SUPREME COURT DECISION DAY

Fly Your Flag May 17

In Little Rock, Ark., on Veterans' Day, November 11, 1957, the American flag was flown in the window of almost every colored home in the city. The idea has spread. A Flag Drive is underway, spearheaded by the NAACP, to have every American fly the United States flag in the window of his home on Supreme Court Decision Day, May 17, 1958.

Following the dramatic leadership of the National NAACP in putting a U.S. Flag in windows of more than 4,000 colored homes in embattled Little Rock on last Veterans' Day, the Central Long Island Branch of NAACP has announced a U.S. Flag Drive program to honor the Supreme Court Decision Day, May 17th, and Memorial Day.

The Branch will start its program educationally by sponsoring showings of "Our U.S. Flag," Freedom Foundation's award-winning movie on the history of our country's flag.

A number of groups including schools in the area, will see the film as the NAACP begins its drive with the slogan, "A Flag in Every Home in Town by Memorial Day."

Speaking for the 1,500 member chapters, Laska Strachan, President, declared, "For too long now Americans have permitted many of the wrong people to speak for Old Glory.

"The tradition of our country's flag as a powerful symbol of struggle for freedom and equality has not been emphasized in many sections of the USA.

"A new emphasis on the real meaning of the flag is needed and the colored people have every right and duty to undertake this task."

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THE U.S. FLAG Drive of the Central Long Island Branch was launched with the incoming New Year. The program calls for members to sell U.S. flags of various sizes in sets with poles and holders to all residents in four important Long Island town. Considerable profit is expected and the money will be used for the Branch's work.

Major Braxton, who is chairman of the flag committee, explained the flag drive this way:

"This flag program has several key purposes. Aside from the fact that it will raise a great deal of money for our Chapter's treasury, the active participation of our groups in the revival of the tradition of home flag display among colored and white people will reveal the true patriotism of the NAACP.

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MEMBERS OF the branch are especially excited about flag display on May 17th, Supreme Court Decision Day and will seek offical proclamations from executives in local towns to declare this a Flag Holiday.

"Success in this endeavor," says Albert Breach, Secretary of the chapter, "will dramatize the importance of the Supreme Court decision for all sections of our population. . . May 17th is a great day. The decision was a blow to subversion and un-American thinking.

"What more appropriate use for our country's flag than to demonstrate our appreciation of the decision against segregation by seeing to it that the U.S. flag flies from every home on that day."

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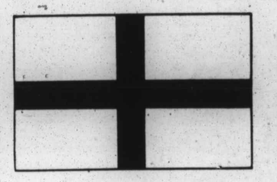
NATURALLY, there will be some uninformed people who will ask on May 17th, "what are all the flags flying for?" This is all to the good for it will give us a chance to explain.

The display of flags in Little Rock on November 11th was the largest showing of flags from homes on a national holiday ever to be seen in any community in the United States.

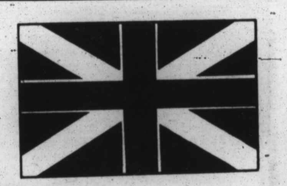
The fact that all colored homes flew the flag while the show of flags in certain white sections of town was comparatively—s p a r s e, was noted throughout the nation.

The Central Long Island Branch hopes by its example to encourage everybody to fly the flag on appropriate holidays.



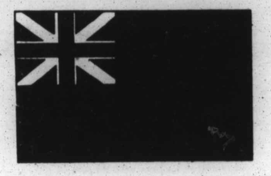
Flag Of The Cabots—1497

"Red Cross St. George." The banner of Richard Cosur De Lion in 1192 and planted at Labrador by John Cabot and son, Sebastian, June 24, 1497, as the royal ensign of Henry the Seventh of England.



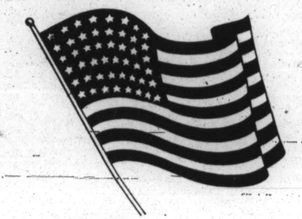
Flag Of The Pilgrims—1620

The first flag to float over permanent settlements in America. The king's colors, a union between the Red Cross of St. George of England and the White Cross of Scotland under King James I, in 1606. (The flag of the Mayflower in 1620)



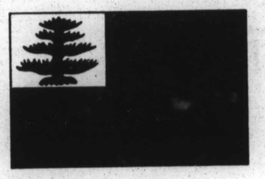
First Liberty Flag—1774

At Taunton, Mass., was raised in 1774 the Red Union English flag common at the time with the addition of the watchword of the world. This word is LIBERTY.



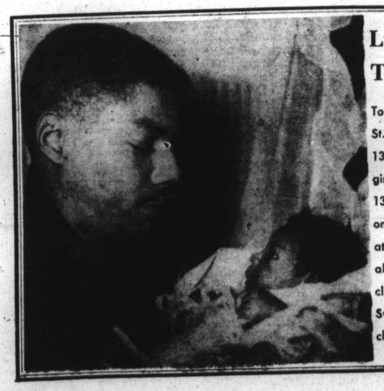
Star Spangled Banner—1814

The first flag of American expansion. United States Congress, upon the admission of two more states in the American Union, added two stars and stripes July 4, 1795. It was this flag in 1814 that inspired Francis Scott Key's writing of the "Star Spangled Banner." Under a bill passed April 4, 1818, the stripes were reduced from fifteen to the original thirteen.



