

1858.

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Legislative Assembly.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

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MURDERS BY THE ABORIGINES ON THE DAWSON RIVER.

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REPORT FROM THE SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

MURDERS BY THE ABORIGINES ON THE  
DAWSON RIVER;

TOGETHER WITH

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE,

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE,

AND APPENDIX.

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ORDERED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY TO BE PRINTED,

3 August, 1858.

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SYDNEY:

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1858.

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EXTRACTS FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

VOTES, No. 44. TUESDAY, 15 JUNE, 1858.

7. Murders by the Aborigines on the Dawson River :—Mr. Hodgson moved, pursuant to amended notice,—

(1.) That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the murders which have recently taken place on the "Dawson River," with a view to render the working of the Native Police Force more efficient, and with power to send for persons and papers.

(2.) That such Committee consist of Mr. Buckley, Mr. Cribb, Mr. Donaldson, Mr. Forster, Mr. Jones, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Smith, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Robertson, and the Mover.

Debate ensued.

Mr. Parkes moved, That the Question be amended, by the omission of all the words thereof following the words "Dawson River," in section (1), with a view to the insertion in their place of the words "and generally on the state of outrage between the white population and the Aborigines in the Northern Districts.

"(2) That such Committee consist of Mr. Cribb, Mr. Dalley, Mr. Dickson, Mr. Donaldson, Mr. Cowper, Mr. Gordon, Mr. Jones, Mr. Murray, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Hodgson."

Debate continued,—

And the proposed Amendment being, *by consent*, amended, by adding at the end of the words proposed to be inserted in lieu of the words proposed to be omitted from section (1) the words "with a view to providing for the better protection of life and property."

Debate continued,—

And Mr. Hodgson having required, in event of the Amendment being carried, that the Committee be appointed by ballot,—

Question,—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the Question,—put and negatived.

Question,—That in place of the words omitted there be inserted the words "and generally on the state of outrage between the white population and the Aborigines in the Northern Districts, with a view to providing for the better protection of life and property,"—put and passed.

Question,—That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the murders which have recently taken place on the Dawson River, and generally on the state of outrage between the white population and the Aborigines in the Northern Districts, with a view to providing for the better protection of life and property,—put and passed ;—

Whereupon the House proceeded to the Ballot, and the Speaker declared the following Members to be, with the Mover, the Committee duly appointed, viz. :—Mr. Cribb, Mr. Donaldson, Mr. Jones, Mr. Cowper, Mr. Buckley, Mr. Forster, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Taylor.

VOTES, No. 57. TUESDAY, 13 JULY, 1858.

1. The House met pursuant to adjournment ; the Speaker took the Chair.

Papers :—

\* \* \* \* \*

4. Mr. Cowper laid upon the Table the undermentioned Paper :—

(6.) Letter from the Government Resident at Brisbane, Moreton Bay, dated 8th July, 1858, enclosing Returns of the expense, strength, and distribution of the Native Police.

Ordered to be printed, and referred to the Select Committee on Murders by the Aborigines on the Dawson River.

VOTES

## VOTES, No. 59. THURSDAY, 15 JULY, 1858.

1. Papers :—Mr. Cowper laid upon the Table the undermentioned Papers :—

\* \* \* \* \*

(3.) Return to the Order, in reference to the dismissal of Mr Ross, Second Lieutenant of Native Police, made by this House, on motion of Mr. Hodgson, on the 21st May last.

Referred to the Select Committee on Murders by Aborigines on the Dawson River.

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## VOTES, No. 65. TUESDAY, 27 JULY, 1858.

1. Paper :—Mr. Cowper laid upon the Table a communication from Captain Wickham, Government Resident at Moreton Bay, dated 21st July, 1858, in reference to the Native Police.

Ordered to be printed, and referred to the Select Committee on Murders by Aborigines on the Dawson River.

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## VOTES, No. 69. TUESDAY, 3 AUGUST, 1858.

7. Murders by the Aborigines on the Dawson River :—Mr. Hodgson, as Chairman, brought up the Report from, and laid upon the Table the Evidence taken before the Select Committee appointed, on the 15th June last, to inquire into, and report upon, the Murders which have recently taken place on the Dawson River, and generally on the state of outrage between the white population and the aborigines in the Northern Districts, with a view to providing for the better protection of life and property.

Ordered to be printed.

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1858.

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**MURDERS BY THE ABORIGINES ON THE DAWSON RIVER.**


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**REPORT.**


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THE SELECT COMMITTEE of the Legislative Assembly, appointed on the 15th June last "to inquire into and report upon the Murders which have recently taken place on the Dawson River, and generally on the state of outrage between the white population and the aborigines in the Northern Districts, with a view to providing for the better protection of life and property"; and to whom were referred, on the 13th ultimo, a Letter from the Government Resident at Brisbane, Moreton Bay, dated 8th July, 1858, enclosing Returns of the expense, strength, and distribution of the Native Police"; on the 15th ultimo, a "Return to Order in reference to the dismissal of Mr. Ross, Second Lieutenant of Native Police"; and, on the 27th ultimo, a further "communication from Captain Wickham, Government Resident at Moreton Bay, dated 21st July, 1858, in reference to the Native Police";—have agreed to the following Report:—

Your Committee are convinced, by the evidence of the various witnesses examined, that the murders which have been committed on the Northern Frontier of this Colony may be attributed to those inevitable collisions which take place more or less between the blacks and whites in opening out a new tract of country, aggravated in a great measure by the inefficiency of the Native Police Force, and the mountainous and scrubby nature of the district.

It will further appear that the sudden disbandment of a large portion of the Native Police was a most untoward event, as there is too much reason to believe that the disbanded troopers have been leaders in most of the murderous attacks upon the whites, and to this cause the inefficiency of the Native Police Force, as at present constituted, may be undoubtedly traced. It appears also that the troopers who did such good service from 1848 to 1852, under their late Commandant, Mr. Walker, on the M'Intyre, and other places, were brought from the Murrumbidgee, Murray, and Edward Rivers; and it is conclusive that the conduct of these men was the cause of the force enjoying that high character which it is deeply to be regretted it no longer possesses.

After a careful consideration of the evidence taken, your Committee would submit the following recommendations for the favorable consideration of your Honorable House:—

- (1.) That the Native Police Force, properly organized and well officered, is the force best capable of protecting life and property in the outlying districts; and an attempt to amalgamate white troopers with such a force would probably be futile, as in almost every instance the natives, after perpetrating an outrage, take refuge in the scrubs, which are inaccessible to horses, and where, except in certain instances, none but native troopers could follow and overtake them. To discipline a mixed force of this kind would, moreover, be a difficult task, as considerable jealousy would undoubtedly arise, and would generally result in the white troopers compelling the native troopers to act as their servants, and do all the more menial work.
- (2.) Your Committee would, however, recommend that ten mounted troopers should be immediately forwarded, by steamer, to Brisbane or Maryborough, and there placed under the orders of the Commandant, with instructions to that officer that these men are not to be amalgamated with the Native Police

Force, but are to patrol the districts in two or more parties, more especially in the open country, where they could, from time to time, render good service ; as they are of opinion that the existence of such a force would soon be known, and would act as a salutary check.

- (3.) Your Committee forbear to recommend the supplementing of the present Native Police Force by a Militia of Border Settlers, but would suggest that two sections for the present should be permanently stationed on the frontier, in the neighbourhood of Taroom, under the command of two experienced officers, fully authorised to enter into such offensive or defensive operations as they may consider necessary.
- (4.) Your Committee are of opinion that the system of recruiting in the Northern Districts is most pernicious, and has led, and will continue to lead, to the most mischievous results—wholesale desertion having, in consequence, taken place. All the witnesses agree that troopers should be raised from distant parts of the Colony, not less than 500 or 600 miles away from the district in which they are to act ; and one highly intelligent witness recommends that the troopers should be placed under military law, so that it might be possible in future to keep them under better subordination—a proposal in which your Committee fully concur.
- (5.) Your Committee would further recommend that instructions be immediately forwarded to the Commandant to send a party to the Lower Darling, Edward, and Murray Rivers, with horses and clothing, with the view of recruiting for the completion of the Force without delay.
- (6.) Your Committee are of opinion that the present Commandant should be allowed the opportunity of carrying out the work which, under many disadvantages, he appears to have so well commenced. That the process of reorganization must require time ; for, although much has already been done, a considerable period must necessarily elapse before the Force assumes its proper and most useful element—that of a *preventive* character—sufficiently numerous and active to check and overawe the blacks in their aggressions upon the settlers.
- (7.) No evidence has been adduced to lead your Committee to the conclusion that the Native Police Force cannot be restored to that state of efficiency to which it at one time attained ; and from a perusal of the two letters from the Government Resident at Brisbane, referred for their consideration on the 20th and 27th ultimo, it would appear that the Force has now been increased to the number of 92, and that, consequently, some efforts are being made to revive the corps.
- (8.) By certain returns transmitted in the communication of the Government Resident of the 20th ultimo, the present number of officers, including the Commandant, is shewn to amount to 16, some of whom are apparently useless ; and the services of these should be immediately dispensed with, and the number of officers might thus be reduced to 13.
- (9.) All the evidence taken tends to affirm the fact, that many persons have been injudiciously placed in the force as Lieutenants, by the Government, totally incompetent, from various causes, to render any service ; your Committee would therefore strongly urge that the recommendations of the Select Committee of 1856-7 should be carried out with regard to the appointment and dismissal by the Commandant of all his subordinate officers, and that the Government should interfere as little as possible in such appointments.
- (10.) Your Committee have had under their careful consideration the evidence of the Commissioner of Crown Lands at Port Curtis, more particularly as to the future site of the head quarters of the Native Police Force, but are of opinion that his suggestion cannot be carried out, not only on the ground of expense, but because as the country becomes occupied and the settlers push out, the head-quarters should be moved to the most central place, and ought, therefore, to be only temporary.

(11.)

- (11.) Your Committee are of opinion that the head-quarters of the Commandant of the Native Police should for the present be fixed about 100 miles north-west of Gayndah, on account of its central position as regards the distribution of the Force. The presence of the Commandant at Brisbane appears, however, to be altogether unnecessary; but they consider that the Secretary ought to be stationed there, through whom the correspondence and payments could then be transacted, subject, as at present, to the control and supervision of the Government Resident, who fills the important offices of Treasurer and Paymaster. The greater facilities of communication with Sydney and the Dawson, and the absence of any Banking Establishment at Wide Bay or Port Curtis, induce your Committee to recommend Brisbane as the residence of the Secretary and Accountant.
- (12.) As it is clearly shewn by the evidence that the Native Police Force is no longer required in the Clarence River District, your Committee would recommend the immediate withdrawal of Lieutenant Dempster and his troopers therefrom.
- (13.) Your Committee consider that the pay of the Native Troopers should be increased from 5d. to 8d. per diem; the additional expense to be met by the contemplated reduction of three officers.
- (14.) After carefully perusing the papers connected with the dismissal of Lieutenant Ross from the Native Police, referred for their consideration, your Committee can see no reason to disturb the opinion which has been arrived at by the Executive Government in the matter.

In bringing their labors to a close, your Committee desire to state that they feel satisfied that the efforts now being made are well calculated to allay those feelings of alarm and apprehension which have been so long prevalent in the unhappy district of the Leichhardt; and whilst they repudiate, in the strongest terms, any attempt to wage a war of extermination against the Aborigines, they are satisfied that there is no alternative but to carry matters through with a strong hand, and punish with necessary severity all future outrages upon life and property, in order that the sanguinary conflicts between the native blacks and the settlers may for the future be avoided.

ARTHUR HODGSON,  
Chairman.

*Legislative Assembly Chamber,  
Sydney, 3rd August, 1858.*

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE.

THURSDAY, 17 JUNE, 1858.

**Members Present:—**

Mr. Hodgson,		Mr. Jones,
Mr. Cowper,		Mr. Taylor,
Mr. Richardson,		Mr. Cribb,
Mr. Buckley,		Mr. Donaldson.

Mr. Hodgson was called to the Chair.

Committee deliberated as to their course of proceeding.

The Chairman stated that he had requested the Clerk to cause Captain O'Connell, Commissioner of Crown Lands for the Port Curtis District, to be summoned before the Committee as a witness, for *this day*, and that Captain O'Connell was now in attendance in answer to such summons.

Whereupon Motion made and *Question*—"That Captain O'Connell be now called in " and examined"—*agreed to*.

Captain *M. C. O'Connell*, Commissioner of Crown Lands, Port Curtis, examined.

[Adjourned till to-morrow, at *Eleven o'clock*.]

FRIDAY, 18 JUNE, 1858.

**Members Present:—**

A. Hodgson, Esq., in the Chair.

Mr. Taylor,		Mr. Jones,
Mr. Cribb,		Mr. Richardson,
Mr. Buckley,		Mr. Forster,

Mr. *Forster*, a Member of the Committee, examined in his place.

Letter from Mr. William Archer, excusing his attendance before the Committee as a witness, for *this day*, read by the Chairman.

[Adjourned till Tuesday next, at *Eleven o'clock*.]

TUESDAY, 22 JUNE, 1858.

**Members Present:—**

A. Hodgson, Esq., in the Chair.

Mr. Forster,		Mr. Donaldson,
Mr. Taylor,		Mr. Cowper,
Mr. Richardson.		

Mr. *William Archer*, J.P., and Mr. *E. M. Royds*, J.P., examined.

[Adjourned till to-morrow, at *Eleven o'clock*.]

WEDNESDAY, 23 JUNE, 1858.

**Members Present:—**

A. Hodgson, Esq., in the Chair.

Mr. Forster,		Mr. Taylor,
Mr. Buckley.		

Mr. *J. B. Reid*, Mr. *W. B. Tooth*, M.P., and Mr. *H. M. Pearse*, severally examined.

[Adjourned till Tuesday, 6 proximo, at *Eleven o'clock*.]

TUESDAY, 6 JULY, 1858.

**Members Present:—**

Mr. Donaldson,		Mr. Foster,
Mr. Richardson,		Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Donaldson, in the absence of the Chairman, was called to the Chair.

The Chairman, expressing his own disinclination to proceed with any business *this day*, in consequence of the death, at an early hour this morning, of the Venerable Arch-deacon Cowper, desired the opinion of the Committee as to the expediency of at once adjourning.

Committee



Committee deliberated, and it was *Resolved* :—

“ That this Committee deems it undesirable to transact any business *this day*, in  
 “ consequence of the demise of the Venerable Archdeacon Cowper, Father of  
 “ the Principal Secretary, and determines therefore on now adjourning till  
 “ Friday next.”

[Adjourned till Friday next, at *Eleven o'clock*.]

FRIDAY, 9 JULY, 1858.

The meeting of the Committee convened for *this day* lapsed, in consequence of the adjournment of the House from Tuesday, 6th instant, till Tuesday, 13th instant, owing to the demise of the Venerable Archdeacon Cowper, Father of the Principal Secretary.

THURSDAY, 15 JULY, 1858.

**Members Present** :—

A. Hodgson, Esq., in the Chair.

Mr. Cribb,	Mr. Forster,
Mr. Taylor,	Mr. Buckley,
Mr. Jones,	Mr. Richardson.

Mr. *Alfred Brown*, Mr. *W. E. Plunkett*, Secretary to the Crown Law Officers, and Mr. *W. H. Gaden*, severally examined.  
 Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned till to-morrow, at *half-past Eleven o'clock*.]

FRIDAY, 16 JULY, 1858.

**Members Present** :—

A. Hodgson, Esq., in the Chair.

Mr. Buckley,	Mr. Cribb,
Mr. Taylor.	

By direction of the Chairman, Resolution of the House referring to the Committee, on 14th instant—

“ Letter from the Government Resident, Brisbane, Moreton Bay, dated 8th instant,  
 “ enclosing Returns of the expense, strength, and distribution of the Native  
 “ Police; ”—

And on the 15th instant—

“ Copies of all Correspondence which has taken place between the Government and  
 “ the present Commandant of Native Police, as to the suspension or dismissal  
 “ of Mr. Ross, Second Lieutenant of the Native Police, together with a copy of the  
 “ Evidence relative thereto, as taken by Lieutenant Murray ”—

read by the Clerk.

Mr. *Daniel Connor* and Mr. *John Miller* examined.

Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned till Wednesday next, at *Eleven o'clock*.]

WEDNESDAY, 21 JULY, 1858.

**Members Present** :—

A. Hodgson, Esq., in the Chair.

Mr. Richardson,	Mr. Forster,
Mr. Buckley,	Mr. Taylor.

The Chairman having laid before the Committee copy of a letter from Mr. Commissioner Wiseman to the Attorney General, dated 29th April last, enclosing the depositions in the case of the murder of four white men by the blacks, and representing the necessity to the Government of affording adequate protection to the stockholders and their men, in the Leichhardt District against the aborigines,—read the same.

Ordered to be printed in Appendix. (*Vide Separate Appendix A*)

Mr. *W. Small* examined.

Letter from Mr. E. B. Uhr, excusing his attendance as a witness before the Committee for *this day*, read by the Chairman.

Motion made and *Question*—“ That E. B. Uhr, Esquire, be now summoned before the Committee, as a witness, for Friday next ”—*agreed to*.

[Adjourned till Friday next, at *Eleven o'clock*.]

FRIDAY, 23 JULY, 1858.

**Members Present:—**

A. Hodgson, Esq., in the Chair.

Mr. Buckley, | Mr. Taylor.

Committee deliberated on the correspondence referred to them on the 15th instant, relating to the dismissal of Mr. Rcass.

Deliberation adjourned.

Captain *M. C. O'Connell* further examined.

Mr. *E. B. Uhr*, J. P., examined.

Witnesses withdrew.

Committee deliberated, and it was *Resolved*:—

“ That it is expedient to take the evidence of Captain M'Levie before closing this “ inquiry.”

Motion made (Mr. *Buckley*) and *Question*,—“ That the Chairman do now prepare a “ Draft Report for the consideration of the Committee”—*agreed to*.

[Adjourned till Thursday next, at *Eleven o'clock*.]

THURSDAY, 29 JULY, 1858.

**Members Present:—**

A. Hodgson, Esq., in the Chair.

Mr. Donaldson,		Mr. Smith,
Mr. Richardson,		Mr. Taylor,
Mr. Buckley,		Mr. Forster.

By direction of the Chairman, Resolution of the House referring to the Committee on 27th instant, “ A communication from the Government Resident at Moreton Bay, dated “ 21st July, 1858, stating that by the arrival of fifteen recruits at Brisbane, on the 20th “ July, the Native Police Force was augmented to 92 troopers,”—read by the Clerk.

The Chairman then laid before the Committee a Draft Report.

Motion made (Mr. *Donaldson*,) and *Question*,—“ That the Draft Report proposed “ by the Chairman be now read 1°”—*agreed to*.

Draft Report read accordingly.

Committee deliberated.

Motion made (Mr. *Buckley*,) and *Question*,—“ That this Report be now read 2°, and “ considered paragraph by paragraph”—*agreed to*.

The Chairman here withdrawing,—Mr. Buckley was called to the Chair.

Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, and 4, initiating the Report, read, considered, verbally amended, and agreed to.

Paragraph 5, comprising 1st Resolution, then read, considered, verbally amended, and agreed to.

Whereupon Motion made (Mr. *Richardson*,) and *Question*,—“ That the consideration “ of the remaining paragraphs be postponed till to-morrow”—*agreed to*.

[Adjourned till to-morrow, at *Eleven o'clock* ]

FRIDAY, 30 JULY, 1858.

**Members Present:—**

A. Hodgson, Esq., in the Chair.

Mr. Forster,		Mr. Richardson,
Mr. Buckley,		Mr. Taylor.

Committee proceeded with the consideration of the Draft Report, *proposed* by the Chairman.

Paragraph 6, comprising 2nd Resolution, read.

Motion made and *Question proposed*,—“ That this paragraph, comprising the 2nd Resolution, stand part of the Report.”

Committee deliberated as to the expediency of expunging the portion of this paragraph, which negatives the amalgamation of Mounted Troopers with the Native Police.

*Question put*.

Committee divided.

Ayes, 2.		No, 1.
Mr. Buckley,		Mr. Forster.
Mr. Richardson.		

Paragraph 7, comprising 3rd Resolution, read, considered, and agreed to without amendment.

Paragraphs 8, 9, and 10, comprising 4th, 5th, and 6th Resolutions, read, considered, verbally amended, and agreed to.

Paragraph 11, comprising 7th Resolution, read.

Motion

Motion made and *Question proposed*—"That the paragraph, comprising the 7th Resolution, stand part of the Report."

