ley is a trial balloon of major importance. The public reaction to its proposals to gut the act's protections of the public and individual workers will determine whether it is abandoned or whether it is just the beginning of additional concessions to union power. The proponents of the sell-out are doing their best to minimize the importance of the message while they quietly encourage their friends to record their support of it. That also is a recognized part of the trial balloon technique.

But if enough people refuse to be lulled to sleep and protest vigorously, as happened on Taft-Hartley itself in 1947 and on the steel strike in 1952, they can get results. There is no doubt that President Eisenhower wants to be fair to all groups. So do many of his advisers. But unless they hear from the people, they may be persuaded that the things proposed in the trial balloon message are not so bad after all.

If you want to make your own opinion count, there is a simple way to do it. Write a letter or send a telegram to the President at the White House. Do the same thing to members of the cabinet. Write, wire, or talk to your representative and senators. Do the same to your Republican state chairman and national committeeman. And be sure to talk to the individual to whom you contributed G.O.P. campaign funds last summer and fall.

You don't have to go into details on the proposed Presidential message in your letters or wires. They will know all about that. But if you believe the restrictions on compulsory union membership should be strengthened, not weakened; that secondary boycotts hitting innocent third parties are rackets which should be completely prohibited; that the billions going annually into union welfare funds should be safeguarded so the individual worker's rights are protected; that the growing union power demonstrated in recent years shows that further curbs rather than greater license is the real need, then say so.

You can be sure that your message will count. And as of now, it looks as if only a flood of such messages can keep Taft-Hartley from being amended into a more one-sided and biased statute than was the old Wagner Act.

Has Russia Got the A-H Bombs?

By ROBERT DONLEVIN

The report of an underground organization backs up doubts expressed in Washington.

Premier Malenkov's announcement that the Soviet Union has the H-bomb was aptly timed. It was made just as the dictator needed to strengthen his hand at the coming Korean peace parley and in such Moscow-directed projects as the Communist rebellion in Indo-China. Doubts that the announcement was true were expressed in Washington. Then the U.S. Long-Range Detection Project picked up air samples indicating that a thermonuclear explosion had taken place in the Soviet Union on August 12, and headlines around the world confirmed the Kremlin's claim to the H-bomb.

Is there evidence that the explosion came from a thermonuclear weapon? Or was it similar to an atomic explosion which took place in Russia in 1949, and was attributed to an atomic bomb?

Allied intelligence authorities have in their hands a report backing up the skepticism which former President Truman expressed last January when he told a newsman that he "was not convinced Russia has the [atomic] bomb." The source of this report is a reliable Soviet underground organization that has been able to set up intermittent courier contact with the free world, and is vouched for by some highly competent experts in Soviet affairs. The report related that the first atomic explosion in the U.S.S.R., recorded in 1949, was either an accident or sabotage, but definitely not an atomic bomb. Although the data on the second and third explosions, which occurred two years later, was less detailed, it was reported that this active, if limited, underground organization is convinced that these explosions were not produced by bombs either.

According to the report, a hospital located in southern Russia was suddenly filled with wounded soldiers in September 1949. A heavy guard was thrown around the hospital but news of the arrivals soon leaked out and rumors spread like wildfire that war had broken out. The soldiers had a different story. They recounted that some months previously they had been loaded on cattle cars of a train and sent eastward. When they asked their officers where they were going they were told, Mongolia. However, they got off the train near the city of Narym on the Ob River in Siberia and were marched to what they described as a newly-built factory city surrounded by a high cement wall topped off with barbed wire and guarded by constantly patrolling sentinels. The entire population was in uniform except for a few German civilians. It was an atomic experimental station. They were employed as unskilled and semi-skilled labor in preparing uranium ore for use in the experiments. The population of the city was estimated at 25,000.

One day late in the summer of 1949 a terrific explosion rocked the site. Of the 25,000 soldiers engaged in the work 8,000 dead were identified; 3,000 were seriously injured; 1,000 suffered lighter injuries, and the remaining 13,000 disappeared without a trace. It is believed that the missing were those suffering from atomic blast burns. They may have been either executed or hospitalized elsewhere in a completely isolated area to prevent leakage of knowledge of the disaster—each one being living testimony to a monstrous accident.

