Haymarket Statue Bombed

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[TRIBUNE Staff Photo: By David Nystrom]

Policeman stands in Haymarket square after explosion wrecked statue. Bomb blew figure of a policeman in 1880s uniform from pedestal on to ground at left.

The statue commemorating the seven policemen who were killed in the 1886 Haymarket riots was blown down by an explosion in Haymärket square last night.

The square on the northeast side of Randolph street at the Kennedy expressway is scheduled to be the starting point Saturday in a march to Grant Park by Students for a Democratic Society.

The explosion blew the statue from its 12foot pedestal, throwing chunks of the legs onto the northbound lanes of the Kennedy expressway and blowing out an estimated 100 windows in buildings nearby.

There were no injuries in the blast and police said that they had no suspects in the case.

The major part of the statue, which is of a policeman in the uniform of the 1880s, was toppled next to the pedestal. Frank Nolan of the bomb and arson unit said that the explosion was caused by a bomb placed between the legs of the statue.

Frank Porzel, a night watchman at Catholic Charities, 126 N. Des Plaines av., near the site of the blast, said the force of the explosion shook his building and stunned an unidentified cab driver in his taxi near the scene.

The monument has had a history almost as stormy as the rioting it commemorates. Since it was erected in 1887, it has been moved three times, almost moved two other times, was wrecked when a street car crashed into it in 1927, was defaced by vandals, and has been sandblasted and restored. It was moved to its present location in 1957. It was dedicated as an historical landmark by the city council in 1965.

No estimate of the damage to the statue as a result of last night's blast was available.

The monument commemorates the explosion of a dynamite bomb May 4, 1886, which resulted in the deaths of 7 members of a 180member police detachment and the wounding of 76 others. The explosion occurred while the detachment confronted an estimated 1,000 persons attending a meeting in Haymarket square.¹ Many of the persons were workers on strike against the McCormick Reaper company. The explosion occurred after police ordered the meeting dispersed following a brief scuffle between striking and nonstriking workers.



Haymarket statue commemorating the seven Chicago policemen who lost their lives in explosion of bomb in 1886.

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