and Estimates

27 August 1948

EVIDENCE OF USSR MILITARY INTENTIONS IN SOVIET  
 PROPAGANDA BROADCASTS

The Problem: Are current Soviet radio broadcasts to USSR and Satellite nations (a) preparing them for possible hostilities, or (b) assuring them that war is unlikely?

Discussion: The overall pattern of monitored Soviet radio broadcasts to the USSR and the Satellites is not one of assurance that an eventual war is unlikely. The assumption of a possible future war with the West is implicit in Soviet propaganda since September, 1946, the month of Secretary Byrnes' Stuttgart speech and the resignation of Wallace from the Cabinet. Subsequently Soviet propaganda has had an explicit and vituperative anti-US, anti-Western, and anti-capitalist orientation. These US-Western-capitalist forces are portrayed as engaged in a constant struggle against the "forces of democracy", i.e., the USSR, the Satellites, and "progressive" elements everywhere.

Soviet radio propaganda contains two elements which logically could be expected if the USSR were preparing for immediate hostilities: (1) positive identification of the main enemy, i.e., the US; and (2) Soviet championship of peace.

On the other hand, Soviet broadcasts currently avoid or minimize important themes which could be expected to occur with considerable frequency if the Kremlin was preparing for early hostilities. Soviet propaganda is confined largely to generalized accusations against an "imperialist war-mongering enemy". The Soviet bloc is not portrayed as in danger of immediate

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military attack or invasion. War is never presented as a possible outcome of a specific international situation or incident. American policies are universally attacked, but are never depicted as reaching a point where they could no longer be tolerated by the USSR. The desirability of hating the Western "instigators of a new war" is almost wholly lacking in current broadcasts. Claims of military superiority over the US and its allies -- claims which would appear vital to the psychological preparation of the Soviet peoples for war -- are very infrequent.

The lack of emphasis on the themes outlined in the preceding paragraph, plus the general consistency between the pattern of current broadcasts and those of the preceding months, leads to the conclusion that the Soviet Union is not preparing for immediate war.

For a more detailed discussion of the relevant trends in Soviet radio propaganda, see Special Report of the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch, CIA, dated 27 August 1948, which is attached hereto.

Conclusions: Current Soviet radio propaganda apparently is not preparing the peoples of the USSR and its Satellites for early hostilities. Soviet broadcasts strongly imply, however, that ultimate armed conflict between the USSR and the Western world is probable.

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FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION BRANCH

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

SPECIAL REPORT

Degree of War-Mindedness of Current Soviet  
Radio Broadcasts to USSR and Satellite Nationals

(Date of Issue: 27 August 1948)

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The Problem: Are current Soviet radio broadcasts to USSR and Satellite nationals: (a) preparing them for possible hostilities; or (b) assuring them that war is unlikely?\*

It can be said without qualification that the overall pattern of monitored Soviet radio broadcasts to USSR and Satellite nationals is not one of assurance that war is unlikely.

On the other hand, the evidence relative to the converse question of whether the Soviet radio is preparing these nationals for possible hostilities is not as clear-cut, requiring qualification particularly with reference to the meaning of "possible hostilities." The assumption of possible eventual war has perhaps been implicit in (or at least not absent from) Soviet propaganda ever since September 1946, during which month Byrnes made his Stuttgart speech and Wallace resigned from the Cabinet. Since then, one of the most characteristic features of the Soviet radio's propaganda to USSR and Satellite nationals has been its ubiquitous and explicit anti-American-Western-capitalist-imperialist orientation; and insofar as the capitalist forces and governments of the West, headed by the United States, are portrayed as wholly evil and engaged in a constant struggle against the "forces of democracy" (identified with the USSR, the Satellites, and Communist-progressive groups elsewhere), the implication of an ultimate possible war at an indeterminate future time is not lacking.

With reference to the possibility of an imminent war, however, the Soviet radio currently slights or avoids several other propaganda elements that would also be expected to appear with considerable frequency if Moscow were engaged in propagandistic preparation for possible hostilities in the fairly immediate future.