*Amendment proposed* (Mr. Forster)—"That this paragraph be amended by the insertion after the words 'to which it' of the words 'is believed that it.'"

*Question put*—"That these words be there inserted."

Committee divided.

Ayes, 2.		Noes, 2.
Mr. Forster, Mr. Taylor,		Mr. Buckley, Mr. Richardson.

Whereupon the Chairman declared himself with the "*Noes*."

*Original Question then put and agreed to.*

Paragraphs 12 and 13, comprising 8th and 9th Resolutions, read, considered, verbally amended, and agreed to.

Paragraph 14, comprising 10th Resolution, read, considered, and agreed to without amendment.

Paragraph 15, comprising 11th Resolution, read.

Motion made and *Question proposed*—"That the paragraph, comprising the 11th Resolution, stand part of the Report."

Committee deliberated.

*Question put.*

Committee divided.

Ayes, 2.		Noes, 2.
Mr. Buckley, Mr. Richardson,		Mr. Forster, Mr. Taylor.

Whereupon the Chairman declared himself with the "*Ayes*."

Paragraphs 16 and 17, comprising 12th and 13th Resolutions, read, considered, verbally amended, and agreed to.

Paragraph 17, comprising 14th Resolution, read, viz. :—

"Your Committee here feel compelled to allude to the present objectionable system  
 "of taking up extensive tracts of land without any immediate intention of  
 "stocking the same; and thus, by keeping the stations so far apart, increasing  
 "the difficulty of protection, and affording to the blacks greater facilities for  
 "committing depredations."

Motion made and *Question proposed*,—"That this paragraph, comprising the 14th Resolution, stand part of the Report."

Committee deliberated.

*Question put and negatived.*

Paragraph struck out accordingly.

Paragraph 18 (*now* 17), comprising 15th (*now* 14th) Resolution, read, considered, and agreed to, without amendment.

Concluding paragraph read, considered, verbally amended, and agreed to.

Motion then made and *Question put*,—"That this Report, as amended, be the Report of the Committee."

Committee divided.

Ayes, 2.		Noes, 2.
Mr. Buckley, Mr. Richardson,		Mr. Taylor, Mr. Forster.

Whereupon the Chairman declared himself with the "*Ayes*."  
 Chairman requested to report to the House.

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1858.

Legislative Assembly.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

## MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE

THE SELECT COMMITTEE

ON THE

## MURDERS BY THE ABORIGINES ON THE DAWSON RIVER.

THURSDAY, 17 JUNE, 1858.

Present:—

Mr. HODGSON,  
Mr. TAYLOR,  
Mr. COWPER,  
Mr. JONES,

Mr. RICHARDSON,  
Mr. CRIBB,  
Mr. BUCKLEY,  
Mr. DONALDSON.

ARTHUR HODGSON, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Captain Maurice Charles O'Connell, called in and examined:—

1. *By the Chairman*: You are Commissioner of Crown Lands for the District of Port Curtis? Yes. Capt. M. C. O'Connell.
2. You have been there some time? Rather more than four years.
3. You resided previously in the Burnett District? Yes; for five or six years. It is ten years altogether since I first was stationed frontier of occupation. 17 June, 1858.
4. You have had many opportunities of seeing the working of the Native Police Force? Yes.
5. Under Mr. Walker? Under Mr. Walker, and since his removal from the command.
6. *By Mr. Cowper*: In fact, Port Curtis was the head-quarters of the force? No; it never was head-quarters. I had control, when I first went up there, of the detachment that belonged to the Port Curtis District.
7. *By the Chairman*: Do you consider the Native Police Force, as at present constituted, efficient? Certainly not, at the present moment. It is very inefficient. It seems to have broken down from a want of any proper system of organization. When I first saw the Native Police, as originally raised by Mr. Walker, it struck me that he had worked a change and improvement in the aborigines I was hardly prepared to think they were capable of; he had got them into very creditable order; but since his removal from the command, as far as my observation goes, the men are not kept together under proper discipline, or with sufficient obedience to their officers, or even sufficient regard for them. At present it seems almost impossible to keep the newly raised recruits attached to the corps. I believe, in several instances, they have been deserting in considerable numbers.
8. Can you inform the Committee where the recruits come from? I cannot. I know nothing on that point, except from hearsay.
9. Do you think they come from the neighbouring districts, or from remote districts of the Colony? I have understood that some who have been brought to the Port Curtis district were recruited in the Wide Bay district, which is the adjoining one, and these men, very shortly after their arrival on the Fitz Roy, deserted.
10. Do you not think that would be a very probable consequence of their being employed so near their own district? I think it is very difficult to keep aborigines in the neighbourhood of their own tribes.
11. *By Mr. Richardson*: You think recruits should not be obtained from the neighbouring tribes? I do.

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12. Do you think it would be desirable to get them from distant districts, such as the Murrumbidgee and Murray? Yes, or from the Namoi or Gwydir, or other distant districts.
13. Do you think the body can be rendered efficient at all on the present system? I do not think they can, without a considerable change of system.
14. *By the Chairman:* Would you be kind enough to favor the Committee with your ideas as to what is necessary for the reformation of the present system? It appears to me that the great want of the present system is a proper organization. Neither men nor officers are trained to their duty, so as to understand what they have to do when called upon to perform it. The officers have not that control over the men which they ought to have; and there is no *esprit de corps*. The duty is a particularly harassing and unpleasant one, and there is nothing to induce to the zealous performance of it beyond the bare fact of its being a duty.
15. Could you propose any remedy? The only plan which has occurred to me, as one which would be at all likely to be effectual, is that of raising a force under a law which, somewhat on the example of the Mutiny Act, shall compel a due observance of discipline, and prevent desertion. I think, under such a law, there ought to be a number of white troopers enlisted, in the proportion of one white man to two blacks; and in that way an efficient working corps would be created. I do not think the expense would be much greater than it is at present; and a body of men could be thus raised and disciplined who would really be useful.
16. Would you not prefer that the white troopers should preponderate? I would, provided the expense was not considered too great; but I think a force composed of one-third whites to two-thirds natives would be efficient, and, at the same time, much less expensive than a larger proportion of white men.
17. You recommend these proportions solely on the ground of expense? Solely on the ground of expense. In some parts of the country the native troopers are much more efficient than white men would be in following up and punishing the blacks for outrages committed, because they can follow them into the scrubs with greater facility—for instance, the scrubs of the Mackenzie and Upper Dawson; but, in all ordinary cases, I think a corps of white men with black trackers would be the most efficient.
18. *By Mr. Cowper:* In these scrubs you speak of, do you contemplate the Native Police being allowed to penetrate and murder the blacks, apart from their officers? No; I think such a system would be very objectionable. It is frequently the habit of the blacks, when they have committed an outrage or murder, to seek shelter on the border of a large scrub; and when they find themselves attacked they immediately disappear in the interior of the scrub; they have then to be followed, and in the pursuit the natives will, in all probability, get in advance of any white men who may be with them, though I have heard of cases where white men—Mr. Walker, for instance—managed to keep up with them all through the scrub.
19. *By the Chairman:* There are open spots frequently in these scrubs? Yes, often. The Native Police are in the habit of throwing off their clothes and entering the scrub with nothing but their accoutrements—their ammunition and carbine. They have a quicker eye, and they follow the blacks with greater certainty; they pick up a track with a sort of instinct, which guides them unerringly, from early habit, and which the white man does not possess.
20. *By Mr. Cowper:* You have a division of the Native Police at Gladstone, under Lieutenant Murray? Yes.
21. Were they often called out? Not when we first went there. I can tell you what happened when I first went up there, or very soon after Mr. Walker's removal took place. Mr. Murray reported to me that his men were all going away; that they had stated to him their intention of going to see Mr. Walker, and that they were, in point of fact, going to desert.
22. *By Mr. Jones:* Was any cause assigned? They said it was on account of Mr. Walker's removal from the command.
23. *By Mr. Cowper:* On account of their personal attachment to him? Yes; he having raised them. I asked Mr. Murray if he thought there would be any use in my speaking to the men. He said he thought it might have some effect; and I directed him to have his men paraded. I then put on my uniform, and rode out to endeavor to induce them to remain—because it was a matter of serious importance to us at that time, as we were then on an unoccupied part of the coast, surrounded by wild tribes, with a large extent of vacant country intervening between us and the nearest settlements; and had they left us, we should have found it very difficult to communicate with the settled portion of the country. On speaking to the men, I found they stated very reasonably their causes for dissatisfaction. They said they had been promised by Mr. Walker that after a certain time they should be taken back to their own country again to see their friends and relatives, and that they had now been five years in the force, and they were determined to go in. I could not prevail on them to change their intention, until I remarked to them that the country they were serving—it was the time the Russian war had just broken out—was then at war with other white people, and that it was a disgraceful thing on their parts to desert us at such a time. I pointed out that we were then on the coast where our white enemies might attack us, and we might suffer from the want of their aid; and they took the idea immediately, and declared that under the circumstance they would remain, and they even followed me into Gladstone, to express more strongly their determination to do so. I mention this, as I think it a strong proof that these aboriginals are capable of generous impulses; and they did remain until about two years afterwards. The force was in the meantime removed from my control; and I may here say, that I think these men were subsequently very unjustly discharged. On the occasion I speak of, I promised them that the Government would find them the means of getting back to their own districts on horseback. I reported this to Sir Charles Fitz Roy, and received a confirmation of my pledge, and yet afterwards that pledge was broken, and the men were discharged to find their way on foot to their own country. I believe they committed many depredations on the road.



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24. *By Mr. Jones* : These men did not desert? No; they were discharged.
25. The Government actually broke faith with them twice, Mr. Walker having, previously to your promise to them, undertaken on the part of the Government to return them to their own country—you have no reason to doubt that statement? No; but I do not think there was any time fixed by Mr. Walker, so that we cannot say it was a breach of faith.
26. Did you ever ascertain from Mr. Walker at what time he had undertaken to return them? No.
27. You yourself, however, gave them a distinct promise, and that promise was never fulfilled? Yes; that pledge was broken. I reported the circumstances to Mr. Parker, who was Colonial Secretary, I think, at the time; but we were so distant, and the correspondence was so long on the road, that it was too late to do anything in the way of remedy by the time it came to a conclusion.
28. *By Mr. Cowper* : Do you know what became of these men? I wrote to the officer at the Condamine, to beg that he would find means of support for them to the extent of £20, pending my reference of the matter to the Government in Sydney, and I would be answerable for that amount myself; but he wrote back to me to say that they had been about his place, and had been committing depredations—that they had fired at a woman, and had been stealing ammunition at the huts; some of them, he said, had joined his force, but had behaved very badly after joining, and he did not know where the others were gone.
29. *By the Chairman* : Do you know whether any personal attachment exists between the present Commandant and his troopers? I have no means of forming an opinion on this point.
30. Do you know the feeling amongst the squatters in the northern districts with regard to the Native Police Force? From expressions I have heard, I believe the squatters, generally, are not satisfied with the working of the corps. I presume they cannot be, for in my part of the country there are no men—or at least not sufficient to be of service.
31. *By Mr. Cowper* : Has Mr. Murray no men with him? I am not sure of the strength of his detachment at the present moment, but for the last two years it has been considerably under its proper number. When I left Port Curtis, twelve men lately recruited had just gone to the Fitz Roy, and I have since heard they have deserted.
32. *By Mr. Jones* : What was the strength of Mr. Murray's force at the time you left? He has had very few men for the last year and a half. I do not think there are more than four or five men at Gladstone now.
33. *By Mr. Richardson* : Have the settlers themselves proposed any plan for the reorganization of the Native Police? I have heard so many different opinions, that I could not say what is the general opinion among the squatters.
34. *By Mr. Cowper* : Have you ever sustained any attacks on the part of the blacks yourself? Never.
35. Have there been any attacks within your district? Within fourteen miles of Gladstone, at Mr. Young's station, they killed everybody on the place except a black boy; and within the last year they killed three men on Mr. Tolson's station, and wounded him.
36. *By the Chairman* : Have you understood that the squatters are not disposed to co-operate with the Native Police? I have never observed anything of the sort myself.
37. Are you personally aware how Mr. Walker is employed at the present time? I am not.
38. *By Mr. Cowper* : Have you considered this matter sufficiently to enable you to make any suggestions to the Committee, which you think would advance the reconstruction of the Native Police Force, or the construction of a force in lieu of it? I do not think it possible to reconstruct the Native Police Force on the present system. I think any such attempt would be likely to end in mischief, from the mixture of the old material with the new. I think, to do anything effectual you must originate a new system; and until the new one can be put in operation, it should be kept entirely separate from the old. To lay down what I believe desirable for a new system, would perhaps require longer time than the Committee are now inclined to afford me; but I may state that I propose to lay before the Committee, at another opportunity, a paper containing a design of that which I suppose to be the best mode of forming another corps. (*Vide Appendix A.*)
39. *By the Chairman* : Leaving expense out of the question, what number of white men would you employ in conjunction with the Native Police, in order to make the force as efficient as possible? Supposing the force to consist altogether of one hundred and twenty men—a number which the last Committee presumed to be sufficient—I should say there should be forty white troopers and eighty aboriginal troopers, independently of staff sergeants, and a number of bat men.
40. You think a force of whites and natives combined in those proportions would work efficiently? I think so; but it must first be properly organized before it is put to work. The great fault of the present system seems to me to be that there is no organization. The men are taken from the bush, and the officers are selected from other walks in life, and the two are put together and told to perform certain duties for which they have had no previous training, and they feel that awkwardness which all men naturally feel who do not understand their duty.
41. *By Mr. Cowper* : Is not the proportion you name, of eighty blacks to forty whites, rather at variance with the idea of using the blacks merely as trackers? I only propose these proportions for the sake of economy; but still I think the intelligence of the whites, combined with the physical force which such a number of natives would give, would make it work as an effective force, and they would be able to accomplish many duties they cannot perform now, such as the execution of warrants, &c. An intelligent white sergeant, with two aboriginal native troopers with him, could perform many duties that half-a-dozen native troopers alone could not perform, and many services which one white constable would not be able by himself to accomplish.
42. *By Mr. Richardson* : Keeping expense out of the question, would it not be as well to have

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43. *By the Chairman:* Are you at all aware of the number of the force at present? No, 17 June, 1858. I am not.

44. Are you at all aware of the difficulty the present Commandant has in increasing the force? I am not; but I presume there must be great difficulty in recruiting, from the native troopers being so scarce in the Port Curtis District. In order to induce the men to remain in the service, I think it would be a great advantage to give a band at head-quarters, and all the paraphernalia of a regiment to this corps. Where it is all hard work and no play, you must do something to induce the men to join. It would tend to induce an *esprit de corps*.

45. You have not yourself been resident in any districts where the blacks have been committing outrages? Yes; in the Burnett.

46. Were they very mischievous there at the time of your residence? They killed a number of men in different parts of the district. I think some twenty were killed in the space of five years.

47. *By the Chairman:* Could you give the Committee any idea of the extent of country in length over which you consider a protective force necessary? If I had one of the maps shewing the Electoral Districts as proposed, I think I could explain to the Committee what I think are the best positions in which to locate detachments of the force. (*A map being produced, the witness proceeded to point out the various positions which, in his opinion, the force should occupy.*) The country to be protected would be about four hundred miles in length, by about 150 or 200 in breadth. I think there is a very good position for a central depot on the Calliope, where Mr. Walker himself once fixed on a spot for head-quarters. The situation is one from which most of the different districts, now that occupation has progressed to the north, could be relieved periodically with the greatest ease. There might, I think, be out-stations at Taroom, Rannes, the Fitz Roy, Maryborough, Brisbane, Nanango, and at the Condamine—in all seven stations, independently of the central one. The object of the central depôt is to have some place where the force could be organized—where the recruits could be trained, and from whence relief might be sent to the out-stations as required. It is absolutely necessary, in my opinion, to bring in the men from the out-lying stations to head-quarters at certain intervals, in order that they may have their horses, clothing, saddlery, arms, and so on looked to, and that they may have a certain period of rest. I think also that there should be a system of constant patrolling kept up by all the different sections, so that the blacks in the intermediate country might be kept in awe. That would be likely to prevent a good deal of mischief. I am convinced an efficient system of patrol is the only way to work the force in a proper manner.

48. *By Mr. Cowper:* Is it not the fact that these outbreaks are chiefly confined to one district at any one time. For instance, it now appears that the Upper Dawson is the district in which the blacks are most threatening—would it not therefore be better to concentrate in that particular district a powerful force, rather than to have a number of stations scattered over a wide extent of country? The object of a depôt would be, that you might at once mass a large force on any given point. I propose that there should always be a considerable number—say thirty men—at head-quarters, and in the event of outbreaks similar to that on the Upper Dawson, the whole of these men could be moved to the spot at once, and other parties might likewise be moved towards the same point. In this way a large amount of force could be brought to bear on any disturbed district, until the outrages had been put an end to.

49. *By the Chairman:* Your plan would involve the erection of barracks? At the head-quarters, certainly.

50. Not at the out-lying stations? I am not prepared to say that. I think the officers ought to have quarters; it is hard work for Europeans to compel them to sleep out every night, year after year.

51. Are they not well received at the different stations? Yes, I believe they are; but I think it would be as well they should stop with their men.

52. Do you think the amalgamation of white and native troopers would bring about much jealousy on the part of the latter? I think not.

53. Not even though the white men should be made sergeants and leading men in each division? I think not. They would, of course, require selection. It would be necessary to make a selection of those who were best adapted by nature to govern and lead the blacks. It is not every man who is fitted by disposition and intelligence to command the respect and attention of the blacks.

54. Do you consider the number of officers now employed—seventeen—excessive or not? They would be decidedly too many under the system I recommend. But I recollect now that most of the officers at present are merely substitutes for sergeants. The men formerly employed as sergeants were found to be of such bad character that it was difficult to keep them in order, as they were not enlisted under any law; and one of the Commandants—I think Mr. Marshall—fancied it would be better to get young men of education, who should be called officers, but do the duty of sergeants. Under that view there are not too many.

55. Can you tell the Committee whether that idea of Mr. Marshall's has been carried out with any effect? I think not. I do not think it has answered the purpose.

56. *By Mr. Jones:* Have you ever been concerned with black troopers in any engagement with the aborigines? No.

57. Have you ever heard any statement, on authority on which you can rely, as to the general conduct of the black troopers when they have been engaged with blacks who have committed depredations—I mean as to whether they exhibit undue ferocity? I do not believe they are at all imbued with any feeling of humanity, as far as consideration for human life is concerned.

58. You do not believe they would act with the same circumspection in a case of that kind that



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that the white troopers would? No; I believe they are quite beyond the control of their officers when once let loose.

59. You think in engagements of this kind the black troopers would take life more recklessly than white troopers would do? I think so.

60. Do you think they would exercise any discrimination between the males and women of the tribes on whom they make attacks in these cases? I cannot give an answer on that point from any personal observation. I do not know whether they would themselves have any hesitation in sacrificing the lives of females; but I incline to think they would avoid doing so.

61. *By the Chairman*: Do you not know that in the skirmishes which do take place the black women are invariably saved—that they are not killed except by accident? I believe that where it is possible the women are saved; but in an indiscriminate attack they may accidentally get shot.

62. *By Mr. Jones*: Do you think the native troopers would, as white men would do, avoid destroying the women in such a case? I think they would. I do not think they would voluntarily shoot the women.

63. But you believe that, as compared with white men, they would be reckless in taking the lives of the male blacks? Quite so. I do not think they ought to be trusted by themselves.

64. You think it would not be safe to employ them, unless in conjunction with a sufficient number of white men to keep them in check? Just so.

65. *By Mr. Richardson*: You think it undesirable that the blacks should preponderate so much as they do? Decidedly.

66. *By Mr. Jones*: What is the ordinary conduct and demeanor of the native troopers towards the neighbouring tribes when not actively engaged against them? I think, whilst under control, their conduct is very good; but if not restrained, I believe they would seize upon the women of the neighbouring tribes, and would in a very short time become exceedingly troublesome in consequence. I had an instance of the sort myself; but I put a stop to it at once. When I first allowed the wild blacks to come into my camp at Port Curtis they soon complained that the Native Police had taken one of their women. It caused great excitement amongst them, and I immediately rode out to the police camp, and requested Mr. Murray to parade his men. When that was done I told them the woman must be returned by sundown. Mr. Murray's men indignantly denied that they had had anything to do with it, but said the woman had been taken by a trooper who had come down on escort from Rannes; and they promised they would have the woman returned, which they did.

