

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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No

April 13, 1951.

To Honorable Franz U. Burkett, House of Representatives
Re: Clarification of the Civil Defense Law

At a conference in October of 1950 which was attended by attorneys for Civil Defense agencies throughout the State, it was the unanimous opinion of the attorneys then in attendance that, if it ever became necessary for the Governor to proclaim an emergency under the provisions of the Civil Defense law, under which emergency it would become necessary for the State Police to perform the functions assigned to it by the Civil Defense Director, the State Police must be in a position to place in the field adequately trained personnel to fulfil its functions.

The only way that these attorneys could arrive at constructive proposals which would make this possible without increasing the present State Police force was to authorize the Chief of the State Police to set up a reserve list that he could call on if, as, and when it became necessary. This is not a move in any way to increase the present State Police force or to enlarge its duties. It is purely and simply a proposal whereby the people of this State and their property may be given the protection of trained law enforcement officers during emergency periods, rather than to subject the people of this State and their property to the difficulties involved when law enforcement officers are recruited from the ranks of untrained civilians and placed in a position of authority without the fundamental knowledge expected of a law enforcement officer.

It is inconceivable why there should be objection to such a constructive proposal.

John S. S. Fessenden
Deputy Attorney General

jssf/c