Approaching the problem from another angle, a hurried and sampled quantitative study of Moscow's domestic and Satellite broadcasts over approximately the past two years has been made in order to determine whether there have been any significant shifts in the frequency of Soviet radio usage of selected key concepts considered pertinent to the subject of this report. The results of this study indicate that a persistent propaganda offensive against the United States and others associated with it was mounted shortly after Byrnes' Stuttgart speech and Wallace's resignation from the Cabinet in September 1946. This offensive, however, was not framed in terms of a propagandistic preparation for imminent war; and considering Soviet broadcasts (including current broadcasts\*\*) subsequent to the initiation of this anti-American

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\*This report was prepared in response to an urgent special request imposing a definite and restrictive time limitation. Of necessity, therefore, the analysis made could not include all of the detailed, systematic research techniques and methods that can and should be applied to the available material.

\*\*Arbitrarily defined as those monitored during the months of June, July, and the first two weeks of August 1948.

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campaign, it was found that the basic pattern of the offensive has not been very appreciably changed.

Current Soviet Broadcasts to USSR and Satellites

A. ELEMENTS TO BE EXPECTED IN PROPAGANDISTIC PREPARATION FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF IMMINENT WAR--AND APPRECIABLY PRESENT IN CURRENT SOVIET BROADCASTS

Identification and Portrayal of the Enemy: No quantitative count is necessary to establish the overwhelming presence of this propagandistic element in current Soviet broadcasts. As was the case when Moscow first launched its anti-American offensive, the United States is characterized as the power in which is combined all of the values and policies that from a Soviet and "progressive" or "democratic" viewpoint are to be feared, abhorred, and combatted. Nothing good is said about it--except for fairly persistent bows to American "progressive" forces, currently under Wallace's leadership; and even such references are made primarily as a means of giving further publicity to the evils of established American policies.\* The United States, whose foreign and domestic policies are dominated by Wall Street, monopolists, and imperialists, is portrayed in varying degrees of emphasis as anti-progressive, anti-democratic, imperialistic, expansionist, militaristic, war-mongering, a threat to peace, anti-Soviet, mendacious, a breaker of international agreements, a protector of fascists and Nazis, etc.

Soviet Championship of Peace: To judge by the content of Hitler's pre-war speeches, as well as of Roosevelt's speeches after 1939, considerable attention to and extensive self-championship of peace is another of the elements that can be expected to appear in the event of propagandistic preparation for imminent war. And this element is by no means absent from Soviet propaganda which portrays the USSR and its Satellites, in contrast to the United States and countries friendly to it, as the only nations defending, struggling for, and intent upon the cause of peace. This is held true of Soviet policy and actions throughout the world and in every international situation in which it has a part. In addition to Soviet concern for "democracy," practically every Soviet action or position on the international level is justified at one time or another by explicit references to the Soviet struggle for and defense of peace. (Relative to internal Soviet and Satellite affairs, less frequent allusions to peace--peacetime reconstruction, peacetime rehabilitation--are made.) Noteworthy, however, is the fact that among current Soviet broadcasts (1 June - 13 August 1948), studied quantitatively, explicit references to Soviet and/or Satellite concern for peace are made only one-tenth as frequently as explicit charges of imperialism, militarism, "bloc"-formation, aggression, etc., laid to the United States.

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\*It should be noted, however, that the Soviet anti-American campaign does not include the American "people" as an object of attack. And to the extent that the Wallace "progressives" and other "democratic" forces and groups are recognized and identified as some American elements for good, struggling against established government policies, striving for peace, desiring friendship with the Soviet Union, etc.--to this extent, it can be said that the Soviet portrayal of the U.S. is not completely and uniformly negative.

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Soviet and Satellite Danger vis-a-vis the U.S. and the West: A government preparing its people for the possibility of imminent war (unless it is planning a completely surprise attack, such as Hitler's on the Soviet Union) must establish a basis for such danger by more than generalized accusations against an imperialist, warmongering enemy. Identification of one's own nation or group of nations as endangered by the potential enemy is required. This Moscow does by explicit references to the "anti-Soviet" or anti-Satellite character of U.S., Western, imperialist conduct. But the majority of such references do not imply anything like imminent military action; such terms as "anti-Soviet propaganda and slanders" constitute the overwhelming bulk of them; and even charges implying some sort of action by the U.S., the West, etc., relate largely to "maneuvers" against the position of the Soviet Union at international conferences or in a vague, general area of world politics. The USSR and Satellites are never portrayed as in actual danger of military attack or invasion.

