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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

President Gerald.Ford's veto of the amendments strengthening the Freedom of Information Act provides new proof that this All American football player is becoming the victim of a bureaucratic blitz, and that he is losing touch with the thinking of the Ameri can people.

The new amendments to the Freedom of Information Act would have put teeth into the present law passed in 1966, but since then nullified by the courts. The new amendments would have made it realisticaily possible for a citizen to sue in Federal Court to force a Government agency to declassify documents and release them to the public.

When President Ford vetoed the new amendments, he gave in to heavy pressure from the Federal bureaucracy, instead of abiding by the overwhelming votes in the Congress.

The amendments contained adequate safeguards so that they would not require the release of information legitimately classified, such as the location of our submarines and bombers. Nor would they require releasing personal information such as medical reports. But they would have opened the door on classified documents which have been wrongfully kept secret under the phony cover of "national security" or "delicate foreign relations."

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In the last several decades the Federal bureaucracy has re-

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peatedly used the false claim of "national security" to hide from the American people information we have a right to know. This power of classification has been used for three purposes:

1) To hide partisan political activities, as was done in the case of the burglary of the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist.

2) To hide secrets of the SoviFt Union so the American people will not know Soviet intentions and capabilities of waging nuclear war.

The most flagrant example of this is the suppression of the Krem lin documents sent to this country in 1962 by Colonel Oleg Penkovskiy which spell out Soviet war plans. In a suit brought under the pres ent Freedom of Information Act, the Federal judge refused even to look at the documents. He relied exclusively on the Pentagon's un proved assertion that national security required continued classifi cation.

3) The third type of material hidden from the American people by the device of classification is info-rmation that could prove damaging to the reputations of powerful politicians. Examples are the continued suppression of the documents of the Teheran Conference of 1943, and of the Operation Keelhaul papers which tell about the forcible repatriation of anti-Communist Russians at the end of World War II.

It is ridiculous to claim that the release of these 3O-year old documents would harm national security.

Congress should repass over the President's veto the amendments to strengthen the Freedom of Information Act. The American people deserve to know the truth about our national security.

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