P.S. to the NEWS
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FOREIGN HANDOUTS

One of the many good effects we can hope for from the recent passage of the new amendments to the Freedom of Information Act is the declassification and release of State Department documents spell ing out the full extent of U.S. foreign aid, and what individuals have profited at our expense.

Information already available proves that total foreign aid expenditures are quadruple the publicly stated figure of about $3½ billion a year. An additional $10 billion is hidden under other items in the Federal budget, such as contributions to the International Development Association, or the Asian Development Bank, or the Inter-American Development Bank, or the United Nations Development Program, or the Export-Import Bank.

The only rational explanation for the way Congress continues, year after expensive year, to vote for foreign handouts, in spite of overwhelming opposition from their constituents, is that there must be powerful behind-the-scenes pressure from groups secretly making money out of the program, including big business, banks, law firms and other consulting firms, colleges and universities.

The $14 million that the Export-Import Bank gave to a shaky Asian enterprise called the Siam Kraft Paper Company is a good ex ample of why those on the inside in Washington are constantly promot ing foreign handouts. The best-known individual investors were Export-Import Bank President Henry Kearns and the then Secretary

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of Commerce Maurice Stans. When the company began to go obviously sour, the Export-Import Bank poured in more money, reduced the in terest rates, and extended the deadline for repayment past the life expectancy of Kearns or Stans.

In addition to the loss to the American taxpayers, hundreds of.Thai citizens who invested in good faith were left holding the bag with a $4½ million loss.

More serious than such waste of our hardearned money is the foreign aid we are giving the Soviet Union. AFL-CIO President George Meany's recent statement on this subject to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is the greatest anti-Communist speech of the last ten years.

He gave the facts, in dollars and cents, of how American workers are being taxed to send hundreds of millions of dollars in handouts to the Soviet Union, correctly labeling this "economic aid ••• a welfare program!" Mr. Meaey said: "In the past year and a half, the Eximbank lent the Russians almost $469 million -- most of it at 6 per cent and a small portion at 7 per cent. What American worker can get a loan at 6 or 7 per cent? You can't get a mortgage under 10 unless you're lucky."

Mr. Meany concluded with this warning: "Let me suggest that there is a limit to the patience of the average American citizen. He's no dope. He knows he's being ripped off from every angle."

That's right, he is. And one of the biggest ripoffs is the racket called foreign aid.

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