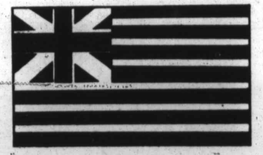
(Union Jack)
Bunker Hill Flag—1775

One bright June morning in 1773, the British attacked American fortifications on Bunker Hill (Breed's Hill) near Boston Harbor. All day the flag waved as the battle raged. Late in the afternoon the Americans were forced to leave the hill because they ran out of ammunition.



Lucky Thirteen

To Fred Sweatt, 765 S. Clay St., Louisville, Ky., February 13th is a lucky date. To begin with, he was born on the 13th of the month, married on the 13th, and in the photo at left is holding his son, also born on the 13th. As a clincher to it all, that is Sweatt's parents' 13th grandchild.



Cambridge Flag—1776

First flag of American independence, hoisted with a salute of thirteen guns at Washington's headquarters in Cambridge, Mass., January 1, 1776, and alluded to in old England as "The Thirteen Rebellious Stripes."

Rattlesnake Flag—1776

A popular flag during the 1770's was this rattlesnake flag. The snake has 13 rattles and all these type flags bore the inscription "Don't tread on me."

AFRO Magazine Section

'HERE I STAND'

First installment of the first two chapters of Paul Robeson's new book "Here I Stand," published by Othello Associates, Inc., this month.

Here for the first time, Paul Robeson, one of the most talented and controversial figures of our times, talks back to his critics.

Is he a member of the Communist party?

Does he consider himself a good American?

Communists are anti-religious, is he a Christian and a member of the church?

What is his reaction to the State Department's refusal to give him a passport to travel abroad?

Barred from concerts in public halls throughout the country, why doesn't he give in?

These are the questions Mr. Robeson answers in this series of articles beginning this week in your AFRO Magazine Section.

Part One

(Of a series of five articles)

I am a Negro.

The house I live in is in Harlem — this city within a city, Negro metropolis of America.

And now as I write of things that are urgent in my mind and heart, I feel the press of all that is around me here where I live, at home among my people.

Not far away is the house where my brother Ben lives: the parsonage of Mother AME Zion Church of which Ben — Reverend Benjamin C. Robeson — has been pastor for many years.

My brother's love which enfolds me is a precious, living bond with the man, now forty years dead, who more than anyone else influenced my life — my father, Reverend William Drew Robeson.

It is not just that Ben is my older brother, but he reminds me so much of Pop that his house seems to glow with the pervading spirit of that other Reverend Robeson, my wonderful, beloved father.

• • •

NEXT DOOR to the parsonage is the church where on Sunday mornings I am united with the fellowship of thousands of my people, singing with them their songs, feeling the warmth of their handshakes and smiles — this too is a link with my earliest days, the congregations I grew up in as a boy in Princeton, in Westfield, in Somerville.

And more: here is a bond that joins me with the long, hard march that is my people's history in America.

This very church, Mother Zion, the mother church of the great African Methodist Episcopal Zion denomination, goes all the way back to 1796 when it was founded by free Negroes who could not abide the church of the Christian slave-masters.

Sojourner Truth, heroine of our liberation struggle, was an early member of Mother Zion; and Frederick Douglass our greatest hero and teacher, and Harriet Tubman, our Moses of the Underground Railroad, also played their part in the glorious tradition of our church.

Yes, I've got a home in that rock!

• • •

THE STREETS outside are alive with the presence of my people . . . The rhythms of their footsteps, their laughter, their greetings to one another.

I, who have heard only a few miles away, at Peekskill, the baying of the lynch - mob, the cries for my life from hate-twisted mouths, feel here the embrace of love. **Hello, Paul—it's good to see you! It's good to have you back!**

And it's so good to be back.

For this is my community. Every street and landmark around here is rich with memories of the good times and dreams of young manhood . . . Harlem after the first world war.

Here I met and married Essie; here life-long friendships began.

Here I started my career as an artist.

Just a few blocks away, at the YWCA, I first walked on the stage in a play; and here I sang, for fun, in the clubs and cabarets; here were the thrills of the big basketball games, the dances, the social life . . .

Yes, here is my homeground — here and in all the colored communities throughout the land.

Here I stand.

I am an American.

From my window I gaze out upon a scene that reminds me how deep-going are the roots of my people in this land.

Across the street, carefully preserved as an historic shrine, is a colonial mansion that served as a headquarters for General George Washington in 1776, during the desperate and losing battles to hold New York against the advancing British.

The winter of the following year found Washington and the ragged remnants of his troops encamped at Valley Forge, and among those who came to offer help in that desperate hour was my great-great-grandfather.

He was Cyrus Bustill, who was born a slave in New Jersey and had managed to purchase his freedom. He became a baker and it is recorded that George Washington thanked him for supplying bread to the starving Revolutionary Army.

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YES, FOR well over 300 years my people have been a

(Continued on Page 3)

Paul Robeson laughs at one of the late Peter Freuchen's witticisms. It happened at a United Nations diplomatic party that both attended at UN headquarters in 1957.