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NOTICE OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING

The next regular meeting will be held Thursday, January 16th, 1958, in Room 208, Union Station, Portland, at 8:00 P.M. New officers elected to serve during the year of 1958 will be installed. A good resolution for the new year would be to attend all meetings if possible.

WHEN IN ROME

American tourists in Italy invariably exclaim with delight when they first set eyes on Rome's imposing new railway station a mile-long marble and glass edifice that is as big as all the railroad stations in New York, Chicago and Cleveland combined, and much, much fancier. "Why," sighs the dazzled tourist, "don't we have railroad stations like this back home?"

The answer is simple. While the U. S. government does not finance the construction of railroad stations for its own citizens, it does finance them, and handsomely, in such faraway places as Rome.

And stations aren't all. In the last decade U.S. taxpayers, through a little gimmick known as counterpart funds, have shelled out over \$1.3 billion to help support the socialized transportation systems of foreign countries. Over half of this - some \$557 million - has gone to foreign rail systems to finance such projects as the Rome station.

For example, America's taxpayers have generously turned over \$442.5 million to Europe's rail systems, including \$220.8 million to Italy's railroads, \$125.1 million to France's SNCF, \$18,400,000 to the German Federal Railways, and \$11,000,000 to Yugoslavia's railroads.

It is harder to determine just how much went to the railroads of the Near East, South Asia, the Far East and Latin America, since these areas report "transportation" aid without distinguishing between rail, air, highway and water transport. But if, as in Europe, they got half of all aid earmarked for transportation, their share was \$114 million.

This \$557 million which the U.S. has turned over to foreign railroads does not, of course, include some \$600 million that has gone to these same railroads in dollar loans which we hope will be paid back.

This half a billion bonanza, which won't be paid back, came out of a little understood lump of money called counterpart funds.

Whenever the U.S. government extends dollar aid to foreign countries - outright grants, not loans - the recipient country generally puts up an equal amount of cash in its own currency, in effect "buying" the dollars. This U.S. - created counterpart fund is then spent by the recipient country on "mutual security objectives agreed to jointly with the U.S."

It works that way, with some variations, throughout the world. Between April, 1948, and June 30, 1957, U.S. aid dollars generated counterpart funds totaling over \$15 billion. Aside from the \$1.3 billion of this which went to bolster the world's socialized rail, air and truck lines, most of the funds went to bolster faltering nationalized industries, such as coal and steel interests.