67. Do you think that, with regard to the women, there would be any material difference between the conduct of the black troopers and of the white troopers—that the conduct of the blacks would be worse than that of the whites under the like circumstances? I think so, decidedly. It would be more easy to keep white men under control in that matter.

68. Taking into consideration the average character of the officers whose services we may expect to secure, do you think it possible to ensure a proper state of discipline where the force consists exclusively of native troopers? I should say it is very difficult to do so; there are few men I should consider competent to control such a force.

69. It would, I apprehend, be much easier to insure a proper state of discipline in a force composed mainly of whites, than in one consisting entirely of blacks? Of course; but there must be a stringent law to govern even the whites.

70. With or without such a law it would, as a rule, be easier for the officers to manage whites than to manage blacks? That would depend a good deal on the temptation to which they are subject. I think a number of white men collected together under circumstances of temptation, without a law to govern them, subject merely to their own ideas of right and wrong, with no penalty but dismissal, would be rather more difficult to retain under any strict discipline than a similar number of blacks.

71. But, under such a law as you speak of, you think there would be comparatively little difficulty in managing a force of white men? Quite so.

72. While the management of the blacks would depend on the tact and skill of their officer? Entirely on his personal character.

73. What do you regard as the relative value of white and black troopers in a case of this kind:—Say it requires a force of one hundred blacks for the protection of a certain district, what number of white men would you consider equal to the same amount of duty? I do not think any great difference could be made in the numbers, because having in all these cases a large tract of country to cover, you would, I think, require nearly the same number of one description as the other.

74. In the event of disturbances leading to engagements with the wild tribes, would you not consider a force of ten white men equal to the work of twice that number of blacks? You mean blacks by themselves?

75. Blacks, with one white officer to lead them. Would not an officer go into an engagement with ten white men with the same confidence as with double the number of blacks? I think not in these peculiar districts. I think an officer accustomed to the blacks would feel himself quite as confident as if he had an equal number of whites.

76. Then, if the character of the force be changed by the introduction of a larger proportion of whites, you do not think it would be wise to diminish the total number of the force on that account? I think not. The amount of physical force required to bring an engagement to a successful issue would be much the same, whether whites or blacks be employed; but the introduction of a larger number of whites into the force would make it more efficient by increasing its moral power; because the whites could perform many duties which require a certain amount of intelligence and education, but to which blacks alone would be quite incompetent. For instance, one white man and two blacks would make an efficient patrolling party; but you could hardly trust three ordinary black troopers by themselves as a detachment for a similar purpose.

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77. *By Mr. Cribb*: Do you not think a force of eight white troopers, with two blacks as trackers, would be more efficient than an ordinary troop of twelve black troopers with one officer to lead them? They would be more efficient for many purposes, but for the purpose of following up and punishing blacks who had committed outrage, I do not think they would.

78. Would they not be more under control? If you are talking of the force as it at present exists, I grant that the whites would be more efficient; but if the black troopers were under a proper system, and as well disciplined as they should be, and certainly were under Mr. Walker, I think twelve of these would be as efficient for that particular purpose as eight whites and two black trackers.

79. Taking the force as it at present exists, would not eight whites and two blacks be more efficient than twelve blacks under their present officers? Decidedly more efficient than the present force.

80. *By Mr. Jones*: Do you not think the black tribes would stand more in awe of a force composed mainly of white men? No; they are desperately afraid of the Native Police.

81. *By Mr. Buckley*: Do you think white troopers would be able to follow the blacks through scrubs of the same density as black troopers would get through after them? No; I say they would not in that peculiar country.

82. In attacking the blacks, it frequently happens that the Native Police are obliged to penetrate dense scrubs, for which purpose they strip themselves of everything, merely taking with them their arms and ammunition—would white troopers be in a position to follow the blacks with the same facility through these scrubs? I do not think they could get so rapidly through the scrubs.

83. Could they get through at all? Yes, with black troopers with them, as I propose.

84. *By Mr. Jones*: What is the state of feeling among the blacks, are you aware, as compared with what it was a few years ago—are they less afraid of the whites than they were prior to the disorganization of the Native Police Force taking place? Judging from the frequency of outrages and murders on the Dawson, I should be inclined to believe they are less afraid of the whites than they were, and less under awe of punishment than they used to be.

85. Do you think that feeling is an increasing one at the present time? I have no grounds upon which to offer an opinion on that point.

86. I presume the blacks are still very numerous in the Northern Districts? Yes.

87. Supposing this feeling of boldness were to grow on them, and lead to its natural consequences, do you not think it would require considerable expenditure of life and money to restore the state of things that now exists in those districts? Yes; I have no doubt of it.

88. Then you think it better to take effective measures at once, to convince the blacks that any country the white people once take up they will keep? Yes; no doubt of it. The wisest and most humane system is at once to cause prompt punishment to follow all outrages.

89. Do you think it possible that result can be arrived at, with the Native Police Force as at present organized? I think not.

90. Then you believe it is absolutely necessary to reorganize this force without delay? Yes.

91. *By Mr. Donaldson*: Public attention has been lately drawn to some very remarkable circumstances, namely, that the blacks in the Northern Districts, especially those about the Dawson, not only travel by night, and fight by night, but that the men separate from the women; and that tribes supposed to be hostile combine their fighting men for the purposes of aggression—have you in any way noticed these peculiarities? The combination of the tribes is new to me, and if it be true, it is a very dangerous feature in their character.

92. You do not know that it is so? I do not.

93. With regard to leaving their women? That I have seen—at least I know they do it when going to their own corrobories.

94. Do you know anything about their attacking at night? That they do.

95. That is a new feature, and a very dangerous one? It is. Formerly it was understood that superstition prevented them from attacking at night; and they must either have outgrown that superstition, or these must be tribes that are not subject to it.

96. *By the Chairman*: Can you tell the Committee the amount of pay received by the Native Troopers? I think it is eighteen-pence a day, to cover their feeding and clothing.

97. Should you recommend a difference of pay between the white and native troopers, on the new system you propose? Decidedly. I assume that the native trooper should get his eighteen-pence a day, as at present, and that the white trooper should get three shillings and sixpence a day, and rations.

98. Do you anticipate that any feeling of jealousy would exist on account of the difference of wages? I think not at all.

99. Would you recommend, as an immediate remedy, to prevent any more murders on the Dawson River, that a body of white troopers should be sent up, if possible, from Sydney? Doubtless that would be the best mode of providing for the present emergency that could be adopted, if they were men fitted for the bush.

100. *By Mr. Richardson*: Would it not be desirable that they should be men accustomed to the bush? Decidedly it would be an advantage; but under the plan I was sketching an idea of, they would all undergo a training at head-quarters before being put to active service in the different districts.

101. Supposing a number of Captain M'Leric's men were sent, do you think they would be efficient at first? They would soon get into working order, if well commanded.

102. *By Mr. Buckley*: From your own knowledge of the disposition of the aborigines, should you imagine that these murders on the Dawson have been committed in consequence of too much freedom having been permitted with the blacks? I have never seen the blacks do mischief without some previous injury being inflicted on them by the whites.

103. Are you aware whether there was any thing of the kind in these cases? No.

104. But, from what you know of the blacks, you do not think they are likely to do it wantonly? As far as I have any knowledge of them, I should think not.

105.

105. *By Mr. Taylor:* Do you think the Commandant should habitually reside at the dépôt? After he has once formed his corps he would be at liberty to move about, and should do so occasionally; but at the commencement I think his presence would be absolutely necessary at the head-quarters, as he himself would be the very soul of the system to be established.

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106. *By Mr. Buckley:* I think you stated that Maryborough would be a good station for a detachment of this force—do you not think Gayndah would be better? No; the blacks are more troublesome, and very numerous, at Maryborough. At Gayndah they have never been troublesome.

#### APPENDIX A.

##### *Remarks on the formation of a Corps of Mounted Police for service on the Frontier Districts of New South Wales.*

1. There can be no doubt of the vast importance to the Northern Districts of this Colony, and to its pastoral interests generally, for the disposal of whose surplus stock these districts now form the chief outlet, of devising and carrying into execution, with as little delay as possible, some more efficient system for the protection of life and property against aboriginal outrage than any which is now in operation.

2. I have therefore much pleasure in laying before the Committee on Aboriginal Outrages on the Dawson River, in accordance with the promise I made when under examination, a carefully-prepared memorandum of what appears to me the best mode of providing a force adequate to the task of affording police protection to the frontier and disturbed districts.

3. I believe the fundamental error in the constitution of the Native Police Force as it now exists, and the cause of its consequent inefficiency, to be the want of primary organization—that is to say, the institution of the corps without any organized and arranged system for its government and discipline, as well as the absence of any method in the drill and training of the officers and men who compose it.

4. The mere clothing and arming a certain number of undisciplined men, be they either whites or blacks, is not a sufficient preliminary precaution before you call upon them to perform duties which, alike important and arduous in their nature, require also skill and intelligence in their execution. It appears to me that all who, either as leaders or followers, are liable to be placed in such a position ought undoubtedly to be thoroughly grounded in a knowledge of the work they have to perform; and that such has not been the case with the Native Police, is in my eyes quite a sufficient reason to account for the failure of that experiment, notwithstanding the undoubted zeal and desire to succeed of many of the gentlemen appointed as officers.

5. The great objects to be held in view in the organization of a body of armed men intended to act in concert for the accomplishment of any particular purposes are, in the first instance, to render each individual member of the force as expert in the use of the weapons entrusted to him as he is capable of becoming, and then, by establishing a system of united action, to give to the whole body a cohesion which shall make its operations the result of regulated efforts and not of occasional and isolated impulses—in fact, to establish individual efficiency and combined discipline.

6. But to accomplish these ends it is absolutely necessary men should be brought under some more stringent laws than those which enforce the fulfilment of civil contracts; and as a preliminary measure to the organization of any armed force, laws should be passed authorizing enlistment, constituting tribunals for the trial of offences, and enacting summary punishments for infractions of discipline, and crimes which are more dangerous to the community when liable to be committed by men with arms in their hands, and assembled together in large numbers, than when springing from the actions of isolated individuals amongst the masses of society.

7. For the particular purposes under the consideration of the Committee also, there ought to be a law empowering the Executive Government to proclaim any particular district in which frequent outrages occur as a “disturbed district,” and to institute therein some more summary process for the trial and punishment of crimes of violence than a resort to the ordinary tribunals of the country will allow.

8. With these protections from the Legislature—and I confess I think them very necessary ones—I apprehend there would be little difficulty in organizing an efficient force for the purposes contemplated by the Committee—the said force to consist of an admixture of Europeans and Aborigines, in such proportions as may be determined on.

9. In accordance with this view of the nature of the Force to be instituted, I have drawn out and append a detailed and numerical return of its strength and organization, and I add estimates of the probable amount of expenditure.

10. I have already stated that I believe the great cause of the inefficiency of the Native Police, as now constituted, to be its want of organization and training; and I would here impress upon the consideration of the Committee the absolute necessity of giving to any body of men raised either to supplement or supersede that Force, time and opportunity to be brought together, trained, and organized, before being called on to enter on their duties; and I should say, considering the small numbers to be drilled and disciplined, six months from the time the recruits are brought together might be the period allowed for this purpose.

11. A primary consideration, also, with reference to the future efficiency of this Force, will be the choice of the localities in which recruiting for aboriginal troopers is to take place; and I would recommend recourse should be had to districts as far removed as possible from those in which the men are to be called upon to serve. I believe the Namoi, Gwydir, and older settled western country generally, would afford the best description of recruits.

12.



Capt. M. C.  
O'Connell.

17 June, 1858.

12. With regard to the European troopers, they must of course be, in the first instance, obtained in Sydney; and so soon as a sufficient number are engaged, I would recommend their being despatched by sea to the spot which may be determined on as the central depôt for the corps; and I would suggest for this purpose the neighbourhood of Port Curtis, on the banks of the Calliope River, as strategically the best point to select, and as affording many facilities for the transport of supplies; it being quite possible to choose a spot having, with every other advantage of soil and situation, water carriage to the very depôt itself.

13. The place having been decided on, no time ought to be lost in commencing the erection of the necessary buildings, and fencing in about 2,000 acres of land.

14. This being the central depôt of the corps, all horses purchased will have to be brought there in the first instance, to be broken in and trained; all horses sick or disabled will be left there for treatment or recovery; and detached sections will occasionally be brought in to recruit the condition of horses overworked and requiring rest. For these purposes, and to prevent the straying of horses to be an impediment to operations when a party happens to be suddenly called on for duty, I think the provision of a few good paddocks absolutely essential, and I propose 2000 acres as affording pasturage for about 200 horses.

The buildings which would be required would, I presume, be nearly as under:—

One Commandant's quarters.

Six Officers' quarters, with mess-room and kitchen.

Barrack accommodation for about 60 men, with hospital.

Stabling for, say 30 horses; and

A guard-house and cells.

But as these needs only be constructed of cheap materials (slabs and shingles) I have no doubt the entire expense of buildings and fencing would not exceed £5,000.

15. Whilst these buildings are in course of construction, the organization and training of such men as had been engaged could be going on—they being under temporary huts in the meanwhile; and as successive drafts of aboriginal recruits could be obtained, I would propose they likewise should be forwarded *via* Sydney to their destination by sea.

16. The Committee will perceive I have included in my estimate an expenditure on account of a band for this force; and I will explain why I consider this necessary.

17. It must be recollected that the duty on which these men are to be engaged is of the most monotonous description, entailing much fatigue, discomfort, and privation; that a great deal of that duty, and a very important portion of it, viz., the patrols, has to be performed by small sections of the corps, released from all observation of their superiors; and that it is of the highest importance, to ensure the diligent performance of its duties, to create in this body of men an *esprit de corps*. In fact, to lead each individual member of it to feel and act as belonging to a body whose general character he knows to be affected by his conduct.

18. Now, to create this feeling, and train it to its best uses in incitement to a zealous discharge of duty in support of the character of the corps with which the individual is connected, it is necessary to give him some pride in the connection itself—some idea he belongs to a body whose services are important to the public; and with a corps such as that I am now contemplating the formation of, I know of no measure I could suggest as more calculated to produce the desired effect than that of attaching a band to its head-quarters.

19. The depressing influence of a monotonous routine of duties carried on from year's end to year's end, in the most desolate and thinly peopled portions of the country, ought likewise to be taken into consideration, as the most energetic individual organization is liable to become broken down and stale under such a pressure. I believe the stimulus given to the spirits of the men by marching out a section to its bush duties, or marching one in for occasional rest or relaxation, with a band of music at its head, would do more good in the maintenance of discipline and zeal than would a whole volume of written commendation, or an hour's verbal praise.

20. I think also a band would have a great attraction for the blacks, and render recruiting much more successful. But although I look upon the expense as not to be weighed in the balance with the good which may be anticipated from this measure as a means to an end, this item can be struck out of the estimate, without directly affecting the other portions of it, if the Committee see fit so to do.

21. I must remark, likewise, that I have provided, on "the establishment of the corps," for fifteen supernumeraries (dismounted)—whom I mean as "men in training to supply vacancies," "Officers servants," and generally to perform any services which might otherwise withdraw effectives from field duties.

22. The total annual expense, therefore, of this Force, according to my estimate, would be about £16,446 7s 6d., irrespective of the pay of the Commandant, which I have not included, as its amount would have to be decided on by Government, under many considerations I am unable to take into account; but whatever this item may be fixed at, it is evident that even with an improved constitution of the Force, by the reversal of the proportion I have taken of Aborigines to Europeans, and employing eighty of the latter to forty of the former, the annual expenditure may yet be kept a good deal within £20,000, and the Colony be provided with a body of men in every way adequate to the performance of their duties, and who would form a nucleus for extension in the event of any sudden emergency requiring us to arm hastily for defence against hostile attack from without.

23. I have added, also, an estimate of the preliminary expenses which will unavoidably have to be incurred ere the Force can be brought into working order; and it only remains for me to point out that, in the event of any such plan as that I have suggested being adopted, it would be necessary to make provision for the gradual absorption of the officers and men of the present Native Police into the new corps.

M. C. O'CONNELL,  
June 24th, 1858.

APPENDIX

## APPENDIX B.

PROPOSED Strength and Establishment of a Corps of Mounted Police for service on the Frontier Districts of New South Wales.

Capt. M. C.  
O'Connell.

17 June, 1858.

*Regimental Staff:—*

1 Commandant ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1 Adjutant and Riding Master, per annum	...	...	...	...	...	365	0	0	
1 Paymaster,	..	..	..	..	..	365	0	0	
1 Surgeon,	..	..	..	..	..	365	0	0	
1 Sergeant-Major,	..	..	..	..	..	150	0	0	
1 Saddle Sergeant,	..	..	..	..	..	120	0	0	
2 Farriers, at 3s. 6d., per diem, each	...	...	...	...	...	127	15	0	
4 Rough-riders, do. do.	...	...	...	...	...	255	10	0	

*Establishment of 2 Troops or Divisions of 60 effectives each, irrespective of Non-commissioned Officers and Supernumeraries:—*

2 Officers commanding divisions, £450 each	...	...	...	...	...	900	0	0	
4 Subalterns, at £300 each	...	...	...	...	...	1,200	0	0	
2 Troop Sergeant-Majors, at £120 each	...	...	...	...	...	240	0	0	
2 Pay Sergeants,	..	..	..	..	..	240	0	0	
40 European Troopers, at 3s. 6d. per diem, each	...	...	...	...	...	2,555	0	0	
15 European Supernumeraries, do. do.	...	...	...	...	...	1,058	2	6	
80 Aboriginal Troopers, at 1s. 6d. do. do.	...	...	...	...	...	2,190	0	0	
Extra pay of 1s. per diem to 20 Sergeants	...	...	...	...	...	365	0	0	

Total of Pay ... .. £10,496 7 6

*Band:—*

1 Bandmaster, and 12 Bandsmen	...	...	...	...	...	1,090	10	0	
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*Contingent Expenses:—*

80 Rations—allowance in lieu of, at 1s each, per diem...	...	...	...	...	...	1,460	0	0	
Annual Clothing, say...	...	...	...	...	...	1,400	0	0	
Remounts and Contingencies...	...	...	...	...	...	1,000	0	0	
Forage	...	...	...	...	...	1,000	0	0	
						16,446	7	6	

Extra expense of 40 Europeans in lieu of 40 black troopers... 1,490 0 0

£17,936 7 6

## APPENDIX C.

ESTIMATED amount of preliminary expenses in raising Frontier Mounted Police.

Purchase of Horses	...	...	...	...	...	5,000	0	0
Recruiting Expenses	...	...	...	...	...	2,000	0	0
Buildings and Fences	...	...	...	...	...	5,000	0	0
Arms and Accoutrements	...	...	...	...	...	2,000	0	0
Forage, first year, extra	...	...	...	...	...	2,000	0	0
Six months Pay and Allowances, say	...	...	...	...	...	8,000	0	0

£24,000 0 0

MEMO.—Say this expenditure amounts to £30,000. I think it might be very properly covered by a loan, to be raised for this purpose; and which loan might be gradually paid off by a light assessment on the property to be protected.

Probable distribution of Frontier Mounted Police, for 1858.

STATIONS.	Commandant.	Staff Officers.	Officers.	Staff Serjeants.	Troop Serjeant Majors.	Troopers.	Supernumeraries.	Band.	Farriers	Rough Riders.	TOTAL.
1. Head Quarters .....	1	3	1	4	...	30	10	13	2	4	68
2. Taroom .....	...	...	2	...	1	20	2	...	...	...	25
3. Condamine .....	...	...	...	...	...	10	...	...	...	...	10
4. Rannes .....	...	...	...	...	...	10	...	...	...	...	10
5. Nanango .....	...	...	1	...	1	10	1	...	...	...	13
6. Maryborough .....	...	...	1	...	...	10	1	...	...	...	12
7. Brisbane .....	...	...	1	...	...	20	1	...	...	...	22
8. Fitz Roy .....	...	...	...	...	...	10	...	...	...	...	10
TOTAL.....	1	3	6	4	2	120	15	13	2	4	170

Under ordinary circumstances, each detachment would be four months at Head Quarters, and eight months at out-stations, during the year.

FRIDAY, 18 JUNE, 1858.

Present:—

MR. HODGSON,  
MR. JONES,  
MR. TAYLOR,

Mr. FORSTER.

