

Flag Day Time to Show Our Patriotism

OUR NATION'S flag is a symbol of freedom. Next Tuesday, June 14, has been designated as "Flag Day," when lovers of freedom display our national emblem. At least some of them will.

The date for Flag Day was chosen because on June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress approved a resolution specifying that "the flag of the United States be made of 13 stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be 13 stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation."

The number of stars has been changed as new states were added, reaching 50 when Hawaii was admitted to the union in 1960. The number of stripes is unchanged but our attitudes toward our flag have soared and slumped as patriotism was praised or ridiculed.

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands; one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all," is a vow that should inspire anyone.

Most people over 40 learned the pledge in school but it has not been

taught with consistency since World War II. The ACLU has filed lawsuits objecting to its use in the classrooms and in some schools the phrase "under God" is omitted when the pledge is recited. Teachers or pupils may refuse to recite the pledge.

Many businesses, government buildings and a few citizens fly our flag every day of the year. It would seem that the rest of us who appreciate our country could find time to raise Old Glory on patriotic occasions and salute it after pledging our allegiance.

Last year the majority of people did not do so. Instead of flag decorated streets making news headlines and TV time, those spots were captured by draft dodgers and demonstrators for various causes. A few burned flags or wore them disrespectfully, practices held by the Supreme Court to be their right as an interpretation of freedom.

Those who display their patriotism in public run a risk of being ridiculed as "flag wavers," even

though that should be a status somewhat above those who cast aspersions upon both our flag and those who cherish it.

Our American freedom is under attack today, with many naive individuals supporting subversive influences without realizing they are being led astray through abuses of political freedom. Some just yell with a crowd without regard for principles or consequences.

It was James Madison, our fourth president, who said: "I believe there are more instances of the abridgment of freedom of the people by gradual and silent encroachments of those in power than by violent and sudden usurpation."

Silent patriotism may be an aid to noisy subversion. One way that we may express our loyalty to our country and to the principles of liberty upon which it was founded is by flying our flag at our homes, at our businesses and everywhere on Flag Day!

We ought to make patriotism fashionable again!