

The New York Times

EISENHOWER WINS: Crowd viewing electric election sign on the Times Tower as it indicates that the General has won.

Old Times Square Tradition Dies; Usual Election Night Uproar Gone

Radio and TV Combine to Cut Down Crowd, Once 250,000 Strong—Now Police Use Only Corporal's Guard to Keep Order

By MEYER BERGER

Times Square last night had the smallest Election Night turnout in its long existence. It was the least demonstrative crowd, too—without voice, without the traditional horns and bells, and utterly without enthusiasm.

Between 9 and 10 o'clock no more than 10,000 persons were in the square, and these were packed thickest on the sidewalks from Forty-third to Forty-fifth Streets, watching the new election bulletin board on the north wall of Times Tower. At the peak, the police estimated, less than 25,000 were in the square.

Even when the theatres emptied, the crowds did not overflow the curbs to cover the pavement as in pre-television days. Though no solid line of police horses stood at the curb to restrain them, bulletin watchers held to the curbs with only gentle urging from patrolmen.

Motor traffic moved freely all night without a break in all directions. In former years the pavements would be solidly packed with numanity, and motor traffic would have to be diverted. Up to eight years ago police never estimated presidential election night crowds at less than 250,000.

1948 Showed Drop

The election night crowd that assembled four years ago last night, when President Truman was runing against Governor Dewey, had fallen far enough away from old figures to indicate that the tradition was dying. Last night's version confirmed that diagnosis.

Assistant Chief Inspector John King, who organized the police detail for the square this year, used the smallest number of men ever assigned for election night. He dispensed entirely with mounted men, who in former years had lined the curbs.

The bulk of men in the detail were rookies—200, all told, with only 150 men in department blue, commanded by fifty-three superiors. Inspector King had thirtyfive mounted men in reserve in side streets, but had no reason for calling them.

Nowhere in the square was there even a hint of the dense masses of a decade ago. The police pointed out that only television and radio could have caused such a drain. The night was starless, but a yellow moon hung over the city. The thermometer stood at a

pleasant 50 degrees.

Times Square shopkeepers had anticipated a sizable turnout. Boarding was up to protect plate glass fronts from Forty-third Street to Forty-seventh, but the storekeepers need not have put themselves to the trouble. Their windows were never threatened.

Ambulances Not Needed

The pigeons around Father Duffy's statue were little disturbed in their nocturnal food-hunting and the ambulances, radio cars and Civil Defense equipment brought into the square remained stationary, with no call for their services.

The Voice of America had a huge blue and gray trailer in front of the Criterion Theatre to record for its listeners the national phenomenon of Americans assembling in the streets to see what their ballots had done. WJZ-TV had a trailer a block further north, but it too had comparatively poor pickings.

What little cheering there was in front of THE NEW YORK TIMES' new election bulletin seemed about even-brief shouting when a lead for General Eisenhower came up on the board, equally brief applause when Governor Stevenson's name was put up. It was damp stuff compared with the deafening roars of old Times Square crowds.

A last burst of shouting echoed in the square at 12:40 A. M. today when the line of lights on the east side of the new election board suddenly streaked to the top, to show that General Eisenhower had more than 266 electoral votes, and had won in a sweep.

At the same moment the line of lights on Governor Stevenson's side of the board, which had not moved for hours, symbolically went out. The moving letters in the running sign that girdles the Tower broke out with "Eisenhower Elected," with the news bracketed between golden stars.

Then the searchlight high in the Tower, which had been brooming the starless sky to the north all night, to show Eisenhower in the lead, held steady to show that he had won. The crowd cheered again, and slowly came apart to drift toward the subways.

A tradition was dead, with only a few thousand pallbearers to see it peacefuly interred.