

Old Glory by Moonlight: Foul at Fair?

Story on Page 2



Sunset Gun. (NEWS photo by Joe Farrington) Should American flag at upcoming World's Fair be left flying at night? Former U. S. Marine has fired opening gun of controversy by declaring it is violation. —Story on page 2



Stars, Stripes & Gripes



Vet to Fair: Flag Should Set With Sun

By JAMES DUDDY

A rugged, 37-year-old former combat marine is waging a one-man crusade to halt what he claims is the improper display of the American flag on the World's Fair grounds. He is John McCann of 58-24 197th St. Flushing.

"The three flags at the fair are left up at night and in the rain. This constitutes a direct violation of Public Law 829, passed in 1942," he says. "In addition, they are positioned behind the administration building so as, in my opinion, to attract the attention of motorists using the Grand Central Parkway. This is no more than making use of 'Old Glory' for advertising purposes. Decorum and respect decrees that all flags be flown in front of buildings," said McCann, a mail carrier at the Grand Central Post Office.

Fair Cites Law

But a spokesman for the World's Fair said that Public Law 829, in subdivision A of section 2, reads: "It is the universal custom to display the flag only from sun-

rise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstaves in the open. However, the flag may be displayed at night upon special occasions when it is desired to produce a patriotic effect."

A survey of flag experts and of the Congressional laws, the spokesman said, determined that there is nothing in the law that says the flag cannot be flown as it is at the Fair provided it is properly lighted to produce a patriotic effect. The three flags at the Fair are illuminated by powerful spotlights.

For years McCann has been instructing individuals and organizations as to the proper display of flags. "I don't actually remember when I started. I never think of it as a hobby, it's a duty as far as I'm concerned," he says.

Tells JFK of Error

"I once wrote President Kennedy on a slight infraction of flag position I noticed during one of his speeches. I realized that he himself was not to blame but he

thought it important enough to acknowledge my point. Apparently the people at the Fair do not, as they have ignored my requests for an explanation of their actions," McCann stated.

Fort McHenry and the Tomb of the Unknown soldier are the only places where the Stars and Stripes fly around the clock without a special order from the President, and even then not in inclement weather, McCann pointed out.

He first noticed the Fair's flags

flying at night last January—and when no one would take them down, his Irish went up. He took them down and in the morning presented them to a Fair official.

Gains Official Backing

The following night Old Glory could again be seen by moonlight. "I had no choice but—back to the drawing boards. I wrote to President Kennedy, Senator Kenneth B. Keating (R-N.Y.), Mayor Wagner and the National Flag Committee. They all answered and agreed with my position. Then I wrote to authorities at the Fair. I never got any kind of a reply," McCann said.

McCann has the backing of two New York lawyers who plan, if necessary, to bring an injunction to prohibit the Fair's flying its flags.

"I hope this isn't needed. All I want is for them to fly our flag properly. Millions of other people do," McCann said.

(Picture on page 1)