

# NIXON TALK FAILS TO SET TV RECORD

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But Estimates of Audience  
Place It at 110 Million  
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By LES BROWN

The television audience for President Nixon's resignation address Thursday night was not the largest for a single television event, as network analysts had predicted it would be. But if it was not a record audience, it was nevertheless an enormous one, especially for a summer evening, when television viewing is lower than at other times of year.

Basing their national projections on available overnight rating data for New York and Los Angeles, research analysts for ABC and CBS estimate that there were 110 million viewers for the 16-minute speech, which began at 9 P.M. NBC analysts have made a more conservative estimate of 90 million viewers.

The largest television audience on record was for the moon landing in July, 1969, which drew 125 million viewers in the United States.

Many millions, of course, particularly vacationers, heard the speech on radio. The address was carried on at least 2,700 radio stations in the United States—those affiliated with the commercial or public radio networks—although numerous independents may also have broadcast it.

## Brevity of Speech Cited

The brevity of the speech was considered to be one reason why the television audience fell short of the 130 million that had been predicted for it Thursday. But one network executive observed that after the news dispatches indicating the Presi-

dent would resign "the speech itself was anticlimactic, and we may have overestimated a bit the interest in the event itself."

In New York, for example, some 450,000 viewers chose the baseball game between the Mets and the Pittsburgh Pirates on WOR-TV, Channel 9, instead of the historic resignation of the President.

WOR-TV and WNJU, the Spanish-language UHF station on Channel 47, were the only television stations in the New York market that did not carry the speech live. WXTV, Channel 41, not only televised the President's speech but also offered a simultaneous translation in Spanish.

"The Captioned ABC Evening News," a service for viewers with impaired hearing that is carried at midnight by public station WNET, devoted the eight minutes reserved by the network for commercials to captioned highlights of the President's speech.

## More Homes on Coast

Although the speech was televised at 6 P.M. in Los Angeles, a greater percentage of homes was tuned to television there than in New York at the peak prime-time hour of 9 P.M. Set use in Los Angeles was recorded by the Nielsen rating service as 66.4 per cent, compared with 64.1 per cent here.

President Nixon's speech was live, by satellite, to the public television station in Juneau, Alaska, and to the European Broadcasting Union, a coordinating body for all television systems in Western Europe.

Recognizing that it would be inappropriate and in poor taste to present the President's resignation in the context of a typical television evening, ABC, CBS and NBC all suspended their prime-time entertainment programs and devoted the entire evening Thursday to news analysis, interviews and discussion of the 16-minute address and the events that had led to it.

They did not suspend commercials, however.