Explosion or Weapon?

Knowledge of this report may have influenced Mr. Truman's expressed doubt that the Soviet Union could manufacture a workable atomic bomb. But the ensuing confusion was not hard to explain. Hadn't Secretary of State Dean Acheson "assumed" that the first announced atomic explosion came from a weapon? Hadn't U. S. Atomic Energy Commissioner Gordon Dean stressed as far back as January 1951 that the Soviets possessed the A-bomb? Finally, hadn't White House press secretary Joseph Short released a statement on October 3, 1951 that "*another* atomic *bomb* has been exploded in the Soviet Union" and that the USSR "is *continuing* to make atomic weapons" [italics mine]?

When called on it, Mr. Truman confirmed his statement but refused to elaborate beyond alleging that those of his congressional foes who criticized him for it were "scaring a lot of Americans to death with some irresponsible statements in the atomic bomb controversy."

The President's announcement of the first recorded atomic explosion in the Soviet Union on September 22, 1949, made no mention of a bomb.

How did we know of such an explosion in the first place? There are three ways to detect an atomic blast:

1. By examining samples of earth taken from around the blast area.

2. By examining air samples which may be taken even at great distances from the blast area. A nuclear explosion of significant proportions causes a measurable increase in the radioactivity in the air, even thousands of miles away. This increase registers on any one of the many devices we have around the Iron Curtain, either on the ground, at sea, or in high-flying aircraft. Air samples also reveal something about the nature of the blast.

3. Through intelligence.

Method One poses the extremely difficult problem of having someone near the spot, at least shortly after the blast, capable of transmitting samples of soil outside the Iron Curtain. But in any case, Methods One and Two have a severe limitation. They cannot distinguish between the blast of an atomic bomb or other atomic weapon and the blast that would occur if a nuclear reactor or a stockpile of plutonium or U-235 should blow up, either by accident or through sabotage.

Writing in the *Washington Post,* Dr. Ralph E. Lapp, one-time executive director of the Research and Development Board of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and former head of nuclear physics work for naval research said: "Our Central Intelligence Agency is known to depend upon the instruments of our Long-Range Detection Project for its intelligence data about Soviet bomb tests."

The only way we can know definitely whether or not an atomic explosion in the U.S.S.R. was set off by a weapon is through intelligence, which also has other—human—limitations.

After Mr. Truman had expressed his doubts about the Russians' capacity to manufacture a workable atomic bomb, Lieutenant General Leslie Groves, wartime head of the Manhattan Project, said that the President may have been right. "All we know is that there were indications of nuclear explosions in Russia," he asserted on January 29, 1953. "That does not prove that they have the bomb in workable form." General Groves later qualified that remark by saying that the Russians should have the capability to produce an atomic bomb and it would be "foolhardy to assume they did not have one."

Even stronger was a statement by Dr. Arthur Compton, winner of the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1927 and a top atomic scientist during World War Two. He said that Russia had the scientific knowledge to make an atomic bomb but whether she could "put a workable atomic bomb together is highly problematical." When queried on his statement some time later, he said he would like to omit the word "highly." He felt, as did General Groves, that it would be foolhardy to proceed on the assumption that Russia did not have the bomb.

On the other hand, President Eisenhower, who may have viewed Truman's statements uncharitably because he would soon have to present a huge national defense budget to an economy-minded Congress, twice declared that there is "incontrovertible evidence" that Russia has the atomic bomb.

The conflict is not easy to resolve, even for the experts, but certain guideposts may be useful. The late Secretary of Defense, James Forrestal, reported in the September 28, 1948 entry in his published *Diaries* that Lieutenant General Walter Bedell Smith, former Ambassador to Russia, had told him "the Russians cannot possibly have the industrial competence to produce the atomic bomb now, and it will be five or even ten years before they could count on the manufacture of it in quantity. They may well now have the 'notebook' know-how, but not the industrial complex to translate that abstract knowledge into concrete weapons."

In an article in the *Saturday Evening Post* (June 7, 1952) atomic spy Klaus Fuchs was said to have