MR. RICHARDSON,  
MR. CRIBB,  
MR. BUCKLEY,

ARTHUR HODGSON, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

William Forster, Esq., M. P., a Member of the Committee, examined in his place:—

- Wm. Forster, Esq., M.P.  
18 June, 1858.
1. *By the Chairman:* I believe you were resident for some time in the Northern Districts? I was a resident in the Northern Districts for thirteen or fourteen years—about eight years on the Clarence, and five or six at Wide Bay.
  2. During that time, I presume, you had many opportunities of knowing the manners and customs of the aborigines? Yes; not only from my residence there, but through my intercourse with the natives in other parts of the Colony, I have a tolerable knowledge of their manners and customs.
  3. You have heard of the murders that have recently been committed in the Northern Districts? Yes; I may say they are notorious. I have learnt them from the newspapers, and also from conversation with gentlemen from that quarter.
  4. To what cause do you attribute those murders? I should say murders of that kind must always be expected on the frontier of a Colony like this, more or less. The great number of murders committed recently may be owing to peculiar causes; but that murders must occur in taking up new country, by collisions between the whites and the aborigines, is a necessity almost of that sort of colonization.
  5. Do you not attribute these numerous murders to the inefficient state of the Native Police? I should not be inclined to come to that conclusion without being on the spot, to feel certain of their being caused by the inefficiency of the Native Police; because I am satisfied that, no matter how you organize any force on the border, enterprising men, induced by the large profit, or appearance of profit, held out in undertakings of the kind, will always go beyond any protection the Government can give them; and, in that case, murders will be committed by the natives, and upon the natives, in spite of any force you can organize. It appears to me, however, that the number of murders that have recently occurred on the Upper Dawson are rather more than we should be warranted in expecting under the circumstances; and I should be inclined to draw the conclusion from that, either that there is some want of efficient protection, or that the squatters have been led to rely on the Native Police more than they ought to do. But it is difficult for any one at this distance to come to the conclusion that the inefficiency of the force is the actual cause of the murders, without knowing more of the circumstances. It seems to me, that the circumstance to be taken into consideration, is the relative proportion of these murders to what we may expect. I believe some murders must occur; but there seems to have been a large number of murders lately, and certainly a larger number than generally occur in other places.
  6. Were the Native Police in the Northern Districts when you were residing there? Yes.
  7. Who was the Commandant then? Mr. Walker.
  8. Was it an efficient force at that time? I should say it was certainly not an efficient force, in this sense, that it did not seem to me to do all the good that might have been done with it; but I should be sorry to say it did not do some good, for I believe almost the most inefficient force that you can have will to a certain extent control the outrages of the natives. But I believe that force has never been, properly speaking, efficient; I believe it has never done as much as might reasonably have been expected from the amount of money expended upon it.
  9. Could you suggest any improvement in the formation of the force? I consider that one of the most difficult questions we have to deal with is, the mode of rendering a force of that sort efficient. I believe one reason of its inefficiency is, in some degree, (I may say this is a conclusion at which I have arrived on reflection,) attributable to the peculiar character of the first Commandant, and the difficulty of supplying his place with another man of his peculiar characteristics. He was, I believe, a man of some natural ability, but I think his talent in dealing with these blacks has been somewhat overrated; because it appeared to me that his control over them was owing rather to his having lived on familiar terms with a large number of the men under his command in other districts before they were enlisted in the Native Police.
  10. To what part of the Colony do you allude when you say Mr Walker lived with these men on familiar terms? He was resident in the south-western districts—in the districts, I believe about the Edward River; and there he had the means, for a long time before he was appointed to the office of Commandant, of becoming very familiar with the particular individuals who were appointed to his force. I do not want to deny his talent; but I think his influence over the men composing the Native Police Force arose a good deal from his previous acquaintance with the individuals who were then appointed to his force. They, no question, had acquired a certain respect for his character, and received commands from him which were carried out without any derogation from his authority, notwithstanding the familiar terms on which he lived with them. From what I have gathered of his dealing with these natives, it would appear that Mr. Walker was extraordinarily familiar with them. He was more familiar than we should consider it right to be with servants, for instance—he treated them almost as friends; and thus, when he was removed from the force, there arose a peculiar difficulty in supplying his place. He was dismissed, no doubt, quite rightly by the Government; for, notwithstanding his abilities, his conduct was such that no Government could have retained him in office with any propriety. My belief indeed is, that they grossly neglected

neglected their duty in not having dismissed him three years before. For the reasons I have stated, I infer that the terms on which he lived with these natives placed a peculiar difficulty on the officers who came into the command afterwards. They found themselves unable to enforce their authority over men with whom they were unacquainted individually. They had been accustomed to notice the familiar terms on which Mr. Walker lived with the men, and they, in most cases, fell in to the error of carrying on the same familiar intercourse; but, owing to their being deficient in those peculiar qualities which Mr. Walker possessed, it resulted in making them objects of contempt to their men. I believe that was the case with a great number of the young officers who had charge of the men afterwards. The consequence was, that the force became disorganized, and the men came to obey or not to obey orders according to their own will and pleasure. Every man must see that under such a state of things nothing could result but complete disorganization; and the evils thus produced were not remedied by the measures taken by the Police authorities. They attempted then to organize a force out of the natives who were close at hand. They could not go back to the Edward River—probably they had not time; and if they had they would only have enlisted a number of new men not acquainted with the officers, and who would probably not have obeyed them much better. But they fell into the worse error of employing a number of men in the districts close at hand, and that completed the disorganization, and led to consequences that were very injurious; because these men carried on an intercourse with the tribes from which they were taken, and used their police authority to exercise a kind of tyranny over the tribes, without, at the same time, rendering much assistance to the squatters. Another circumstance that tended to the disorganization of the force was, that there was a sort of trade in the women of the different tribes by these Native Police. Wherever they came into a new district a number of young women of the tribes were brought forward and placed at their disposal—at least they lived in their camps. Wherever they went they were always surrounded by a number of these women, who always act as emissaries between the wild tribes and those with whom they want to deal. The consequence of all these things was, that the Native Police enforced their authority only at their own option. The officers had hardly any power over them, and whatever good they did was greatly curtailed. I will not say that even under these circumstances they did not effect some good; but still the inefficiency of the force was greatly increased, and its disorganization completed; for it has, up to the present time, been in a thorough state of disorganization.

Wm. Forster,  
Esq., M.P.

18 June, 1858.

11. Could you state to the Committee any views you may entertain as to the best means of ameliorating the present condition of the force? Having stated what appear to me to have been the peculiar causes of its disorganization, I may say that the subject is an exceedingly difficult one, and that any suggestions I make I offer with great diffidence. I have thought, that, in order to enable the officers to obtain any authority over these blacks, they must always have a certain number of white men acting with them; and it appears to me that they might be associated in the proportion of, say, half white troopers, or two white troopers to three natives. I state this proportion with the greatest diffidence, because it is a mere matter of detail; but, having stated that a great part of the disorganization of the present force arises from the absence of authority on the part of the officers over their men, it appears to me that there must be some white men in the force in order to give them confidence. I think that young men placed in the circumstances that the officers of the Native Police now are, would be very likely to feel themselves in a great degree at the mercy of their men; and placing a certain number of white men among the blacks—perhaps in some position of authority over them—would go far to the root of that portion of the evil that we are at present considering. The proportion is a difficult point, however. I should be inclined to make it such as would give the officers full confidence in dealing with their men, but not so great as entirely to get rid of these blacks as an essential part of the force. I have heard it suggested that they should only be retained as trackers; but I think they should be retained as troopers, not altogether on account of the good they do, but because I think the idea of a Native Police Force is likely to be beneficial to the blacks themselves. It has done good, and, if the force could have been kept under control, would have done more good. Its effect upon the men enlisted, I think, has been beneficial. They seem to be a better race than the wild men they were taken from. The vanity of each individual is affected by having an uniform, and being made a soldier of, and an *esprit de corps* is formed among them. Besides all this, I think they are able to act against the blacks in the scrubs better than white men would. The pursuit in a scrub is a very difficult matter. No white man with his clothes on, or even without them, could get through the scrubs with anything like a chance of overtaking the blacks; but the Native Police throw their clothes off, and very often come up with them. The pursuit of certain of the wild tribes—when pursuit is necessary—cannot well be effected without a certain proportion of these black troopers, because in the country to the northward these scrubs are frequent, and therefore I should be sorry to see them done away with altogether.

12. *By Mr. Richardson*: You seem to think a great deal of the disorganization of the Native Police has arisen from the connection of the black troopers with the women of the tribes? Yes; I believe that has been carried on to a great extent.

13. Do you think the same would be the case with white men? I have not the slightest doubt intercourse of the same kind would occur, but not to the same extent; at all events, not to the same dangerous extent. I cannot believe white men would be influenced in the discharge of their duty in the same way as the blacks are. In most cases these men are dealing with their own tribes, or allies of their own tribes, for there are alliances between these tribes extending over large tracts of country.

14. *By Mr. Jones*: Where the troopers were white men, the women could not act as emissaries? No.

15. *By Mr. Richardson*: Do you think a lieutenant in command of a division would have much power over the white men under him? He would not feel the fear that an inexperienced young man must feel when placed among a number of armed savages.

16.



Wm. Forster, Esq., M.P.  
18 June, 1858.

16. *By the Chairman*: Would you have any special law put in force for the control of the kind of force you propose? It has been suggested by a very intelligent gentleman, Mr. William Archer—whose evidence would be of great use to the Committee—and I think the suggestion is a very excellent one:—that if we employ black troopers, there should be a law passed to subject them to some kind of military authority, in the same way as the Sepoys in India, and the Kaffirs at the Cape. As I have said, I believe this experiment of a Native Police is useful to the natives themselves; and I think the advantages derived from it may be greatly increased by making it a legal body. At present it is my opinion that giving arms to the blacks is a direct violation of the law as it stands.

17. In the event of the proposal to associate some white troopers with the blacks being carried out, in the proportion of two whites to three blacks, do you think it would be advisable to discharge the black troopers at present employed? Of course their first enlistment ought to be voluntary; and to carry out that principle it would not be right to retain their services, unless they were willing to remain under the new system. If they were willing to remain, I would let them do so. But I would in no case employ native troopers in the districts from which they came. It is not enough to go over a range or river and take them from a different tribe, because, from my knowledge of the blacks in the Northern Districts, I believe I may say that alliances between the tribes extend in some cases along extensive tracts of the country, whereas a single range will sometimes disconnect them altogether. I believe a dialect that is common to a great number of tribes extends all the way along the coast from Clarence River to Wide Bay; but when you go inland you meet with a totally different dialect. Wherever these common words occur, common intercourse and alliances take place. I know this to be a fact, that young men from the tribes will go from one tribe to another, until they reach tribes whose language they scarcely know; and they get wives from these tribes, and go back afterwards. I think it ought to be a rule never to employ any natives who may be enlisted in the force within reach of their own tribes, or those with whom they may be in alliance.

18. Where would you propose getting them from? I have no doubt plenty of blacks could be got from the Murrumbidgee and the adjacent districts. Nor do I see any great danger in getting them from the Clarence; for, although certain Clarence River words are known to the blacks at Wide Bay, I do not thence infer any great connection between the tribes. These words are probably carried from tribe to tribe by young men wandering, as I have just stated. Still, a certain degree of connection and alliance is thus kept up.

19. *By Mr. Jones*: Have you any knowledge of the conduct of the black troopers in engagements with the wild tribes? I have no personal knowledge, but my impression is, that it is impossible to restrain them when once an affray takes place, and particularly when a single young officer is placed at the head of a large number of these troopers. Any one may see at once that it is quite impossible for him to have his orders executed when a *mêlée* takes place. No doubt in many cases the discretion of the officer regulates the period of attack; but after the affray commences, you cannot blame him if he cannot restrain his men. I think the circumstance of having a number of white troopers, even if they were not able in certain cases to follow the wild tribes, would still have the effect of controlling the native troopers.

20. I gather from what you say, that in consequence of the employment of these black troopers, when an affray takes place there is greater sacrifice of human life than there would be if white men were employed, from the impossibility of restraining the black troopers? I think so. I think the presence of white troopers would enable the officer in command to do just what he wanted to do, and no more. We know that it is hardly possible to restrain even civilized soldiers when they are excited. In the siege of a town, for instance, no commanding officer can prevent his men from carrying on slaughter after the necessity for it has ceased.

21. The white troopers would be more able to answer signals? Yes; they would be more under control, for two reasons;—because, in the first place, they understand that there is a possibility of their being called to account afterwards; and also because, being human beings of a superior order, they are less impulsive than the blacks, and more able to keep their passions under control.

22. Do you believe it is at all possible to insure, as a rule, any proper degree of discipline and control amongst a force composed entirely of natives? I think it is exceedingly difficult. I believe it was done by Mr. Walker, in the way I have stated,—that he had an individual knowledge of these men which gave him a control over them that it would be almost impossible for another officer to acquire.

23. Taking the average class of officers, do you believe they would be able to obtain an effective control over their troopers, and get them into a proper state of discipline, if there were none but blacks in the force? I believe men generally would not do it.

24. It would only be in special cases, where men like Mr. Walker happened to be in command, that such a body could be retained in a state of discipline? If Mr. Walker himself had engaged a number of new troopers, unless he had retained a good many of the old ones, I doubt whether he could have done what he did with them; because he would not have had the same individual familiarity with them that he had with those who first joined him.

25. Do you believe that a smaller white force would be as effective in repressing and preventing outrage as a larger force of black troopers? I think that would depend on the management.

26. Supposing them to be equally well managed? A white force do you mean, without any blacks?

27. Either a wholly white force, or a force in which the whites were sufficiently predominating to give the officers effective control. I think a force of that kind would be more effective, for the reason I have stated,—that there would be a superior control over it in the hands of the officers. I believe the efficiency of a force like the present depends a great deal on the humour and caprice of these blacks. The officer in command cannot control them unless they happen



happen to be in a good temper. Many cases have been stated to me in which the officer could not do with his men as he liked.

28. Then you believe a white force, or a force composed to a considerable extent of whites, would be much more effective in proportion to its numbers than a black force? I believe it would.

29. Do you think the fact of the employment of a considerable number of white men as a frontier force would have a moral effect in restraining the wild tribes from aggression? I think it would, because it would make the force more efficient, and the efficiency of the force is of a great consequence in producing a moral effect.

30. The blacks would be more apprehensive, if white men were employed against them, that they would be followed up more systematically? They would be followed up more systematically in all cases; and I believe the punishment is more effective where it is certain. It is an old maxim, that it is not the severity, but the certainty of punishment that deters.

31. Then you believe, I presume, that if a considerable proportion of whites be infused into the frontier force, a less number of men than are now employed would be able to do the work more efficiently? That is, supposing the present number is a sufficient number, or ought to be sufficient if they were effective. I have heard it said that the present number is not sufficient; but I believe, whatever may be the number, there will always be some murders by the blacks, because enterprising men will always go beyond any protection that can be afforded them.

32. *By the Chairman*: Do you think any jealousy would be caused among the black troopers by this amalgamation of white men with them? Possibly there might be some jealousy among those formerly employed; but, I presume, that if any difficulty should arise from that cause, it might be remedied by getting rid of all the individuals at present employed, and introducing others, with whom there would be no difficulty of that kind, because from the first they would be placed in subordination to the white men.

33. Would you recommend that the Commandant should have the sole appointment of officers, or that it should rest with the Government, as at present? I consider it a dangerous power to give to any officer in command of a force at a long distance. Take the example of Mr. Walker: Supposing he had had the appointment of his officers, I think the evils which were caused by his conduct would only have been enhanced. It was his virtual irresponsibility that made him so bad an officer. I believe if he had felt himself fully responsible, and had been made so by the Government, he would not have committed the excesses he did. But his want of responsibility made him, in fact, entirely regardless of opinion—of what was said or done respecting him; and I think if he had had greater power, in the way you speak of, it would only have increased the evils complained of. I will not say, that if you once get a good Commandant you might not give him that power; but I would always leave a veto in the hands of the Government.

34. *By Mr. Jones*: Would you make him like the heads of other departments are now in this respect—giving him the privilege of recommending his officers, but leaving the actual appointment in the hands of the Government? I think he should have the same power over his officers out there as the commanding officer of a body of troops has; but I would not give him the final power.

35. *By Mr. Richardson*: You are aware that the present Commandant, Captain Morissett, urges as one reason why he cannot get on, his not having the power to choose his own officers? I have heard that that is the case.

36. Do you think it would be desirable to choose men who had been accustomed to a bush life? I would not carry out a rule of that kind rigidly. I have great faith in the appointment of young men—if you select them well, they can be trained to do anything. Men who have been squatters, although very expert bushmen, might be unfit for the office in many ways; and there are others who would make very good officers. I would not follow any rule of that kind. I would give the Commandant great liberty in appointing and suspending his officers, but I would not give him any final power.

37. *By Mr. Jones*: Do you think troopers, whether white or black, or officers, are fit to undertake the duties devolving on a frontier force without some previous teaching and training? Generally speaking, I should say not; because, if discipline be necessary in an army, I do not see why it should not be necessary also in a force of this kind. As a general rule, some degree of training is necessary for every occupation.

38. Do you not think it quite as necessary to train and discipline these men as ordinary military bodies? I think they could not be well managed without some training. But in cases of emergency we have young recruits enlisted and sent out, and they get trained on the spot. Perhaps the best training is actual service.

39. Even these young troops undergo some preliminary training? I think that so far as preliminary training is necessary in military matters, it would be so in this.

40. Do you think it desirable, with a view to the efficiency of this force, that there should be some kind of central depôt established, to which the officers as well as the men should be sent to acquire the necessary training to make them effective? I think that is a matter of detail; but I see many advantages that might be derived from such a central depôt, though I am afraid it would be found very expensive. If a thing of the kind be determined upon, it should be on the frontier, not in the neighbourhood of Maryborough or Brisbane, or any such places. I think a plan of that kind would be reasonable under certain limits.

41. Do you not think an officer should be stationed at this depôt, whose duty, like that of an adjutant, should be to discipline and teach the raw recruits sent to the depôt? I think so.

42. *By Mr. Cribb*: Do you happen to know, from circumstances within your own knowledge, whether any of these murders and outrages have been committed by any disbanded troopers or deserters? I have no knowledge of that; I am inclined to doubt whether it is so.

43. *By the Chairman*: From your knowledge of the Northern Districts, could you point out to the Committee the spot where you think such a depôt as that you have just spoken of could

Wm. Forster, could be best placed? It should be always on the frontier. As the Colony is now situated, I think it should be on the Fitz Roy River. I should put a depôt of that kind in the very middle of the districts requiring protection. If any good effect is to be produced by the employment of the force, a portion of that effect would be derived from the circumstance of the depôt being placed there.

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44. The head-quarters would naturally be at the depôt? I think the head-quarters ought to be moved, like any other portion of the force, from time to time.

45. *By Mr. Richardson:* Do you think the blacks who have deserted have taken their fire-arms with them? I have understood that some of them have run away with their arms from Wide Bay; but guns would never be much use to them, particularly after their ammunition was spent; they would not keep them clean.

46. *By the Chairman:* What immediate remedy would you suggest to stay these outrages in the Dawson District? I can think of nothing, excepting making the force efficient. If that cannot be done immediately, I can propose nothing.

47. And you think the way to make the force efficient would be to amalgamate it with a white force? That is the only suggestion I can make. I made a suggestion to the former Committee, to the effect that a power of reporting, without interfering with the operations of the police, ought to be vested in the Benches of Magistrates. I think the Government would be able to place reliance on their reports.

48. *By Mr. Jones:* Do you think it desirable that any white force should be immediately despatched from Sydney to the districts where the murders have recently taken place, without waiting for the reorganization of the Native Police—for instance, do you think it might be advisable to send a picked detachment of some dozen or twenty of the Sydney Police, taking care to select men to some extent accustomed to the bush, to co-operate with the Native Police in putting down these disturbances? I think a dozen or twenty would be too many, almost. I think if you send five or six good troopers it would have a good effect.

49. To act in conjunction with the black troopers? Yes.

50. *By Mr. Taylor:* The presence of these men would give the officers more confidence? Yes I mean it as an immediate measure.

51. *By Mr. Jones:* Do you think half-a-dozen well armed and mounted white men would hesitate in facing any number of the wild blacks? In my opinion, four well armed men might go from Wide Bay to Port Essington, and be in no danger from the blacks.

52. *By Mr. Cribb:* Do you think half-a-dozen white men, with a few blacks as scouts, would be more efficient than a detachment of twelve of the present Native Police? I think every white man should be attached to two blacks, and that the operations of a force of that kind would be greatly assisted by an arrangement of that sort; because a division often takes place when the force is actively employed. No troop of this kind acts in a body. It is not like a phalanx or a legion. I would give the white men a sort of authority over the blacks; and in certain extreme cases, where a blackfellow had been a long time in the force, and his character was well known, it might exercise a good effect if you gave him promotion. We know black men are often placed in the same positions of confidence as white men, where we know them well; and I think in some cases, a very well known individual might be rewarded by giving him the same authority as you would give to one of the white troopers over the blacks. It would have a good effect, as holding out something to these men to look forward to.

