

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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May 27, 1942

Frank I. Cowan, Attorney General

Hon. Sumner Sewall, Governor of Maine

I talked with Mr. Putnam yesterday in regard to the action of the Executive Committee of the Governors' Conference which met in Washington, May 21st, to consider the possibility of joint action by the States to eliminate serious obstructions in the movement of necessary war materiel due to variations in motor vehicle standards. Mr. Putnam informs me that the ten standard requirements that were agreed upon meet the laws of the State of Maine except for #4 which sets up permissible length of a combination at 45 feet. I understand the State law allows 40 feet.

My personal feeling is that it is better for police morale if they have definite figures to work on. Many years of experience in dealing directly with police have shown that where mathematical measurements are involved it is not proper to permit the policeman to exercise discretion. To him, 2 and 2 must make 4, and to permit him to vary the result itself on discretion leads to maladministration.

I believe it is not proper to put out instructions to the police to ignore the 40 foot maximum provision of our law in the case of transportation of materials required for the war effort because every load could, to some extent, be so classified. I believe the proper thing to do is to issue an Executive Order increasing permissible length of combination to 45 feet.

Attorney General

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