B. ELEMENTS TO BE EXPECTED IN PROPAGANDISTIC PREPARATION FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF IMMINENT WAR--BUT QUALIFIED, SLIGHTED, OR ABSENT IN CURRENT SOVIET PROPAGANDA

Soviet and Satellite Strength in Current Military or International Contexts: Again judging by the results of quantitative analyses of Hitler's pre-war speeches and of Roosevelt's speeches subsequent to 1939, as well as by the logical need for instilling and developing popular confidence, esprit and morale in anticipation of possibly imminent hostilities, propagandistic preparation therefor can be expected to include frequent allusions to self-strength in contexts explicitly or implicitly relevant to possible war. And this is one element that is most noticeably slighted, or at least not dwelt upon, in Moscow's radio propaganda. Among Moscow's current domestic and Satellite broadcasts, there are 6 times as many explicit references to U.S. "militarism," all in the context of international immorality, as there are to Soviet military strength. The relevant references to Soviet military strength that do appear are made almost entirely in terms of the past--e.g., the Great Patriotic War, the post-1917 intervention. Such items, occasioned primarily by anniversaries of military victories or by such events as Army, Navy, and Air Force Days, all contain statements about Soviet military strength; but these statements are only infrequently and sparingly extended to include general claims of Soviet military superiority to capitalism, or reminders to "instigators of a new war" to remember what happened to Hitler when he attacked this mighty bulwark of peace. The implications, however, are rarely spelled out further. Claims of superiority to capitalism are never framed in terms of "we have more," although claims of superior Soviet military design (e.g., heavy tanks) occasionally appear. Molotov's statement that the atomic bomb is no longer a secret was dropped almost immediately--nor has it reappeared in current Soviet broadcasts. And as to explicit identification of the United States (or any other country) as the nation that should remember Hitler's fate, the following items are practically unique:

"Under the debris of the war machine of fascist Germany there was buried not only the adventurous theory of the 'Blitzkrieg,'... but also the theory of 'war with small armies' in the elaboration of which the most prominent military theorists of bourgeois countries took part. The short-

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sighted politicians of the imperialist camp of the United States and Britain and their military theorists, dreaming of a new world war, are again trying to base themselves on the theory of the 'Blitzkrieg,' providing it with a new material base--the atom bomb. They ignore the experience of the Second World War which demonstrated the utter groundlessness of this theory." (From a RED STAR article by Major General Zubkov, quoted by TASS, in Russian Hellschreiber to the Slav areas, 14 August 1948)

On 23 and 24 January 1948, the Soviet Home Service broadcast excerpts from a series of PRAVDA articles by Sholokhov who wrote that U.S. imperialists, "seeking their salvation in war," are attempting to represent the USSR as defenseless and weak, as an easy prey to the swashbuckling Marlboroughs of the American legions." In refutation, he quoted from the "eloquent figures of the State Planning Commission" and told the story of a half-filled grave containing the skeleton of a German soldier from whose gaping mouth, "filled with fertile loam," rose a "curling shoot of convolvulos bearing its delicate flowers. Yes, indeed! We possess a great deal of fertile earth and we have more than sufficient of it to stuff the mouths of all who would dare to pass from talk of fatal encounters to action."

As to Soviet economic strength, more frequent comparisons are made between it and the capitalist economies--to which the Soviet Union is held infinitely superior. Here too, however, such claims are made in general, moralistic terms; it is the Soviet socialist "system" that is superior, not actual or specific production achievements. The latter is usually emphasized only in a purely internal context and is not put in a military or international frame of reference. (It is not "in order to be self-sufficient and prepared for war.")