TUESDAY, 22 JUNE, 1858.

Present:—

MR. FORSTER,  
MR. HODGSON,  
MR. TAYLOR,

MR. RICHARDSON,  
MR. DONALDSON,  
MR. COWPER.

ARTHUR HODGSON, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

William Archer, Esq., called in and examined:—

W. Archer,  
Esq.

22 June, 1858.

1. *By the Chairman:* You are a resident in the Northern Districts? Yes, at Tracemere, on the Fitz Roy River.

2. How far is that from Rockhampton? Five miles.

3. And from Gladstone? About seventy.

4. You have had great experience in forming stations in new districts? Yes, I have had some experience. I have been at the forming of four stations.

5. In what districts? In the districts of Moreton Bay, Burnett, and Port Curtis.

6. Is not your station on the Fitz Roy the farthest out at present? No; there are two others beyond us.

7. You have had many opportunities of becoming acquainted with the habits of the native blacks? Yes.

8. Can you draw any distinction between the blacks to the northward and the blacks in the Burnett District? No, not a decided distinction; but I can draw a very decided distinction between the blacks to the westward of Sydney, on Liverpool Plains for instance, and those on the Fitz Roy. I think the blacks on the Fitz Roy are a much lower caste—a more savage and a more treacherous race of people than those to the westward of Sydney. I may mention that I have also had great experience in the districts to the westward of Sydney, having resided there for ten years, and formed stations there.

9. Are the blacks on the Fitz Roy a stronger race of men? I do not think they are physically stronger; but they are more treacherous, and less to be depended upon. It is more difficult to attach them in any way.

10.

10. Do you believe they are very numerous in the Northern Districts? They are exceedingly numerous in the neighbourhood of our station, and I think I may say generally along the coast to the northward.

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11. Had you any serious difficulties with the natives in forming your last station? There was a difficulty, not with ourselves, but with a Mr. Elliot, who was located on the run for some time: he was attacked by the blacks; one of his men was killed, and he was himself speared in several places, and otherwise injured very considerably. That was the only collision that has happened on our run that I am aware of.

12. What is the nature of the country to the northward? A very large portion of it is covered with briclow and vine scrub, particularly the valley of the Mackenzie. The open country consists of undulating ridges, timbered with box and silver-leaved iron-bark.

13. Can the natives easily escape from pursuit, after committing murder or outrage, in consequence of the scrubby nature of the country? They have very great facilities of escaping, owing to the mountainous nature of some parts of the country, and the exceeding density of the scrubs. It is with great difficulty, in some districts, that the blacks can be followed.

14. You are aware that several murders have been committed on the Dawson River by the blacks? Yes.

15. Have you ever been there? No.

16. Can you suggest any reason to the Committee for the numerous murders that have been committed? The only reason I can give is, that the blacks are fond of getting sheep and cattle. When gathered together, as they sometimes are, in exceedingly large numbers, their food frequently becomes scarce, from their being in the same neighbourhood for a great length of time; they see quantities of sheep and cattle roaming about, and they prefer them to the difficulty of getting food for themselves according to their usual methods; they therefore attack and kill the shepherds for the sake of getting the sheep. Then there is retaliation, and thus the thing goes on.

17. Do you consider that the blacks have been emboldened by success? I have not had much opportunity of knowing, for there have been no depredations committed in the immediate neighbourhood of our stations. I have not come in contact with the tribes that have been committing violence.

18. They are to the west and south-west of you? Yes. There is no doubt, as a general rule, that the blacks become emboldened by success. If they commit a murder, and are not severely punished for it, they become emboldened.

19. Have you had any opportunities of noticing how the Native Police Force has been constituted of late? Yes; I have had considerable means of seeing a good deal of the working of them, having had head-quarters on two of our stations.

20. Will you state to the Committee your opinion of the present state of that force? To do that, it is almost necessary to go back for some time. I believe that the force under Mr. Frederick Walker was originally very effective; but, from certain reasons in his own conduct, I believe the force was afterwards considerably reduced in efficiency. Subsequently, when the force was under the management of Mr. Marshall, I have reason to believe that his hands were very much tied by the Government, by the reduction of the force, and in a great many different ways; he could not act independently, and the force became very much reduced both in numbers and efficiency. Since the appointment of Mr. Morissett, I think he has not yet had time to organize the force. I think, from what I have heard him state myself, that he would, in time, take the proper steps to do so; which, I may mention to the Committee, I think to be, that troopers should be raised from very distant parts of the country—not less than five or six hundred miles away from the districts in which they are to be employed—and that they should be put under some kind of military law, so that it would be possible to keep them under some kind of subordination, as they are very apt to run away from their officers.

21. You mention the efficiency of Mr. Walker's police —? Yes, in the beginning, when he first brought them up there.

22. To what cause do you attribute that efficiency? He had a peculiar tact, I think, with the blacks.

23. Are you aware where these troopers came from in the first instance? I was told they came from the neighbourhood of the Edward River.

24. Are you aware that many of them were personally known to Mr. Walker before he took them to the north? I have reason to believe they were.

25. Would not that previous knowledge materially assist Mr. Walker in the conduct of his force? No doubt of it.

26. From your observation, would you say the troopers were attached to Mr. Walker? I should say so, decidedly, when he first came up there.

27. And his removal from the command would naturally cause desertion on the part of many of his troopers? Yes, I should say it would, as no person was found immediately to take his place who had the same influence or opportunities of getting men previously attached to him.

28. You mention that it would be desirable to enlist troopers at a distance of five or six hundred miles—do you think that practicable? Decidedly. I have not the slightest doubt it is practicable.

29. How would you proceed? By sending a person into the districts —

30. Will you mention the districts in which you would select the men? The district of the Lower Namoi (I would begin there if I went on such a duty,) the Castlereagh, the Macquarie, and down towards the Darling. I think in those districts a sufficient number might be found in a very short time by a person who had an adaptation for that sort of work. I could do it myself, I am sure.

31. Will you state how you would go about it? I know a little of their language, and I would go about talking to them, taking an interest in their manners and customs; and at



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- a convenient time I would propose to them what they were required for, and the country to which I wished them to go. I would take the jackets and trousers with red stripes, to show them, and put them in uniform.
32. Would you take horses with you? Decidedly; I would take horses, and mount them at once.
33. *By Mr. Richardson*: You say the blacks were attached to Mr. Walker at first? Yes.
34. Did that attachment fall off? Yes; from the capricious way in which he treated them.
35. You think Mr. Walker's force was very efficient at first? Yes.
36. Do you think it possible for any one else to have managed them as well? Under the same circumstances I have no doubt it might be done. In time I have no doubt Mr. Morissett might attach a body of men to himself in the same way.
37. Supposing Mr. Walker had remained in the force and had got his troopers from the neighbouring tribes, do you think he could have managed them as well as he did? No, decidedly not. No person could have managed them as well taken from the neighbouring tribes.
38. Do you approve of having so many native troopers as at present? I do, decidedly.
39. You would disapprove of having a larger infusion of whites? I would decidedly disapprove of any large infusion of white men into the force.
40. You would object to anything like half? Certainly. I think there should, at most, not be more than one white man to three blacks, and that only to strengthen the hands of the officer in command, the troopers at the same time being under some discipline—some military law.
41. You would think white men in the proportion of two to three would be too many? Yes; I would not have so many, because I consider them to be inefficient; when after the blacks they are perfectly useless.
42. Have you any reason to believe that when they encounter blacks who have committed depredations, the Native Police would take life wantonly? I have no reason to suppose so; nor have I reason to suppose they kill women and children, as has been stated.
43. Do you think they are sufficiently under the control of their officers to obey them? I cannot say. I do not know all the officers.
44. Supposing the officers to be efficient men? Then I have no doubt they could be kept under very effective control.
45. *By Mr. Taylor*: You think it would be an improvement to have a certain number of white men in the force—that it would then be more effective than if it consisted entirely of blacks? Yes; with first rate officers, not more than one white man would be required in each section; but with the choice we have of officers, I think it would be better to have their hands strengthened by having one white trooper to three blacks.
46. *By Mr. Richardson*: Do you think, if some of Captain M'Leir's men were sent up from Sydney—taking care to select men accustomed to the bush—that they would be useful? I think they would be useful, if three or four of them were stationed at each station to protect it; but in case of outrage being committed they could not follow up the blacks; they could not go through the country; they never would see a blackfellow.
47. From what you have said, of course we infer that you would not use the blacks only as trackers? No; they must be employed as troopers. They would track for themselves of course.
48. *By the Chairman*: Can you mention the name of any one in particular who would satisfactorily perform the duty of selecting natives as troopers in the distant districts in which you have suggested they should be raised? The best person I can think of, on the spur of the moment, is Mr. John Murray, who is now, I think, second in command of the Native Police.
49. Do you know where he is now? The last time I heard from him, which was a few days ago, he was on the Dawson.
50. *By Mr. Cowper*: You think he would be able to perform this duty with some hope of the recruits remaining in the force when once enlisted? Yes, if they were engaged at a sufficient distance from the districts where they are to be employed.
51. You are aware that some recruits have been taken from the Clarence River? Yes; and I am aware that twelve of them ran away from one of our stations in one night. I heard it by a letter from my brother.
52. Can you tell why the effort has not been made to get recruits from the Namoi? I think Mr. Morissett's exigencies have been so great that he has not had time to organize the body sufficiently for that purpose. I know it was in contemplation to have sent Mr. Murray to the country I have mentioned for the purpose of raising troopers there; but there have been so many murders that Mr. Morissett has been glad to get police troopers from any part of the country.
53. He has not been very successful in getting them, has he? I believe he has got them in sufficient numbers, but they are always apt to run away.
54. *By Mr. Richardson*: Supposing he could get troopers, as you suggest, at a distance of five or six hundred miles, would you discharge the present force? No? I would make a selection of the best of them—those that are faithful. I believe a great many of them run away under intimidation; perhaps the majority wish to go, and they coerce the remainder to go with them.
55. *By the Chairman*: Would not the amalgamation of whites with the blacks materially prevent such desertion? I do not see what effect it would have, except they were under military discipline, and liable to be shot if they deserted. In that case I think they would not desert so frequently.
56. You believe that is necessary? I believe it is necessary to put them under some kind of military discipline. They will not endure a great deal of discipline, but there is a certain amount of it which suits them very well.
57. Do you think there is any *esprit de corps* amongst the present troopers? Not a great deal.

58. Do you think there was amongst those formerly employed? Yes.

59. That has disappeared? Yes, in a great measure

60. *By Mr. Couper*: You think Mr. Walker at first brought his force into a state of discipline by means of his personal influence? I think so; he possessed peculiar tact in dealing with them.

61. The personal influence that the officer in command should exercise over them seems to enter into your idea of discipline? A great deal would depend on that; but he must be supported by certain regulations and laws, so that when his commands are not carried out, he may enforce them.

62. What is the mode of punishing them? There is none now. Under Mr. Walker they used to be flogged, with great efficacy.

63. You mean to say he assumed a power of summary punishment? I have not seen it myself.

64. But you have understood that he flogged them? Yes—a regular scourging—the fellow being tied up and flogged by one of his mates.

65. *By the Chairman*: And that had a beneficial effect? Decidedly; it is an excellent way of appealing to the feelings of a black trooper.

66. *By Mr. Couper*: The men did not abscond in consequence? No; I never heard of the men absconding in Mr. Walker's time; he could flog them, and the next moment be friendly with them.

67. Who inflicted the punishment? One of themselves. He had corporals and sergeants among them.

68. Do you know whether any form of trial was observed? Yes; he used to call them all up and tell them—"this fellow has been doing so and so—isn't he a great rascal—hadn't we 'better flog him'"; and then he would have him tied up and flogged. My brother has seen it.

69. I think I understood you to say you objected to a white force, because it could not follow the blacks—could not come into contact with them? Yes. I think white men would have great difficulty in doing so.

70. Are you aware that the Native Police themselves, under the command of their officers, have lately made two or three very extensive journeys, and have totally failed in coming in contact with the blacks? I have not heard of it lately, but I have known frequent instances of it.

71. After the blacks have committed aggressions they retire back for a time? Yes, away into the most inaccessible parts of the country; nothing but a blackfellow has any chance of getting near them.

72. *By the Chairman*: What immediate remedy would you suggest to put a stop to the outrages on the Dawson? There are only two things I could suggest;—either to send a body of white troopers in the first instance, to overawe the blacks —

73. How many do you think would be sufficient? I cannot say. I do not know how they could work, except by stationing a few at every station in the disturbed parts. I suppose there are from fifteen to twenty stations.

74. Would twenty or twenty-five be beneficial? Yes, I should think so. I cannot propose anything better.

75. You mentioned two;—what other course would you propose? Or allow the people in the country to embody themselves into some kind of militia, for a time, with strong powers.

76. Do you believe that would work? It used to work in the olden times, without any powers.

77. Would you make the militia force compulsory? I think I would, under a disturbed state of the country.

78. You think it would work? I have my doubts about the working of it, but it would be worth trying.

79. Are you aware that the blacks are let in to some stations and kept out at others? I am. I think it a most unjust thing to keep the blacks out from the stations. They must exist somewhere; they cannot be driven from the face of the earth altogether. If they were allowed in they would have less temptation to commit aggressions.

80. *By Mr. Couper*: Does not the keeping of them out arise from apprehension of attack from their treachery? Yes. Our plan has always been, to allow the first tribe we find on the station, when we occupy it, to remain on it; and we get information from them as to the movements of the tribes outside.

81. You do not drive them off their own territory? No, we do not.

82. Suppose a family going down into that country and dealing with the blacks on this principle, and some of the servants of the establishment getting into a quarrel with them, from causes we may easily imagine; may not the family then be sacrificed, owing to the misconduct of the servants? I grant you they may. The blacks like to have revenge in some shape, and they are not particular upon whom they get it.

83. They might revenge the offence of a servant upon the family? Yes.

84. *By the Chairman*: You are aware they have done it? Yes

85. *By Mr. Couper*: There is, therefore, considerable risk in allowing the blacks to remain upon a station? If every person would do it, the risk would be less. The blacks must live somewhere; and they can only remain on their own ground. If every person on a station, where the country is taken up, would allow them to locate themselves on it, there would be less danger. We know every person on our station, and give him a name; in fact there is a record kept on the station. If every person did the same, and they were allowed to live on the face of the country, they would not be so much disposed to commit aggression.

86. *By Mr. Taylor*: In that case, they would not collect in such large numbers? They would, at certain periods of the year; and this I would prohibit. Two or three tribes, for certain religious purposes of their own, meet at particular places; and then is the time at which the great mischief is done. These gatherings I would discountenance where white

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- people are; for, where such large numbers of blacks are located for any length of time, their food gets scarce, and then they attack and kill the shepherds in order to get at the sheep.
87. *By the Chairman*: Do you know the present number of the Native Police Force? No.
88. To what number would you raise the Police Force, with a view of defending the whole of the country out there? I have not studied the matter; but I should think one hundred and twenty men altogether would be sufficient.
89. Ninety black troopers to thirty white men? Yes.
90. Where would you make the head-quarters? I would make it at our station on the Fitz Roy River for the present, on account of the water carriage. It appears rather invidious to name my own station, but I do not do so because I require more than ordinary protection; I can always protect myself. If there is a station formed beyond us in Broad Sound, I would recommend the head-quarters to be there.
91. *By Mr. Richardson*: Do you think that would be sufficiently central? Yes; I think so. You should have the head-quarters near the centre of the country that requires protection.
92. *By Mr. Cowper*: What is your idea of the use of head-quarters? I think it should be a depôt where the police would get their clothing, and to which they could come down once a-year to have a yarn with their mates. All the stores should be kept at head-quarters.
93. *By the Chairman*: An accountant is necessary at head-quarters? Yes, I think so, decidedly.
94. Would you suggest that the accountant should act as adjutant, and drill the recruits at head-quarters? I think a man's time might be very profitably employed in drilling young recruits without having anything else to do.
95. How are provisions obtained for the Native Police? They are generally supplied wherever the troopers are at the time, for they are continually going about, at a price agreed on with the officer.
96. Varying, I suppose, according to the distance from water carriage? Yes.
97. Therefore, the head-quarters being at a distance from water carriage would make their supply more expensive? Decidedly.
98. *By Mr. Cowper*: I think I understood, from your evidence, that you think that if proper steps were taken to secure recruits they could be obtained from the districts to which you have alluded? Yes.
99. Then you do not look on the attempt as a failure, but you think it has not been made in a proper direction? It has not yet been made in a proper direction.
100. *By Mr. Taylor*: I think you said that Mr. Morissett has not had time to make the trial, but that he intends to do so? Yes. Mr. Murray told me he was to be sent down, but then these murders began, and he could not get away. They are glad now to get recruits anywhere.
101. *By Mr. Richardson*: How many divisions would you make of the hundred and twenty men you think necessary for the whole force? About twelve men in a body are quite enough to face any number of blacks. A section of twelve men with an officer would be quite sufficient for any purpose to be together at any one time.
102. Three whites and nine blacks, with an officer? Yes.
103. You could then have them stationed in about eight different places? Yes.
104. You think it necessary these blacks should undergo a kind of military training at head-quarters? Yes; more for the sake of discipline than anything else.
105. You say the head-quarters are now on your station? Yes; they were forming there.
106. Have they any barracks there? They had just contracted for a barrack.
107. Would you recommend barracks at the out-stations of the Native Police? No; they would be perfectly useless.
108. Only one central barrack? Yes. The officers should have good tents to live in.
109. Can you inform the Committee what is the probable distance of your head station from the scene of the late murders? About one hundred and fifty miles.
110. In what direction? About south-west, or west south-west.
111. Are the squatters extending in that direction, or further to the northward? Further to the northward and north-west.
112. What is the name of the district? It is the Leichhardt beyond us.
113. What is the name of the river where these stations are forming? There are only small creeks. There are but two stations beyond us yet; but they are extending in that direction.
114. Then you imagine that in course of time your head station will become more central than it is at present? No, I think not, because as people go beyond us I expect our station will become quiet. As stations are formed to the northward it will become less central; it is now central in the disturbed districts.
115. I thought you said there were only two stations formed beyond you, and you mentioned fifteen or twenty in the neighbourhood of these murders? Yes.
116. Therefore it would appear to be an outside point of the district, and one hundred and fifty miles from the scene of the murders? But the whole country is disturbed. There was an attack made upon the Barnard station—our neighbouring station—the other day. I look upon the whole country as disturbed country, although the actual murders have taken place lately at the Dawson, a distance of one hundred and fifty miles from us.
117. *By the Chairman*: I would ask you, from your knowledge of Brisbane, whether you would recommend that the drilling should take place there? Not at all.
118. Why not? Because it is not so near the disturbed districts.
119. Do you not think there are too many public houses at Brisbane? Yes; that is a very serious objection. There is a public house at Rockhampton; but that could be kept under control.
120. *By Mr. Richardson*: Do you think the native troopers have been in the habit of getting drunk at stations? Not at stations, but at public houses. I have often seen them drunk about Brisbane and about Gayndah; and I dare say they get drunk at other places.



121. Do you not think they should be prevented from getting spirits? I certainly think it would be a very good rule if you could carry it out. I think it would be very much better if the whole thing was put on a legal footing—making their embodiment, and giving them fire-arms, legal.

W. Archer,  
Esq.

22 June, 1858.

122. *By Mr. Forster*: In speaking of the efficiency of the Native Police under Mr. Walker, are you of opinion that they were more efficient than they have ever been since? When Mr. Walker first came up they were.

123. But their efficiency declined under Mr. Walker himself, before his dismissal? Decidedly.

124. Do you not think a great deal of his influence was owing to his previous individual acquaintance with a great many of his troopers? I think it was.

125. And the circumstance of their not been individually known to the other officers in the same way as they were to Mr. Walker placed those officers under peculiar difficulties? It would place them at a disadvantage.

126. Do you think Mr. Marshall would have brought the force into a state of efficiency if he had remained? I think he would.

127. Are you of opinion that any portion of the present inefficiency of the force is owing to the recent appointments as officers having been of improper persons? I do not know anything about them of my own knowledge.

128. Are you aware whether general intercourse is carried on between the black women of the tribes in the neighbourhood wherever the Native Police are situated? Yes.

