

# In The Nation

## The Size and Nature of the Minority

By ARTHUR KROCK

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4 — After Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected for the fourth time, a devoted friend of his drew up a chart for the President's desk. He believed that no man ever created was proof against all the dangers to democracy which this doubly unprecedented tribute might evoke. The chart was a list of the states of the Union, and after each name was printed the number of votes cast therein in November, 1944, not for Mr. Roosevelt, but for Gov. Thomas E. Dewey.

The list was intended as a reminder that, though the United States was involved in a world-wide war, 22,006,278 of its citizens had voted to replace the President and Commander in Chief of their Army and Navy (Mr. Roosevelt's total was 25,602,505).

### A Worthy Purpose

After the President's friend had the chart prepared he decided not to proffer it, whatever his reasons may have been. But his worthy purpose was to restrain certain impulses that might well follow a popular triumph, especially an unusual one, which adjectives describe not only Mr. Roosevelt's victories in 1940 and 1944 but Mr. Truman's amazing victory this week. It was to keep in the victor's mind the fact that a very large and representative minority in the nation, with equal rights of citizenship, did not want him in the White House.

Last Tuesday an even larger minority than in 1944, in terms of popular and electoral votes, opposed the election of the successful candidate for President. Moreover, because of its distribution in four political parties, and because in some states the law prevented a part of it from expressing real preferences, neither the popular nor the electoral statistics fully reflect the size of this minority. If President Truman bears that steadily in mind, he will be better armored against some of the demands that will be made on him by organized groups which claim credit for his election. And it will help him to remember the size and nature, and hence the rights and interests, of his opposition. This, as President Roosevelt's friend with the chart believed, might make Mr. Truman a better President.

### Some Results in Perspective

Thus far, quite naturally, the accent of the news has been on Mr. Truman's surprising victory, its dramatic quality, its national scope, its beneficial effects on his party's membership in Congress. This accent is the more natural because of the refusal of the President to entertain the possibility of defeat.

But analysis of the election returns follows as naturally and as properly. And, while these are as yet incomplete, they already disclose some facts which put Mr. Truman's victory in truer perspective:

1. It is sound to assume that, if there had been no Progressive party ticket in the field, Mr. Truman would have received the bulk of the votes cast for that party in New York State—508,542. This would have wiped out Mr. Dewey's margin of 42,777 and added to the President's 304 electors New York's forty-seven, making his total 351.

2. But by estimates not considered excessive in Illinois political circles there were 150,000 to 200,000 supporters of Mr. Wallace who had no candidates for elector on the state ballot. The President carried Illinois by an indicated majority of 50,000 to 70,000. The example of New York supports the theory that, if Wallace electors had been on the ticket in Illinois, the President's vote would have been reduced by more than the size of his majority, and the state's twenty-eight electors would have gone to Mr. Dewey to give him a total of 217.

### Enter the Supreme Court

The Republicans of Illinois thought this theory so well established that they joined with the Progressive party in its request to the Supreme Court to order Wallace electors onto the state ballot, a request which three justices favored and six rejected.

3. It seems established that, because of the States' Rights party, Mr. Truman has lost the forty Southern electors he would normally have acquired (all in Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina and Louisiana and two in Tennessee). But he got Tennessee's remaining ten and Virginia's eleven by a minority vote. If in these states, where the Republican party is a large group, the Dixiecrats had voted Republican, as Senator Taft urged them to do, Mr. Dewey would have had twenty-three more electors, bringing his grand total to 240. He could never have won, as is now plainly disclosed. But the choice of a President would have been made by the House of Representatives, since, with Illinois also subtracted, Mr. Truman's electoral total would have been reduced to 253.

Because, therefore, of the local situations in these several states—unlucky for the President in five and for Mr. Dewey in three—their possible, and—in Illinois and the four Dixiecrat states—demonstrable, gains and losses were as follows:

Mr. Truman—(gains) Illinois 28, Tennessee 10, Virginia 11; (losses) New York 47, the Dixiecrat states 38—a net loss of 36.

Mr. Dewey—(gains) New York 47; (losses) Illinois 28, Virginia 11, Tennessee 12—a net loss of 4.

This scoreboard confirms Mr. Truman's firm title to the Presidency. But it is eloquent of the presence of minorities with passionate convictions and strategic importance.