The same may be said of Soviet references to Satellite strength, except that the Satellite military is almost never mentioned--even on anniversaries. Claims of Soviet-Satellite unity and cooperation, while prominent in Soviet broadcasts, rarely imply material strength against the West; rather, moral and political strength.

War as an Actual Possibility: Soviet radio propagandists, for all their talk about American and Western expansionism, militarism, and warmongering, studiously avoid any suggestion that war is an actual imminent possibility. Affirmations of Soviet and Satellite bravery and readiness to fight a specific enemy or in a specific situation, such as appeared frequently in Hitler's pre-war speeches ("if they want war, we are not afraid to fight") and more frequently in Roosevelt's speeches after 1939 than in those prior ("we must be ready for heroic sacrifices"), are almost completely absent from Soviet broadcasts. The rare charge, made some months ago, that the Greek situation was being developed by the U.S. and the "monarcho-fascists" into a war threat to Greece's northern neighbors was never elaborated nor emphasized; nor were even implicit inferences drawn as to the possibility of resistance by these Greek neighbors. War is never presented as a possible actual outcome of a specific situation or incident. The current Berlin situation, for example, is either discussed in relatively dispassionate, objective terms or its importance is minimized via derision of those who have allegedly blown it

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up into a major issue. American actions and policies in this situation and others, though thoroughly attacked, are not presented as if they were becoming completely untenable, as if they were reaching the point where they could no longer be tolerated by the Soviet Union.

Desirability of Hating the Western "Instigators of War": References to the desirability of hatred for the U.S., the west, imperialists, etc. (such as the explicit Soviet idealization of Nazi-hating and German-hating during the war) is another element that is almost wholly absent from current broadcasts. The one and only monitored item on this order appeared in January 1948 in the above-quoted PRAVDA article by Sholokhov who said:

"Let not our hatred of our foes grow cold even if he has been hung. Let it continue to rage with a ten-fold fury in our hearts towards those for whom there is no name in human language, towards those who have not yet satisfied their lust for profits derived from the blood of millions and who in their satanic and blind folly are preparing a new war for suffering humanity. ...while they live, and while like profligates they spend billions of dollars in the making of atom bombs and for the preparation of a monstrous war, let our indestructible hatred of them continue. It will come in handy at the right time."

#### The Trend of Soviet Radio Propaganda

In addition to examining current Soviet broadcasts with reference to propaganda themes and elements that would be expected were Moscow to be preparing its nationals for the possibility of imminent war, a quantitative study of selected themes appearing in Soviet broadcasts over the past two years has been made to determine the degree to which the pattern of current Soviet broadcasts is different from those of the prior period. As mentioned above, it was found that Moscow's systematic propaganda campaign against the United States was not mounted until after September 1946. Assuming that this campaign was not initially undertaken by Moscow in propagandistic preparation for the possibility of imminent war, one could expect an appreciable difference between the pattern of this initial campaign and the pattern of current broadcasts if Soviet propagandists were now engaged in such a preparation. The results of this study, however, indicate a remarkable general consistency between the thematic pattern of current broadcasts and that of the preceding months.

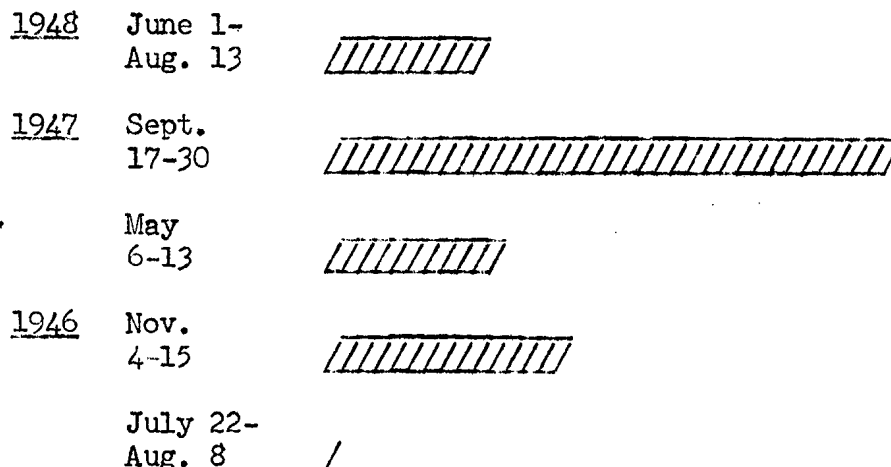
A. THE "WARMONGERING" THEME: References to war and peace were made with great frequency in Hitler's pre-war speeches, and were much higher in Roosevelt's speeches after 1939 than before. Judging thereby (as well as by other social-psychological considerations), one could expect an appreciable increase in such references in Soviet propaganda if Moscow were to undertake a program of preparation for the possibility of imminent war. But this is not the case with the two themes--U.S., Western, imperialist warmongering; and Soviet-Satellite defense of peace--taken as representative of such war-peace references in Soviet broadcasts to USSR and Satellite nationals.