129. Are there not always a number of the women of the tribes in the camps of the Native Police? There are generally a few; perhaps two or three attached to every section.

130. Do these women travel about with them? Yes.

131. Have you ever seen them riding on the police horses? Yes, frequently.

132. Are you aware whether that has been with the sanction of the officer in command, or of the Government? It must have been with the sanction of the officer, because I have seen the officer travelling with them. I do not see the slightest objection to it.

133. Are you not aware that these black women act as emissaries of the tribes? No.

134. Is not that a general impression? No, I think not.

135. If these black women live continually in the camps of the Native Police, might they not acquire information which they might distribute afterwards to the people of their own tribes? The women I have known to be in their camps generally came from a distance; they did not belong to the tribes in the immediate neighbourhood.

136. Was there not a general impression that the native troopers made use of their authority, and the terror they create among the blacks, to compel them to supply them with women? I have not heard of it. I think it is a thing they are likely to do; but I do not know that they have done it.

137. May not a good deal of the inefficiency of that force arise from the want of authority in the officers themselves over their men? A good deal, I think.

138. I think you stated that the employment of a certain proportion of white troopers would give the officers a greater feeling of security in dealing with the blacks, and that to that extent you thought it would be beneficial? Yes.

139. There might be many cases, also, where white men would be able to act as troopers with some degree of success? Yes, generally they might; but not in pursuing the blacks into heavy country after a murder, or anything of that kind.

140. Do you think the circumstance of having white troopers acting with them would in any way create a feeling of *esprit de corps* among the black troopers themselves? I think it would rather have that effect, if there were a good selection of white troopers; a great deal would depend on that.

141. The example of the white men would have a good effect on the black troopers? Yes; but it would altogether depend on the class of white troopers appointed, I think.

142. Supposing the Native Police were altogether suppressed, what do you think would be the result—do you think it would lead to the country not being occupied at all? I do not think it would. As an individual, I think it probable I would leave the country; but I do not think it would be left by others.

143. You think the squatters would take the law into their own hands? Yes; and they would very soon exterminate the blacks. It would be a war of extermination.

144. Then your opinion is, that if the Native Police were withdrawn, it would lead to a more rapid extermination of the blacks? Yes, no doubt of it.

145. Then you consider the existence of the Native Police is merciful to the blacks themselves? Yes.

146. Do not your remarks lead to this conclusion, that it is better the punishment, which must be necessary in certain cases, should be inflicted by authority, rather than by the squatters themselves? Decidedly I have always thought so.

147. You are very well acquainted with the character of the country in the Northern Districts? Yes; I have seen a large portion of it.

148. Do you not consider that the squatters are placed in greater difficulty in taking up new runs there than they are in the country to the south, owing to the large scrubs? We had a great many scrubs in the Moreton Bay country; but I do not know that we have had more difficulty on that account.

149. Do you not find the scrubby country increase as you go north? No. The valley of the Mackenzie is full of scrub; but as a general rule the scrub does not increase as you go northward on the coast.

150. Is the country close to the coast pastoral country? Yes.

151. There is an absence of scrub there? Yes; that is a peculiarity of the country. On stations now being formed to the northward of us, there is little or no scrub, I am told.

152. That will render it more easily maintained? Yes.

153. Have you ever heard a suggestion that reports on the state of the Native Police should be

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- W. Archer, Esq. be made to the Government by the Benches of Magistrates in whose neighbourhood they might happen to be? No.
- 22 June, 1858. 154. What do you think of such a suggestion—I mean merely reports of the state of the force, without interference with their management, made by the Benches, irrespective of the officers of the Native Police, in order that the Government might have a kind of check upon them? I do not see any objection to that.
155. *By the Chairman*: Would it not give the Government more certain information? Yes; having reports both from the Benches and from the officers of the Police, I think the Government would have a better chance of obtaining correct information.
156. *By Mr Forster*: Did not the force get into a state of great disorganization about the time of Mr. Walker's dismissal, and the Government, though informed of it, did not interfere? I do not remember the circumstances.
157. Were not complaints made by squatters in the Wide Bay and Burnett Districts which were not attended to? I have heard of complaints, but I do not know whether they were attended to or not.
158. *By Mr. Cowper*: Do you consider that the magistrates of these districts would have sufficient information to enable them to make reports of the proceedings of the Native Police? No; they would only be able to report as to the state of discipline, or anything of that kind, from what they may observe when the police are encamped on their stations. They would see then what they are doing, and whether there is any *esprit de corps* among them.
159. As a magistrate, or one of a Bench, would you not consider that you would always have authority to report to the Government any matter connected with the Native Police which might call for notice? Yes; if I were a magistrate I would consider it my duty to do so.

Edmund Molyneux Royds, Esq., J. P., called in and examined:—

- E. M. Royds, Esq., J. P. 1. *By the Chairman*: You are a magistrate of the territory? Yes.
- 22 June, 1858. 2. Where do you reside? At Juandal Station, on the Upper Dawson.
3. Did you form that station? No; it had been formed three or four years when I got it.
4. How long have you been resident there? Since 1852.
5. Have you had many opportunities of making yourself acquainted with the native blacks? Yes.
6. Have you suffered much from their attacks? One person was murdered at my station; that is the only case in which they have done me harm.
7. *By Mr. Cowper*: When was that? I forget whether it was two or three years ago.
8. Nothing of the sort has happened on your station recently? No.
9. Is your station situated among those that have been attacked? It is about thirty-five or forty miles in a direct line from Hornet Bank.
10. *By the Chairman*: Do you allow the blacks in at your station? Not now, since the murders recently.
11. Had you done so previously? Yes, for years.
12. Why did you discontinue it? It was thought better to keep them out, because they distribute intelligence among the neighbouring tribes.
13. Is that plan generally adopted now? Yes. No blacks were allowed at any of the stations on the Dawson at the time I left.
14. *By Mr. Cowper*: How did you communicate to them that they were not to come on to the station? I did not communicate it to them, but it was communicated in a very strong way.
15. Was that considered matter of offence by the blacks? I must say I had some doubts about the safety of some of my own out-stations after it had taken place.
16. *By Mr. Richardson*: Do you not think that if you allowed the blacks to come about the stations, and were to be friendly with them, you would learn a great deal of what was going on amongst them? No.
17. You think it desirable to keep them away? Yes, under present circumstances. The blacks are different there from what they are in other parts of the country. The tribes seem to mix up together more than others do. Our own blacks have travelled right into the middle of the Downs.
18. *By the Chairman*: What distance may that be? Upwards of two hundred miles.
19. Is that usual with the blacks? It is not usual in other parts of the country. I have reason to believe the interior blacks come in to us. I am certain the tribes that have been committing the recent murders have often been at our stations.
20. What is your opinion of the present system on which the Native Police is constituted? I approve of the Native Police; but there are a great many improvements that might be made.
21. Will you state what those improvements are? To increase the force, for one thing.
22. Would you mix any white troopers with the native troopers? I do not know that I would; I might put a sergeant with each section, to assist the officer.
23. What would you call a section? Each officer has six or eight men at present, when he has his full number.
24. Are you aware that blacks have been recruited within a very short distance of where these murders have been committed? Yes; some were recruited on my own stations.
25. Out of the tribe that has committed the murders? That is not the same tribe; but still, I suppose, they are connected with them to a certain extent.
26. Where are these recruits employed? I believe they were sent to Wide Bay and Moreton Bay.
27. What would you suggest as a sufficient number for the Native Police Force? I can hardly say without putting it down on paper. I do not know how many the other districts require.



28. *By Mr. Couper* : You spoke of sections of six—do you think that is a sufficient number to attack a party of blacks with? Yes, I think it is. E. M. Royds,  
Esq., J.P.
29. One officer, a sergeant, and six troopers, you think sufficient for each section? Yes; it is very seldom the blacks stand against them even for a moment. 22 June, 1858.
30. *By Mr. Richardson* : Where would you get the troopers from? I think the further away you get them the better.
31. How far do you think? Four or five hundred miles, I should say.
32. You think it very undesirable to have them from the neighbouring tribes? I think so, if they can be got elsewhere.
33. You do not think it would be desirable to have a larger infusion of white men? No; they would only be an incumbrance.
34. *By the Chairman* : Have you considered the subject well, with regard to the amalgamation of a white force with the native troopers? Yes; I think I have.
35. You have, probably, often heard it mentioned and discussed? Yes. I think, generally speaking, it is thought that they would not act well together.
36. For what reason? I think the whites would interfere with the working of the troopers—be in their way, in fact, in following the blacks up.
37. That would be in a scrubby, mountainous country? Yes.
38. But not in open country? In open country white troopers might be of as much service as black.
39. Do you think there would be any jealousy on account of the amalgamation? There might be on the part of the whites, but not on the part of the blacks.
40. Where would you suggest that the head-quarters of the Native Police should be? It depends on what is to be done at head-quarters. If it is to be a depôt for all the stores and everything required by the force, you want it at some place where there would be easy communication with the different stations.
41. What place would you suggest for that purpose? I think the present place, Wide Bay, is a very good place.
42. You are not aware there are no head-quarters there now? I was not aware of that.
43. You would suggest Wide Bay on account of its central position? Yes.
44. *By Mr. Richardson* : Do you think any number of men sent from Sydney would be of service in putting down outrages? They would be of no use in the world until they had had some training in the bush.
45. If they were smart young men, who had had some experience in the bush, might they not soon pick up a knowledge of the mode of warfare? They might.
46. Do not many men who have not been much in the bush soon become good bushmen, from natural talent? Yes.
47. *By the Chairman* : What remedy would you suggest to stay the outrages on the Dawson? I really cannot say, except increasing the Native Police Force.
48. Without a mixture of whites? Without any more whites than I have mentioned—not very many more at any rate. The only use of a force of white men going up would be that the blacks hearing of it might be frightened.
49. *By Mr. Richardson* : Had you many opportunities of seeing the Native Police when Mr. Walker first took charge of them? No.
50. You did not come in contact with them then? I did a little, but not much. When I first knew the force it was going to the dogs, under Mr. Walker.
51. *By the Chairman* : Are you aware that the blacks have become bold in consequence of their successes? Yes; I have not the slightest doubt of it.
52. Are they superstitious to any extent? Yes; in some ways.
53. Are you aware that they have attacked stations at night? Yes.
54. Is not that unusual? I have heard of other cases besides that of Hornet Bank.
55. You are aware it has hitherto been unusual for the blacks to attack at night? It is unusual; but I have heard of their attacking parties in camp at night; for instance, on the very night the Hornet Bank murders took place, Mr. Walker and another person were attacked.
56. Are all these cases of night attack confined to the same neighbourhood? I have heard it spoken of as having taken place at the Big River.
57. *By Mr. Taylor* : Even hostile tribes have joined to attack the Europeans, have they not? I cannot say about that.
58. Do you think the Commandant of the force should be stationed at the depôt, or that he should travel about? He should travel, most decidedly. Of course a good many of his duties might keep him at the central depôt for a time.
59. Do you not think it would be a more effective force if he were chiefly at head-quarters? Without he travelled he would hardly be able to know how the different sections of the force were managed. It would be mere matter of hearsay with him.
60. *By the Chairman* : You know the late Commandant of the Native Police—Mr. Walker? Yes.
61. Where is he now? He has a small Native Force of his own about Euroombah and Hornet Bank.
62. Who employs him? I believe some of the neighbouring squatters keep him to patrol about their stations.
63. Has he many troopers? Eight or ten, I think; I do not know exactly.
64. *By Mr. Richardson* : Are they in any way efficient, do you know? They do not seem to protect the place much, because two men were killed on the station he is chiefly employed on.
65. Do you think his force has met the expectations of the parties who employ him? Hardly, I think, as they have interfered with the working of the Native Police.
66. *By the Chairman* : If a party of Native Police came to your station, and the officer in command invited you to assist them, would you join them? If he told me he thought I should be of service, I would.

- E. M. Boyds, 67. Are they generally well received at the stations? Very well indeed, as far as my experience goes.  
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68. When co-operation is requested, is it afforded? I do not think it is ever requested; I never heard of it.
69. *By Mr. Richardson:* Have you gathered, through the medium of the press, that there has been any unwillingness on the part of the settlers to assist the Native Police? I do not remember having noticed it.
70. *By the Chairman:* But you think that, generally speaking, there is a strong desire to co-operate with them, and render them every assistance? Decidedly. There are men, I have no doubt, who have a great dislike to the force.
71. Which is the nearest Police Court to your station? The Police Court at Taroom, about twenty-five miles.
72. How far is Taroom from Hornet Bank? About thirty-five miles.
73. Would you suggest that there should be any permanent police-station at Taroom? Not exactly at Taroom, but in the neighbourhood. I believe they have barracks on the Dawson.
74. Do you know the name of the place? No; but it lies between Euroombah and Kinnoull, the station of Miller and Turnbull.
75. Are the squatters always ready to give supplies to the Native Police on application? I think so. I never heard of their being refused.
76. Is the nature of the payment for these supplies well understood? Yes; the quarter's accounts are always given in to the officer in command—in fact the chief officer of the district always gives a cheque for them. Sometimes there has been a little delay for a few months, but people do not care about that. There has been no difficulty about it since Mr. Walker left.
77. *By Mr. Forster:* How long have you been acquainted with the Native Police? Five or six years.
78. Do you consider it an efficient force? They are efficient as far as they go, but there are so few of them.
79. Have you ever known them to be an efficient force? Yes; I have known many cases in which they have done a great deal of service.
80. No doubt they do some good, but are they as efficient as they ought to be, considering the money expended upon them? I cannot say about that.
81. You seem to think that the sole cause of their inefficiency is the want of numbers? Yes.
82. Do you think if they were increased in number they would be fully efficient? I think so, if they were under good officers. Everything depends on the officers.
83. Would you recommend that the Commandant should have the appointment of his own officers exclusively? I do not know about that. He has so few opportunities in the bush of meeting with a sufficient number of fit men. I think it is a great mistake to send men out of Sydney, who have only been accustomed to a town life.
84. Do you think the inefficiency of the force has at all arisen from improper appointments? I have not the slightest doubt about it.
85. You think with good officers the force might be made efficient? I think so, certainly.
86. *By the Chairman:* Do you know, from your own knowledge, that some of the officers are inefficient? Yes; I have known some officers that are not of the slightest use.
87. Are they still in the force? I am not aware. There have been a good many changes lately.
88. *By Mr. Forster:* Supposing the Native Police Force were altogether abolished, what do you think would be the consequence? The squatters would have to fight for themselves.
89. You think they would still keep the country? I am certain they would.
90. Then you think the maintenance of a Native Police Force is merciful both to blacks and whites? Yes. I do not think the squatters would be beaten out of the country for want of the Native Police Force.
91. Does that not rather contradict what you were saying about the uselessness of white troopers, because, if the squatters were to maintain the country in the absence of a Native Police Force, it would have to be done by white men? It would be done by white men; but the squatters, having their interests at stake, would do what paid men never would do.
92. Do you not think that if white troopers were employed in the proportion of one to three or one to two, they would do good? That is nearly what I said—an officer and sergeant, or a corporal, to each half dozen native troopers.
93. Do you not think four well armed men might go from one end of the country to the other without fear of the blacks? Yes. No doubt they might travel across the whole continent without the slightest fear; but they would not easily find the blacks if they were looking for them.
94. Is it the habit of the Native Police to take native women about with them? Yes, I believe it is; but not when after blacks.
95. Do you know a camp of Native Police where there are not a lot of these women? Some officers will not allow them to have them.
96. Do you think the presence of these native women is prejudicial or otherwise? It is one way of keeping the troopers quiet.
97. Do you not think it has a bad effect in keeping up intelligence between the tribes and the Native Police? I think it has a bad effect in that way.

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WEDNESDAY,

WEDNESDAY, 23 JUNE, 1858.

Present:—

MR. HODGSON,  
MR. TAYLOR,MR. FORSTER,  
MR. BUCKLEY.

ARTHUR HODGSON, ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

James Blain Reid, Esq., called in and examined:—

1. *By the Chairman*: You are a squatter on the Burnett? I am.
2. How many years have you been there? Nearly ten years.
3. Did you form your station yourself? I did.
4. Were there many squatters out there when you first formed your station? Very few.
5. In the formation of that station did you come in contact with the natives? Several times.
6. Did they harass you at first? On several occasions they have done so.
7. Have you ever lost any men? I never had a man killed; but they have left them for dead on two occasions, though the men recovered.
8. Are the blacks in your district more quiet than they were when you first formed your station? In my immediate neighbourhood they are quiet; that is to say, life is perfectly safe, but they are given to sheep stealing.
9. Do you admit them on your station? Yes.
10. Is that the general practice in your district? I fancy it is the case all over the Burnett district. I do not refer to the Dawson country.
11. Do you approve of that? I do.
12. You are aware that many murders have been committed in the Dawson district? I have heard so.
13. To what cause do you attribute those murders? I suppose they must either be a more determined race of blacks there; or, in many cases, from what I hear, it has been traced to aggression on the part of the whites, such as firing salt at them at night. That was the case in poor Treverthan's murder.
14. What would be the effect of firing salt at them? It would cut the skin and irritate them—make the blacks mad almost.
15. From what you have heard do you imagine that the blacks on the Dawson River are a more treacherous and more powerful race of men than the blacks on the Burnett? From what I have heard I would suppose so. I do not know the men who have been dealing with them though.
16. Do you know anything of the Native Police Force? I did formerly. I used to see them frequently in Commandant Walker's time.
17. What did you think of the force at that time? Before he forgot himself it was better than it ever has been since; that is, the men were kept in proper discipline, and you never heard of them running away, as they do now.
18. What is your opinion of the force as it is now constituted? It is anything but what it might be if proper measures were adopted.
19. What remedy would you suggest for its improvement? That the troopers should be recruited from the Southern Districts; they are a superior race of blacks there; and of course they would not be so liable to abscond. I would also suggest that they ought to have a greater number of horses, say three horses to every two men. At present there is only one horse to each trooper; and when one of the officers returns with his troopers to barracks, after being away some time, their horses are knocked up and have sore backs; news may then come of depredations committed probably a hundred and fifty miles off, and there are only these same horses to go away.
20. Would two horses to each trooper be sufficient? That would be ample.
21. Would you recommend any mixture of white troopers with the natives? I would recommend that there should be one man to each section to look after the saddles, because none of these native troopers know how to saddle a horse, and that is the reason why they get knocked up so soon. It is very difficult to teach a blackfellow that. But I would not recommend a mixture of white troopers with the natives, for this reason, that the principal work they have to do is in the scrubs, and white men cannot come up to the natives there.
22. One white man to each section, to look after the saddles, is all you would recommend? Yes; besides the officer in charge. I believe a section consists of twelve men; but there is generally one deficient.
23. You would not recommend a white sergeant? No.
24. What reasons do you give for not approving the mixture of white troopers with the natives? Because white troopers would be of no use now. Whenever they come up to the blacks it is generally at the edge of a scrub; the wild blacks run into this, and the black troopers can follow them as quickly, but you or I could not keep up to them.
25. Do you believe the native troopers, when they are in hot pursuit in these scrubs, effectually come in contact with the natives? I do. I think the present men are probably not so good as those formerly recruited on the Murray, because on several occasions they have been taken out against their own relatives.
26. Do you know that to be a fact, that recruiting has gone on in the districts where murders have been committed? Yes.
27. Do you not consider that highly objectionable? Decidedly.
28. When you mention the Southern Districts, to what districts do you particularly allude? I think you should get men from the Barwan and Lower Namoi, and down towards Fort Bourke.
29. Do you think there would be much difficulty in recruiting in those districts? No, I do not think there would.

