

Freedom's Outlook Brighter This July 4

HOORAY for the U.S.A.! The outlook for continued independence of our nation and freedom for the people is somewhat brighter this Fourth of July than it has been for some past celebrations.

Freedom was a novelty in 1776 when the Declaration of Independence separated the 13 American colonies from a government that had imposed excessive regulations and taxes upon them.

The colonists were not against government; they were just against too much government. They were not against taxes; they were against taxes levied without the taxpayers' consent.

Contemporary Americans again are trying to convince Congress and the administration that they want to lift the load of excessive regulations and unnecessary tax burdens.

President Reagan apparently is making headway, but he is encountering stiff opposition from congressmen who appear to be concerned only about their own political futures, from bureaucrats whose jobs depend upon continued redis-

tribution of the nation's wealth by law, and from beneficiaries of scores of federal subsidy programs.

Patriotism of those who are obstructing efforts to stem inflation and balance the budget is not questioned. They are true Americans. Their country comes first — after their own interests.

Other groups are demanding "rights" that may be subject to question. Their selfish demands (and practices) often overstep the bounds of fairness and infringe upon the rights of others.

Perhaps the foremost issues in this area involve fundamentals of civilization, culture, morality and economics. People who insist they have a right to drink-and-drive, get high on drugs, gamble on horses, and view pornographic movies and TV aren't satisfied with having access to these diversions. They insist upon forcing their preferences upon those who do not want them.

Then they loudly proclaim it is unconstitutional for any government-

al, religious or civic group to impose its will upon them.

The criminal element also intrudes upon our freedom and threatens our security constantly. Much of this growing problem stems from official misconceptions about whose rights should take precedence: those of guilty criminals or those of victimized citizens.

As Americans, we should realize that we are among a minority of world people who have anything at all to say about our government.

According to a survey by Freedom House, announced in January, 64.1 percent of the world's population is classified as "not free" or "partly free." Those living in freedom declined 1.1 percent in 1980.

The United States of America is classified as a free nation. We hope that it may remain that way. At the moment, the greatest threat to our freedom does not appear to come from any totalitarian nation. It is from our fellow citizens who unfairly demand more than their share.