

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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February 14, 1933

The Honorable Harold E. Weeks'
Chairman, Judiciary Committee
State House

My dear Sir:

Inquiry has been made of this department as to whether or not it is advisable to disorganize Allagash Plantation, containing more than four hundred inhabitants. My answer to this inquiry was, in substance, as follows:

I cannot see any advantage to be derived from such disorganization because of the provisions of sections 192 and 193 of R. S. Chapter 5 which are as follows:

"Commissioners of counties containing unincorporated townships shall, at the expiration of every period of five years from March, eighteen hundred and sixty-one, determine from the United States census, when taken the preceding year, and by actual enumeration when not so taken, what townships have not less than two hundred inhabitants, and make a suitable description and designation thereof, and return them to the secretary of state, to be by him recorded.

"Immediately after making such return, said commissioner shall issue their warrant to one of the principal inhabitants of each of such unincorporated townships, commanding him to notify the inhabitants thereof qualified to vote for governor, to assemble on a day and at a place named in the warrant, to choose a moderator, clerk, three assessors, treasurer, collector of taxes, constable, superintending school committee, and other necessary plantation officers. Notice of such meeting shall be given by posting an attested copy of the warrant therefor in two public and conspicuous places in the township fourteen days before the day of meeting. The warrant with such inhabitant's return thereon shall be returned to the meeting, and the above named officers shall be chosen and sworn."

Section 193 seems to make it mandatory for the county commissioners to cause to be organized, unorganized townships having 200 or more inhabitants.

It appears to me that disorganization of such a township would be a distinct disadvantage to the inhabitants therein owing to the provisions of section 76 of Chapter 8, R. S., which are, in substance, as follows:

Electors living in unorganized places may furnish a list of their polls and estates with the assessors of any adjacent town, on or before the first day of each April, and said assessors shall assess state and county taxes upon all such persons ****. And such electors so presenting their polls and estates may vote in such town for all national, state and county officers and representatives to the legislature.

I think the experience in the past has shown that this provision, in effect, has deprived many of the inhabitants of their right to vote because of their neglect to furnish a list of their polls and estates yearly to the adjacent town, and also because of the inability of some of them to bear the expense necessary to reach the adjacent town polling places.

Respectfully yours,

Deputy Attorney General

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