J. B. Reid,  
Esq.

23 June, 1858.

- J. B. Reid,  
Esq.  
23 June, 1858.
30. What means would you take to recruit there, in the first instance? I would send one of the officers, accompanied by one of the present troopers who can speak the kamilaroi language, used down there, and I have no doubt he would be able to procure men.
31. Would you send horses for them? I would either send horses or buy them there.
32. Are you aware of the present number of the Native Police? No.
33. Of what number would you recommend the Native Police Force to consist? I am not well aware how many are needed; but I fancy seven sections would be sufficient.
34. Could you suggest to the Committee the proper site for the head-quarters of this force? I think the head quarters ought to be temporary, because as stations push out they ought to move to the most central place.
35. Would you not suggest that there should be head-quarters where the arms and stores should be kept? Yes.
36. Do you not think this ought to be a permanent station? Do you mean the residence of the Commandant?
37. The residence of the accountant more particularly? All that had better be done at Brisbane, where there are the greatest facilities for communicating with Sydney.
38. You would not recommend any port further to the north? Certainly, at Wide Bay you would be nearer to where the different sections are, but then again you are further removed from those on the Clarence.
39. If a Native Police Force were not considered necessary on the Clarence, would you recommend Wide Bay in preference to Brisbane? Yes; it is nearer to the unsettled parts of the country. As to the Dawson country, I not think there are many miles of difference from the Dawson to Brisbane, and from the Dawson to Wide Bay; but taking the country further north, Wide Bay would be much nearer.
40. *By Mr. Forster:* You alluded to aggressions by the whites as one of the causes of the great number of murders that have taken place? Yes; I refer to Treverthan's case.
41. That occurred, how long ago? I should think six years ago.
42. You alluded to that case particularly? That is the only instance I know of.
43. Then you do not mention aggression by the whites as the rule? No; but in this case I believe Treverthan fired salt at them during the night.
44. Did you ever hear of firing salt at them in any other case? No.
45. Then I presume you do not mean to infer that the murders committed by the blacks are in general caused by aggression from the whites? No, I should say not.
46. Does not your experience lead to the contrary impression,—that in general aggression is first committed by the blacks? Yes; for instance, Humphreys and Herbert were not forty-eight hours on the run before a man was killed.
47. Do you not think the most conciliatory measures have failed? I do not think conciliatory measures are adopted by the men.
48. But by the squatters—is it not their general desire, and also their interest, to conciliate the blacks? Of course it is.
49. Do you not think they would always endeavor to be on good terms with them? Of course. In that unfortunate affair of Wilkins, the man who was killed fired at two blacks the day before he was killed.
50. May it not have been caused by some aggression of theirs previously—you are not aware to the contrary? No.
51. Are you not of opinion that, whatever means of protection the Government may give, and however efficient a border police there may be, some murders will occur. There always will be occasional murders.
52. Do you not think that, however well a district may be protected, enterprising men will go beyond protection, induced by the profit derived, or supposed to be derived, from such adventure? It has always been the case in my experience.
53. I think you have come to the conclusion that, in the cases we are considering now, the murders are more than might have been expected from the circumstances? Yes; they are more than when the Burnett District was first settled.
54. You stated that you considered the Native Police Force was efficient under Mr. Walker? Yes, up to a certain time.
55. Did you consider it even then as efficient as it might have been? No, I do not think it was, because he kept far too many men together.
56. Do you not think a great part of the time of the men was taken up uselessly in travelling along lines of road, and going to stations where they were not required, even in his time? I never saw anything of that. On one occasion I saw him at Barber's station, where he had about fifty men together.
57. Where the force was not required? He had been to the Bunya, where the blacks were, to disperse them.
58. Do you think that in his time the force was kept as near the frontiers as it ought to be? I should say not, when the head-quarters were at Callandoon.
59. You have never known the force in an efficient state since? The men have never been in the same order as when Mr. Walker had charge of them.
60. Do you think a good deal of the discipline he maintained may not have been owing to the individual knowledge which Mr. Walker had of these blacks, he having lived with them before they joined the force? I think that had a great deal to do with it. He was very severe, more so than any other person has been since.
61. Are you at all acquainted with the force said to have been organized by Mr. Walker since his removal? Merely by rumour. I have not seen him for years.
62. Can you give the Committee any idea whether that force is useful or efficient? No, I cannot.
63. Has it ever come to your knowledge that constant intercourse is kept up between the native troopers and the women of the wild tribes in the neighbourhood where they are stationed? I have heard so; but I cannot speak from experience.



J. B. Reid,  
Esq.

23 June, 1858.

64. You have been in the camps of the Native Police? Yes.
65. Have you not always seen these native women there? I have frequently; but whether they were living with the troopers I cannot say.
66. Were these women the wives of the troopers—had they come from the same part of the country, do you suppose? I think, when Mr. Walker was in command, there were two girls from the south country with the Native Police.
67. Did you ever see a camp of the Native Police without a quantity of women about it? Yes.
68. A camp where they had been stationed some time; I do not mean where they had camped for the night only? The only station I was ever at is Wallah, Mr. Thompson's station; I have been there several times, and I always saw women.
69. You are aware, at all events, that there is an impression that they are always supplied with women by the tribes, wherever they go? So it is said.
70. Supposing that to be the case, do you think it would tend to injure the efficiency of the force, and render it less useful? I think it does. For instance, they were attacked at Rannes; and from what we hear, it was because the Native Police had taken a number of girls away. That is the story; and it is very probable, I think.
71. You are not favorable, I think you said, to the employment of white troopers? No; only one to each section.
72. One white trooper to two blacks, or one to three, you would not approve of? No, that would be too many.
73. In what sense too many? I think the less military the more useful the force will be. I would make them throw away their heavy swords, for instance; they do not know how to use them. The carbine is all they want.
74. Are you aware of any instances in which the Native Police have been employed as constables, to take up white men? I once saw Mr. Walker at Gayndah order his men to put a drunken man in the lock-up, who was very violent.
75. Do you approve of the native troopers being employed in any case of the kind? No. I do not see how they can do it; they cannot take the oath; but if the officer was with them all the time, I would see no objection.
76. An officer being with them, of course they could be legally employed, because any peace officer may call on any of Her Majesty's subjects to assist him, and I presume they might act in that case, whether they were constables or not? Yes.
77. *By Mr. Taylor:* Do you not think the presence of a few white men in the force would increase the authority of the Commandant? No, I do not see how it would.
78. Do you think it safe for any one white man to be surrounded by these men alone, without any protection from his own race? Quite safe. I do not think there is any danger from them.
79. It would be merely as a kind of servant that you would recommend a white man with each section? Yes. Mr. Marshall when he was First Lieutenant, used to saddle all his troopers horses himself; he would take his coat off and set to work to put all the saddles on; and consequently his horses were in better condition than the rest. You have no idea how careless these black troopers are.
80. *By the Chairman:* Could you suggest any immediate remedy to stay the murders on the Dawson? No, I do not know of any. There are plenty of troopers up there at present.
81. Sufficient to protect life and property? I believe so. I have heard of two sections being in that part of the country. Some of the natives of the Dawson have come in as far as Gayndah; I have seen several of them there; they are afraid to go out, I believe, on account of the Native Police. I dare say they have been pursued by the police, and have come in to the settled parts for protection. I saw a Dawson black at my own station a few days before I came away, who was wounded both in the face and in the thigh.
82. Are you aware that the natives on the Dawson have become very bold? So I hear.
83. To what do you attribute this boldness? I fancy they are very numerous; and probably the people there are very much afraid of them.
84. The squatters you mean? Yes. That station where so many people were murdered is a very unprotected place to have so many females at. It was rash to have them there.
85. Are you aware that the natives on the Dawson have been murdering people at night? I have heard so.
86. Is not that unusual? Very.
87. Have you ever heard a similar case? I have never known it in the south country. The blacks on the Burnett go about at night; in fact, it is at night they steal the sheep, principally.
88. Are they very superstitious in the northern districts? They are.
89. Do you not think their continued success in their attacks—these murders being so frequently committed, and no punishment following—has tended to do away with that superstition? I know of one instance in which the fact of a blackfellow's being shot has made him bolder. He was shot through the nose, another ball passed through his throat, and a third along the front of his body, without killing him; and he believes now that no ball can kill him.
90. Are the horses used by the native troopers generally useful animals? Yes, I think they are very fair. In summer one horse to each man would do the work very well; but in winter there is very little feed, and one horse will not then stand riding every day.
91. Do the native troopers generally take care of their horses? No; I do not think they do.
92. Nor of their saddles? Nor of their saddles, nor of their arms.
93. Under these circumstances do you not think it would be better to have a white sergeant attached to each section? Probably it would, to see after the arms. If he were a saddler as well it would be of great use; or, probably, there should be a sergeant and a saddler also. There is tremendous wear and tear of saddles and accoutrements. For instance, if they stop for a short time they will take the bridles off their horses, leave the carbine in the saddle, and probably the brute rolls, and breaks one or both.

- J. B. Reid,  
Esq.  
23 June, 1858.
94. Would you propose that there should be barracks at any other point than the head-quarters? Yes; I think it would be prudent to have barracks more in the interior—probably two besides the head-quarters.
95. You think that would be sufficient? Yes; one in the southern and the other in the northern part of the district.
96. Have you ever been at Rockhampton? Never.
97. You know where it is? Yes.
98. Do you think that would be a proper site for the head-quarters of the Native Police? Yes. It is not a great way from the Dawson country; in fact, in a straight line it is nearer than Brisbane.
99. You are well acquainted with Brisbane? I am.
100. Do you not think there are too many public-houses in Brisbane to make the head-quarters of the Native Police there? Yes; there are a great many public-houses there.
101. Do you not think that a serious objection when you come to think over it? I have never seen any of the troopers intoxicated, but I have never seen them at a place where they could get drink, except at Gayndah, and they had no money there.
102. Do you think it possible to prevent the native troopers from getting drink when it is within their reach? Nearly all of them will take it, if they can get it; but I have never heard that any of them were guilty of drunkenness.
103. Would you suggest that the native troopers should be under any strict military discipline? Decidedly.
104. Would you appoint any punishment in case of desertion? I think if it were possible to have them flogged and returned to their duty, it would be the best punishment for them.
105. Are you aware that they ever were flogged? I have heard that Mr. Walker used to make a black sergeant flog any black trooper who misbehaved; but I have never heard of such a thing since his time.
106. Would you invest the Commandant with the power of appointing all his subordinate officers? It would certainly be a great power to invest in one individual.
107. Are you aware whether the officers, generally speaking, are efficient? Some of them are said not to be efficient.

William Butler Tooth, Esq., M. P., examined:—

- W. B. Tooth,  
Esq., M.P.  
23 June, 1858.
1. *By the Chairman:* You are a Member of the Legislative Assembly, for the Pastoral Districts of Moreton, Wide Bay, Burnett, Maranoa, Port Curtis, and Leichhardt? Yes.
2. I believe you are generally connected with squatting pursuits in those districts? Yes.
3. Have you formed any stations yourself? Yes, in the Wide Bay District.
4. Were you the original discoverer of those stations? I was the original occupant. Other people had seen them before, but I took them up.
5. You have had opportunities of knowing something of the natives in that part of the country? Yes; in consequence of taking up these stations particularly.
6. Have you suffered in property or in the lives of your shepherds from the natives? I have never had a man killed.
7. Have you had sheep taken away? I never had sheep taken away, but I have had plenty of cattle killed. The stations I formed were for cattle. Stockmen are not so liable to be killed as shepherds.
8. Are the natives allowed in upon your stations? We kept them out at first, but they are now allowed in. I approve of the principle when all can pull together; but for one squatter to allow them in and others to keep them out is wrong.
9. Are they generally allowed in, in your district? Yes, now they are. As soon as Mr. Walker came down with a company of police, we agreed together to let them in, but before that we dared not do it.
10. Then the presence of a section of Mr. Walker's Native Police tended to protect your property? Decidedly.
11. As well as the lives of the native blacks? Yes.
12. Then you consider that the employment of the Native Police is merciful, both to the squatters and the natives? An effective force would be so. I will point to the case of the very first company or section of native troopers that Mr. Walker brought from the southward to Callandoon. That was the first scene of his operations. I bought a large cattle station there, from Mr. Larnach, just before the troopers came up. The blacks before that had been so very troublesome that he could not get a purchaser for it, and he had to sell it at a sacrifice, in fact. You could scarcely get a man to go into that district for double the wages paid anywhere else, and no woman would go near it at all. The hut-keepers would not venture to go down to the water-hole without being armed with gun or pistol. But in less than three months after the Native Police came up, that district was so quiet that a man could walk about anywhere. Mr. Walker met the blacks killing cattle close to my camp, and they had a stand up fight for it. The blacks were so completely put down on that occasion, and terrified at the power of the police, that they never committed any more depredations near there. The place was quiet at once, and property became fifty per cent. more valuable.
13. Then the Native Police Force under Mr. Walker was efficient? That section was more efficient than they have ever been since; because, when he got more to do he had to trust to others. To increase the force, he had to go away a second time to the Murrumbidgee and Lachlan, and those places. Mr. Walker had several advantages: he was a superintendent in these Southern Districts, and knew a great deal of the country, and the blacks there individually, and that enabled him to recruit successfully. I do not think a stranger going there would find it such an easy matter; and I could tell him, whoever he might be, that the squatters

squatters would not at all like his presence to take their black servants; because it is not wild men we want for troopers, but men broken in by the squatters; and they do not like these men to leave their service to join the police. I remember there was a great deal of dissatisfaction about it.

W. B. Tooth,  
Esq., M.P.

23 June, 1858.

14. In what district? When they tried to get men in the neighbourhood of Callandoon to send out to Wide Bay. I believe a letter was written to the Colonial Secretary on the subject, and a correspondence took place between Mr. Walker and the Government.

15. Are you at all aware of the state of the Native Police Force at present? It is in a wretched state.

16. How do you account for that? In this way: that the Native Police Force having been disbanded, it has required more time than there has been to re-organize it as it ought to be done. For instance, there has not been time for the Commandant to go away to get troopers; he has had to get them in the district where they do duty. Even now, I understand, he is only going as far as Callandoon and the Clarence. I think he will have a great deal of difficulty in doing it. I think if anything could be done temporarily to give better protection for a short time, an attempt ought to be made to get troopers from the Lower Darling.

17. What temporary measure would you suggest? I should say protection might be afforded by supplementing the force with about one-third European troopers. I do not see any other way of doing it.

18. You think that should take place immediately? Yes; and then if they should seem to work well together the arrangement could be continued, and if not, other troopers could be got in the meantime. They will always be wanted as long as we want a border police force at all; and it would be far better to get them by degrees—ten or twenty at a time, than fifty at once—and much easier to do it.

19. If it were possible to send twenty white troopers at once from Sydney to the scene of these murders, do you think it would be desirable? I do, decidedly. I think it ought to be tried. It is worth trying. There is no other way that I see.

20. If this could be done, the Commandant of the Native Police would have an opportunity of seeing how the amalgamation of white and black troopers would work? Yes. I think I would give him power to distribute the white troopers as he pleased. I would not order him to put any particular number of whites with blacks. There may be one or two companies of native troopers who are quite efficient by themselves; for instance, the section under Mr. Murray's command. The Commandant might think it unadvisable to disturb that section. I would therefore give him power to mix the Europeans with the natives as he might think best.

21. Mr. Murray bears the name of a very efficient officer? Yes, he does.

22. Do you think if Murray were sent to the Namoi and the adjoining districts, he would be able to recruit native troopers there? I do not think he could on the Namoi; the time has gone by. When I was sending some cattle from there, we could scarcely get a black boy to go with the stockmen. I believe the best place is near the junction of the Darling with the Murray.

23. Do you think that the best place on account of the number of natives there? Not only on account of their numbers, but because they are a superior class of blacks, and are more to be depended upon, than in the northern districts—they are more skilful in warfare, and are a finer race of men.

24. Suppose it were possible to send up twenty troopers from Sydney, would you send horses with them? No; I would rather buy horses that have been bred in the districts, because they do better, and are acclimatised.

25. Are horses easily obtainable in the district? I should say so. I noticed that at a large sale of horses the other day at Brisbane, from Mr. Leslie's stud, the average was only £9 a head.

26. Where would you suggest that these white troopers should be landed in the first instance? That would depend on circumstances, and where the Commandant was. If the Commandant were at Wide Bay, I would land them there, but if at Brisbane, then I would send them there. I should send them wherever the Commandant might be.

27. Where would you suggest that the head-quarters of the Native Police should be? I think Maryborough would be most central. There is not much need of the Native Police on the Clarence, I should think; and the Commandant has very little to look after there. If he were at Brisbane his work would be nearly all to the north.

28. You are in favor of having head-quarters? Not of having any great quantity of police at head-quarters, but of head-quarters for the accounts and stores.

29. And for drilling? That is quite another thing. But after they were drilled and formed into sections, I do not see any necessity for them to go to head-quarters any more.

30. Would you suggest barracks at head-quarters? I would not have barrack accommodation for more than twenty men.

31. Are there barracks now erected at Maryborough? I do not know; I believe the station is at Tyro Lagoon, about sixteen miles up the river.

32. You are not aware whether there are any buildings erected, or not? No; but the settlers, if they regarded their own interest, would build barracks for the troopers on their stations. I did it; I built a large place for the troopers, where they could come and stop a day or two, and then go on. They must be moving about to be effective. They will not sleep in a hut, if you build the barracks, they will put their saddles inside, and sleep out.

33. You would surely suggest buildings at head-quarters? Yes, at head-quarters; but not for more than fifteen or twenty men. I do not see the necessity of going to any great expense about it either.

34. *By Mr. Foster:* Would not a large tent or tarpaulin, or several such things, be found useful in place of barracks? They would soon wear out. If heavy, the objection would be to the load for the horses to carry; and if light, the friction would soon wear them out.



W. B. Tooth,  
Esq., M.P.  
23 June, 1858.

35. Do you think the expense would be greater, on the whole, than that of putting up huts? I think it would; if they were rolled up damp, and allowed to remain so for a short time, they would be spoiled. These men are so careless, that anything that can spoil will spoil in their hands.
36. The officer in command is supposed to look after their accoutrements? No doubt he ought to do it, and perhaps does do it; but fancy having to look after the saddling up of all his troopers. There is inevitably great wear and tear.
37. Do you not think the force might be less expensively managed than it is at present? I can hardly say, unless you can put some particular point of expense to me.
38. I will put the case of their carrying heavy swords, which they never use? They are not required at all, and are a very great incumbrance.
39. Is it not the great object in fitting out a native policeman to put a light weight on his horse? Yes.
40. These swords add a great deal to the weight? A great deal.
41. Are there not other things they carry which are unnecessary—they have different uniforms, for instance? They may have them, but I never saw them—there is no necessity for them.
42. Have you not seen a very heavy kind of military saddle supplied to them, instead of which a much lighter saddle would be better? Yes. A common stockman's saddle would be much better than any other saddle, and more easily kept in order.
43. And last better? Yes.
44. *By the Chairman*: Could they fix holsters on saddles of that description? Yes; stockmen go about with pistols and holsters on their saddles. There is no doubt that European troopers are not able to follow the blacks in these scrubs. Mr. Walker's troopers (I do not know what they do now) used to strip and go in after them naked, because the scrubs are of such a kind that their clothes become entangled. You would not get an European to do the same; in fact he would not be able to do it.
45. *By Mr. Forster*: Have you noticed the kind of intercourse that exists between any of the recently appointed officers and their men? No, I have not.
46. You are not acquainted with any of the new officers, perhaps? I am not, except the Commandant; I have known Mr. Murray for many years.
47. Do you think the officers generally have sufficient authority over the men? They had at one time.
48. That was in Mr. Walker's time? Yes.
49. Do you think they have not since? I think Mr. Murray and Mr. Bligh have, and so had Mr. Marshall, and several other old officers.
50. Did you ever know the force to be in an efficient state since the time you speak of under Mr. Walker? Never since it was disbanded.
51. Was it not inefficient under him latterly? It was not so efficient as it was at first. The section at Callandoon was the perfection of a protective force when it first came up; but it gradually got worse and worse under Mr. Walker himself.
52. Since that time the force has never recovered? It has not began to recover. One-half the troopers are next to no good at all, except to ride about and show themselves.
53. Do you think the troopers, from the way they are selected, are capable of being made useful at all? They can never be efficient while they are selected from the districts where they are employed.
54. Do you not think the squatters would be better without such troopers? Anything is better than nothing.
55. Do you not think a force of white men would be better than troopers selected in that way? Yes, but for the scrubs.
56. Supposing the white troopers cannot pursue the blacks at all in the scrubs, do you not think that the injury that is done by selecting black troopers from the immediate neighbourhood is greater than any good derived from it? I do not think any injury would be done if the men would not abscond.
57. But they do abscond? I have heard they do.
58. Do you not think they would carry on intercourse with their own tribes? That would depend a good deal on circumstances. If you can get men that the tribes have a down upon they will be true, because they know that if they leave you the tribes will kill them; but you do not know when you have actually got these men.
59. All depends on the selection of individuals? Yes.
60. And that again depends on having a good Commandant, in fact? Yes.
61. *By Mr. Taylor*: Do you not think the body would be better organized if there were one main head-quarters stationary, and the whole force divided into different sections with settled stations? The disturbed district is about three hundred miles long and very wide; and I think there would be no necessity for any of the sections ever to come to head-quarters.
62. Still, things might occur at some of these out stations which would require correspondence with the Commandant? The Commandant ought, of course, to have some place where he can be corresponded with, but not a barracks for the main body of the force to come to.
63. Would he not be more useful if he were almost stationary at head-quarters—going out at times, of course, but remaining chiefly at head-quarters? I do not think so; because I think he ought to have power to employ his subordinate officers, and that he ought to be moving about to judge for himself whether the officers were doing their duty. I would make him the responsible man, and expect him to find officers to do the duty. Until that is done you will never get efficient officers. I would give him full power to appoint his own officers, just the same as I would give to the head superintendent of a number of stations power to appoint his own overseers at the different stations, and I would hold him responsible for the efficiency of the corps, in the same way as I would hold the superintendent for the good management of the stations.
64. You would give him the sole power, without referring to the Government at all, to appoint whatever officers he pleases? I would.