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The following graph presents the relative frequency of Soviet use of the term "warmongering" (or its equivalents) during selected periods over the past two years:



It should be noted that the period 17-30 September 1947 during which the theme was most prominent immediately followed Vishinsky's "warmongering" speech at the General Assembly which the Soviet radio played for all it was worth. What is significant, however, is that this campaign against "warmongers" was allowed to recede to approximately the same diffuse level it occupied prior to the speech. Nor, despite recent official Soviet protests over "warmongering" press and periodical articles, has it since been revived in anything like the volume accorded it immediately subsequent to Vishinsky's excoriation.

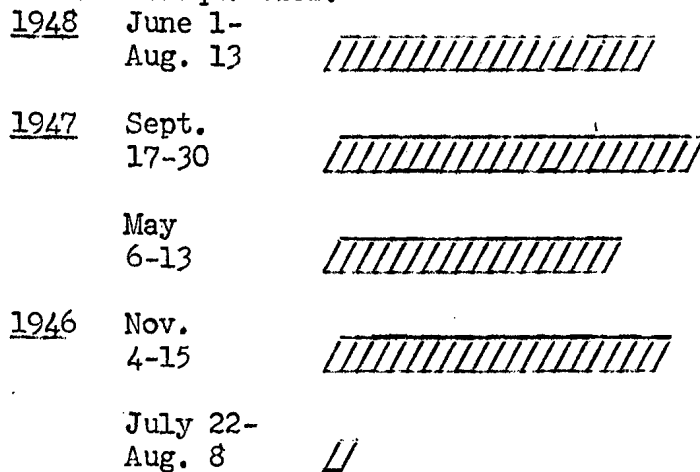
There has been somewhat more variation in explicit references to Soviet support of peace; but the variations that do occur do not represent anything like a trend in any particular direction. In general, they reflect temporary attention to such events as Hugh Baillie's and Stassen's interviews with Stalin and the Smith-Molotov exchange, when references to the issue of peace and the Soviet defense of it rose perceptibly. These campaigns, however, do not continue; and currently such references are relatively fewer than they were during the period of 6-13 May 1947. In general, Soviet protestations of peace have been made less frequently than Soviet charges of "warmongering."

B. U.S. IMPERIALISM, EXPANSIONISM, ETC.: Of all the concepts used to describe or attack American policy, that of "imperialism" appears the most frequently. Carrying dynamic, aggressive connotations, the term (or its equivalents) is used to portray the U.S. as a driving, expansionist power intent upon the domination of the world. Here, too, one could expect an appreciable increase in frequency of such references if the Soviet propagandists had currently launched a program of preparation for the possibility of imminent war. The evidence indicates otherwise, however; for in the periods (since the anti-American offensive began) selected for study, the

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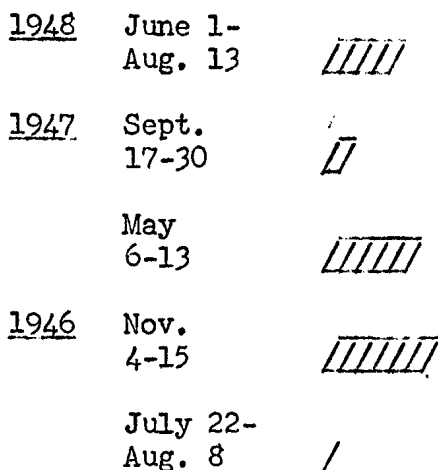
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frequency of explicit references to U.S. "imperialism" (or its equivalents) has remained remarkably constant, as indicated in the following graph presenting these relative frequencies:



C. "AGGRESSIVE" WESTERN, U.S. POLICIES--"ANTI-SOVIET," ANTI-SATELLITE--"TWO CAMPS"--SOVIET AND SATELLITE STRENGTH (in military or international contexts): Similar consistency and uniformity of usage is apparent for each of these, references to which could be expected to increase noticeably were a Soviet propagandistic preparation for the possibility of imminent war currently under way.

"Aggressive" Western, U.S. Policies: Only explicit usage of the terms "aggressive" or "aggression" (which appeared with markedly increased frequency in some of the Berlin radio's campaigns of preparation for imminent hostilities during the war) was counted.








"Anti-Soviet" Anti-Satellite: Again, only explicit references to the terms (or their equivalents) were counted. It should be noted that this is the only element of those quantitatively studied whose frequency of use prior to the mounted anti-American campaign was at the same relatively high level occurring during most of the selected periods subsequent to the launching of this campaign. The atypical frequency in the period 4-15 November 1946 was a function of Hugh Baillie's interview with Stalin which was used to

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berate and deride those who previously ascribed aggressive or trouble-making intentions to the Soviet Union.

<u>1948</u>	June 1- Aug. 13	
<u>1947</u>	Sept. 17-30	
	May 6-13	
<u>1946</u>	Nov. 4-15	
	July 22- Aug. 8	

"Two Camps": Although this term (implying that the world is divided into two hostile, irreconcilable camps, the one headed by the democratic, peace-loving Soviet Union and the other by the warmongering, imperialistic, anti-democratic U.S.) is used occasionally, its frequency of appearance is consistently very limited.

<u>1948</u>	June 1- Aug. 13	
<u>1947</u>	Sept. 17-30	/
	May 6-13	/
<u>1946</u>	Nov. 4-15	
	July 22- Aug. 8	-

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Soviet and Satellite Strength: Here, only references to strength in a military or international context (implied or explicit) were counted.

<u>1948</u>	June 1- Aug. 13	////
<u>1947</u>	Sept. 17-30	/
	May 6-13	//
<u>1946</u>	Nov. 4-15	////
	July 22- Aug. 8	//

D. U.S. "MILITARISM"--"BLOC"-FORMATION: Of all the elements selected for quantitative study on the basis of an expected rise in their frequency of use in the event of propagandistic preparation for war, these two are the only ones showing an appreciably greater usage in current broadcasts than in those of the selected periods prior to 1 June 1948.\*

U.S. "Militarism": Explicit use of the term (or equivalents) was counted, as well as such charges that the U.S. is acquiring military bases throughout the world, is reviving German and Japanese military potential, etc.

<u>1948</u>	June 1- Aug. 13	////////////////////
<u>1947</u>	Sept. 17-30	////////////////////
	May 6-13	////////////////////
<u>1946</u>	Nov. 4-15	////////////////////
	July 22- Aug. 8	/

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\*There has also been a slight, although not statistically significant, rise in frequency of implied or explicit references to the desirability of East-West trade.

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American "Bloc"-Formation: All explicit references to the Brussels Pact, the Western Union, "bloes," and Western or U.S.-inspired military alliances were counted.

<u>1948</u>	June 1- Aug. 13	
<u>1947</u>	Sept. 17-30	
	May 6-13	
<u>1946</u>	Nov. 4-15	
	July 22- Aug. 8	/

Both of these appreciable increases are intelligible on the basis of events during the first few months of 1948. The increase in references to U.S. militarism can be plausibly related to President Truman's preparedness speech in March, the 7-group air force, etc. And the increase in references to "bloc"-formation can be related to the actual formation of the Western Union and to discussions relative to the addition of other countries to it; there has been special Soviet emphasis recently on the undesirability of Scandinavian participation in this alignment.

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