Henry



Henry Midland Pearse, Esq., called in and examined:—

H. M. Pearse,  
Esq.

23 June, 1858.

1. *By the Chairman:* What is your occupation? I have been managing for Mr. Holt in the Dawson District lately, at Bungaban.
2. How far is that from Gayndah? One hundred and ten miles.
3. In what direction? About west of Gayndah.
4. How far from Hornet Bank? I believe it is about forty-five miles, but I never was there.
5. Were you there when the station at Bungaban was first formed? No.
6. How long have you been there? Since the middle of January, 1857.
7. I presume you have had many opportunities of knowing the manners and customs of the blacks in that part of the country? Only since the time I mention.
8. Do you allow them in upon your station? Yes; they were there till last shearing time.
9. Did they go away then? Yes.
10. Under what circumstances? They went of their own accord.
11. You did not send them away? No.
12. Have you ever sent them away? No, I never did.
13. Have they not returned since? Not up to the time I left the station.
14. To what cause do you attribute their absence? I suppose they were frightened, having heard the news that the police were about after them.
15. Have they ever done any injury on the station under your charge? None whatever. We lost a few wedders at head station, supposed to have been taken by strange blacks.
16. Have they speared no cattle? No; they have never done us any injury whatever.
17. Have they committed depredations and murders in the neighbourhood? Yes, on the next station.
18. Which is the nearest station to you? Mr. Yaldwin's, at Taroom.
19. How long ago? The latter end of 1857.
20. Did they commit murders there? Yes; two men were reported to be killed on Mr. Yaldwin's station.
21. Were they shepherds? I believe they were; it was reported so.
22. How far distant from your station where the murders committed? About twenty-five miles, I believe; I have never been at the place.
23. As long as you have been in the district, the blacks have never injured the property you had in charge? Never.
24. Could you give the Committee your ideas of the reasons for their behaving so well on your station? I imagine we are an inside station, and the stations where the murders have been committed are on the frontier, and surrounded by scrubby and broken country.
25. If the blacks had come in to your station again after they had left, would you have admitted them? Yes; I promised them I would take care of them if they did come in.
26. Have you had opportunities of observing the Native Police Force? I have seen it passing and re-passing at different times.
27. What is your opinion of that force? I have said from the beginning that if there never had been any Native Police Force these murders would not have been committed to such an extent, because the people would have protected themselves.
28. By that remark, I suppose you wish to impress the Committee with the idea that the squatters were hanging to the Native Police for protection? In some measure I should imagine so.
29. *By Mr. Forster:* You say they could have protected themselves without the Native Police? I think they could, because I have been in other parts of the country where we had no Native Police, and we never required them.
30. *By the Chairman:* What I understand from you is that the squatters have not taken any trouble to protect themselves, owing to the presence of the Native Police? I do not know what they have done on the Dawson. I know very few parties out there. I imagine they looked entirely to the Native Police for protection.
31. You imagine that if there had been no Police Force the squatters would have combined and defended themselves with greater advantage? Yes; I think so.
32. In what other parts of the Colony have you been previously? On the Lower Macquarie, and all those western waters down the Barwan and Darling.
33. In these districts you were enabled sufficiently to protect yourselves? Yes. In fact I have never had any trouble with the blacks wherever I have been.
34. Are you aware whether the present Native Police Force is efficient or not? Some of them may be; some are very good men.
35. Could you suggest to the Committee any immediate remedy to stop the outrages? It is really a very difficult thing to suggest. It is difficult even for those people who live in the immediate neighbourhood to do so.
36. Would you approve of white troopers being sent from Sydney? I cannot see what use they would be, unless they were led by men who knew the country.
37. Suppose they were led by the officers of the Native Police and accompanied by the native troopers? If the officers were good bushmen, and were accompanied by blacks who could track, then they might be of some service.
38. Would they not materially strengthen the force? That would depend upon the management of them upon the ground.
39. What is the nature of the country in the Dawson River District? It is scrubby. All the hills, whether high or low, are covered with dense briclow scrub, which it is difficult to get through even on foot.
40. Do the blacks get into these scrubs after they have committed murders? I believe so.
41. Have you ever been out after the blacks? Never.
42. You have never had any occasion? No.
43. Is the country where you have been living open? Tolerably open, with the exception of the tops of the hills.

H. M. Pearce, 44. On what water is the station? On a tributary of the Dawson River.

Esq. 45. Are the Native Police generally well received at the different squatting stations when they come up? I imagine so. They have been always well received at our place.

23 June, 1858. 46. Have you heard anything to the contrary? I cannot say I have.

47. Do you not imagine there is a general feeling of co-operation between the squatters and the native troopers? In some instances there may be. Others speak against them sometimes. Perhaps it is merely because they cannot always get them just when they want them. No doubt the Native Police would be very efficient if they were led by officers that were good bushmen.

48. Is not that the case? I cannot say they are not good bushmen, all of them; but I should think men sent out of the towns cannot be much good in the country.

49. Is that the case with many of the officers? I understand so, in more than one instance.

50. That you think is bad? Decidedly.

51. Are the Native Police troopers generally well horsed? Yes.

52. Do they seem to take care of their horses? I should say they do; but they all require looking after.

53. Have you noticed their saddles? I have.

54. Do you approve of them? I have not made any observation with regard to them. It seems to me almost necessary for them to have the saddles they use, on account of the heavy weight they carry, carbines and cloaks, and such things.

55. It is necessary they should be large? Of course a large saddle is decidedly preferable to a small one in any case for a man to ride on.

56. Could you suggest to the Committee where the head-quarters of the Native Police Force might be? It is difficult to do so. At Maryborough the blacks are sometimes more troublesome than they are any where else.

57. You could not suggest where the head-quarters might be? No.

58. *By Mr. Taylor*: Do you not think the presence of a certain number of white troopers in the district would tend to frighten the blacks, and to prevent these outrages, even though they could not follow them into the scrubs? I do not think so. I think one good man on a station would be worth all that could be sent from Sydney—one good bushman I mean.

59. *By Mr. Luckley*: If you could get desirable men, bushmen, in Sydney to send up to the force, would they not be of use? I do not think much of the Sydney men at all to send into the bush.

60. If good bushmen could be picked up in Sydney and sent up there, would they not be of good service? If they are good bushmen, no matter where they come from, that seems to me to be the principal thing. They must be men who would not be running about on the tracks of roads. Any one can do that.

61. Such an addition to the force you think would be of some service? I think so.

62. *By the Chairman*: Have you felt perfectly secure in your station ever since you have been there? Quite so.

63. Do you imagine that the natives might leave your station, go to those outlying stations, commit murder, and return in again to you? I am very doubtful about that. It is generally supposed that they know of all these things before they are committed—I merely speak from supposition—but still we never can get it out of them. I mean that before a murder is committed, the blacks for hundreds of miles round know that such a thing is going to take place, as far as I can find out from having spoken to the blacks after the event. But such is the combination that you cannot get them to speak out. I have heard of it when they have been talking of the event afterwards.

64. Do you happen to know whether the blacks are admitted on the squatting stations outlying beyond you? No, I believe not. The blacks were admitted at Mr. Yaldwin's place some time after they had left our place; but they were not the same blacks that had left our place; as far as I heard they went in a different direction.

65. Is it not generally known that Mr. Yaldwin has treated the blacks with great kindness? Report has said so.

66. And yet he has lost two men? And yet he has lost two men.

67. Therefore, admitting the blacks on the stations gives no security to the proprietor as to life and property? That depends on the way you treat them in great measure.

68. How would you treat them? I keep them at a proper distance, and if I employ them I give them what I promise, and send them to their camps.

69. Have you employed them? Yes, in many ways,—sheep washing, drafting sheep, cutting bark, and so on. I had them all last winter. I paid them for what they did, and I found them very useful, and always willing to stop with me. They would come back, only that they are frightened now.

70. Have you found the blacks to the north a superior race to those you have come in contact with on the Darling? No, I think they are inferior.

71. Are they larger? I do not see any difference with regard to size; if anything, I should say they are smaller.

72. You do not approve of the present Native Police Force? I have said so, and I have heard other people join with me; because, in other parts of the Colony that I have been in, if the blacks committed any depredations the whites always protected themselves.

73. Do you not imagine that the blacks in the districts where these murders have been committed have been greatly assisted by the scrubby and mountainous nature of the country? Yes. And very probably some of the deserters or disbanded Native Police have been the principal leaders.

74. Is not the country on the Dawson more scrubby and mountainous than any other district in the Colony that you have been in? Yes, where the frontier stations are, I think it is. I have never seen it myself; I only speak from hearsay. It is described to me as a broken country extending for hundreds of miles.

75. Do you form your idea of it from your own station? Our country is not much broken. H. M. Pearse, Esq.  
We are on the south side of the Dawson; I am speaking of the north-west side.
76. Do you in any way attribute the murders which have been committed by the blacks to the harsh manner in which they have been treated by the squatters? I have often heard of instances of that kind where the blacks have been badly treated or badly used, and that they have retaliated in some way or other. It may be so; I do not say it is in this case. 23 June, 1858.
77. You are speaking generally? Yes.
78. Can you give the Committee any further suggestions? I think the native troopers should be brought up from other parts of the country. It is no use to have men picked up in the neighbourhood, or within a hundred or a hundred and fifty miles, because they are apt to bolt, particularly if there is any mismanagement on the part of the officer. If they were treated as well as blacks should be about a station, I think they would stick to their officers just the same as they would stick to us at a station.
79. Do you know the Commandant of the Native Police, Mr. Morissett? Yes.
80. Would you vest him with the appointment of his subordinate officers? Most assuredly I would.
81. Do you think he is fully capable of carrying out the duties of Commandant? I think it would be difficult to get a better man.
82. Is he a good bushman? I should imagine he is, because he is here and there in every direction across the country.
83. He is an active man? Very much so.
84. Do you think if sufficient time were given him he would be able to reorganize the force? It is very possible he may.
85. From what you have seen of him, do you think it is likely he will do so? I should say if any one can he ought to be able to do it.
86. Have you frequently had opportunities of seeing him? Very frequently. I was not acquainted with him much before he became Commandant; but I have met him since frequently.
87. Have you ever met Mr. Murray? Yes.
88. Is he an efficient officer? Very much so, I think. I speak from general report. Mr. Bligh is also a good officer, I know, and also another officer, Mr. Powell, whom I have seen frequently.
89. Are you aware of the number of officers attached to the Native Police Force? No, I cannot say I am.

THURSDAY, 15 JULY, 1858.

Present:—

MR. BUCKLEY,  
MR. CRIBB,  
MR. FORSTER,

MR. HODGSON,  
MR. JONES,  
MR. RICHARDSON,

MR. TAYLOR.

ARTHUR HODGSON, ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

Alfred Brown, Esq., called in and examined:—

1. *By the Chairman:* You are a resident in the Wide Bay District? Yes.
2. In what part? Gingin is the name of my station.
3. What is the distance from Maryborough? About seventy miles.
4. And from Port Curtis? About a hundred miles.
5. Have you been long there? Four or five years.
6. Did you form the station yourself? No; it was formed by Mr. Forster.
7. Have you had many opportunities of noticing the conduct of the Native Police? I think I have had every opportunity.
8. Do you consider them an efficient corps? I do not.
9. Did you ever consider them efficient? They were at one time—at the commencement.
10. Who was Commandant then? Mr. Frederick Walker.
11. Their efficiency has ceased since Mr. Walker was superseded? Yes.
12. Will you be good enough to state some of your reasons for drawing that conclusion? I think the principal reason of their inefficiency is that they have inefficient officers. Some of the officers appointed are not at all adapted to the command of the force.
13. Are you speaking generally? It is so in many cases, or I might say in most cases.
14. Do you include the present Commandant? I do not think he is an efficient officer; I do not think he understands his business. I have seen personally very little of him; but, if I may judge from the officers, and the way in which the force is conducted, I think he is to blame in some points.
15. Will you be good enough to state to the Committee any instances of inefficiency in the officers that have come under your notice, not mentioning names? I consider that one essential object of the employment of the force is that they should be continuously patrolling the country, which they do not do. I consider they adhere too much to the roads, instead of following the blacks and patrolling through the bush. I consider also, that the officers do not keep up that degree of discipline amongst the troopers that certainly was maintained by Mr. Walker, and to which I attribute his efficiency. I have frequently seen officers entirely led by their troopers; and I consider that the troopers ought not to know in which direction they are going out, for this reason, that at the stations they

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they make acquaintance with the blacks, principally through the women, and I believe they give them information which they ought not to possess, as to where the next movement of the force will be. That is one reason of their inefficiency, and I think the principal one.

16. Could you make any suggestions to the Committee, with the view of making the force more efficient? It struck me that the addition of a white force with them would be beneficial.

17. In what proportion? I think the same proportion would not be applicable to all districts. From what I know and have heard of portions of the Leichhardt District, where scrub so much abounds, I scarcely think a white force there would act well; but I would suggest that in my own neighbourhood, which I consider moderately quiet now, there should be a force of, say four white men and two blacks, as trackers, besides the officer. Such a force would be sufficient in moderately quiet neighbourhoods; but in outlying districts where scrub is so very general, through which it is exceedingly difficult, or I might say impossible for white men to follow the natives with sufficient rapidity, I would have a body of Native Police, or two, at disposal, so that in case of necessity they could follow the blacks through the scrubs.

18. You would vary the number of white men according to the nature of the country? Yes.

19. *By Mr. Jones*: In some districts you would have a force consisting chiefly of whites, and in others, a force consisting chiefly of blacks? Yes.

20. *By the Chairman*: You would place the whole force under one Commandant? Yes. My view is that the present disorganization of the force is owing principally to its being very badly officered.

21. From what cause? Because the officers have been appointed by persons from Sydney who know nothing about the force. I consider that the Commandant ought to have the entire appointment of his officers. If you wanted officers for a force consisting entirely of blacks, for the remote districts, you might then make a selection of officers for that purpose from the whole. I could go now and select perhaps six good officers; their sections are moderately efficient; whereas some of them are worse than useless.

22. That you should say from your own observation? Yes.

23. If it were possible to send up twenty troopers from Sydney, would you not place them immediately under the control of the Commandant, and allow him to dispose of them as he thought proper? Yes. I think everything should be left to the direction of the Commandant. I do not know what powers are vested in the Government Resident at Moreton Bay; but he appears to have the control of this force in some way. I do not think he ought to have anything to do with it. Brisbane is quite out of the way of its operations.

24. Where would you suggest that the head-quarters of the Native Police should be? The head-quarters should be as nearly central as possible. If otherwise, I would have it more to the northward, where the force is more wanted.

25. Where would that be? I think the Burnett would be as good a place as any; that is where it was in Mr. Walker's time; but now the squatters have gone out further to the north than they were then.

26. Would you approve of Maryborough? No; the only advantage would be, that it would be economical for the supply of the force; but that gain would be very inconsiderable. I think Gayndah a good place.

27. There would then be inland carriage? Yes, eighty miles, from Maryborough. The Native Police generally get their rations at stations, so that there would be very little carriage.

28. Do they get rations at stations without any difficulty? They have not latterly; many persons have objected to supply them on account of their inefficiency; and not only that, but the difficulty of getting the rations paid for under Mr. Walker's management.

29. The difficulty of getting paid has ceased, has it not? For supplying the present force we have always been paid. I allude to money that has been due.

30. *By Mr. Richardson*: In the districts you have spoken of, where the scrubs are dense, would you have any proportion of whites at all in the Police Force? No; what I meant was, to have no whites at all in such districts, where you can get efficient native troopers. I have known white men to attempt to follow the blacks in the scrubs, but it is almost impossible to do so. They are obliged to strip off their clothing, in order to get through rapidly.

31. You stated that, in your opinion, the present Commandant was not an efficient man? Yes.

32. Supposing any number of white troopers were sent up from Sydney to the scene of the recent outrages, do you think he could manage them? He would not control them as well as a better man. I consider that a man peculiarly adapted for the post may be one in five hundred.

33. Do you think the Commandant is likely to improve—he has not been long there? I believe he does his best. Perhaps he is above the average.

34. Do you think it necessary for the native troopers, when first enlisted, to undergo any training at head-quarters? No; I do not think there could be any benefit from that. I think a few recruits should be put with a force that is in training, and be sent out at once on an expedition. They could have no better training.

35. As I understand you, you do not think the present system a good one, where the scrubs are not so dense as to render it necessary that native troopers should be employed to pursue them? No; I suggest that there should be some white troopers in such cases. If a black force were well officered, I dare say it would do, and it would be economical; but the wild tribes require to be followed and a constant system of patrolling to be kept up, and, as a general rule, the black troopers are not suited to these duties in open country so well as white men. Their habits and dispositions are the reverse of energetic; and it is only under excitement that they work well. I consider that a white force would be much more diligent, and always willing to do some work.



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36. You said that one reason of the inefficiency of the present force is, that the native troopers tell the blacks where they are going? That is one element of inefficiency.

37. That could be easily obviated? If you had proper officers it could; but that is the difficulty. Some of the officers of the force are intemperate in their habits.

38. *By the Chairman*: That is generally known to be the case, is it not? Yes, that some of them are intemperate.

39. *By Mr. Richardson*: Would you enlist blacks as troopers at a distance from where they are to be employed? Decidedly.

40. Where do you think would be the best place to enlist them? I should think somewhere about the Murray. You could not have a better class of men than those Mr. Walker brought from that part of the country.

41. Do you attribute the circumstance of Mr. Walker having got good blacks to his good management? Perhaps so. That was partly the reason of his efficiency. I think he had tact in the management of the force.

42. Which you think the present Commandant does not possess? I have not seen so much of the present Commandant as I did of Mr. Walker; but from what I can gather, I think he has not as much tact.

43. *By Mr. Forster*: Do you consider that the presence of the Native Police Force, in its present condition, is useful or mischievous? I think it is mischievous.

44. Do you attribute the occurrence of a larger number of murders than usual to the inefficiency of the force? Yes.

45. Do you think that if there had been no force at all so many murders would have occurred? I do not think they would.

46. In speaking of the inefficiency of the force since Mr. Walker's dismissal, do you mean to infer that it was never inefficient under Mr. Walker himself? No, I do not say that; it was inefficient at times.

47. Do you not consider that it was in a very inefficient state long before his dismissal? Yes, decidedly.

48. Do you consider that his dismissal was a necessary act? Yes, an act of justice; because he was so intemperate.

49. May it not be, then, that the inefficiency to which Mr. Walker reduced the force has remained from that day to the present—that in some degree he was the cause of its present inefficiency? Yes, but from a different reason,—it was from his intemperate habits that his inefficiency arose.

50. You consider that his intemperance led to his becoming unfit for his post? Yes.

51. In what respect do you consider him to have been so far superior to other men in managing this force—was it from a natural power of command, or from his long familiarity with the natives? I cannot describe it better than by saying that he had more tact.

52. You mean that he understood the natives? He understood the native character, and what was necessary to make them act as a force.

53. I think you said a man of that kind it is very difficult to obtain? I think so.

54. Then, in fact, the inefficiency of the force, if it arises from a want of that kind, is exceedingly difficult to remedy? Yes; you not only require the Commandant to be good, but you require his subordinates to be so also.

55. Do you attribute any of the present inefficiency of the Native Police to the circumstance that the troopers have been selected from districts too near the scene of their employment? Yes; they have selected men where they ought not; they have taken them from the neighbourhoods where they are to act. I have stated that the force, in its present state, is worse than useless, and that is one reason. These men, being near their own tribes, are constantly running away, and are now amongst the blacks, who, through them, are acquainted with many of our tactics.

56. Amongst the secondary causes of inefficiency, you place the selection of troopers from tribes in the neighbourhood? Yes.

57. Do you not consider also, that another of the secondary causes is the constant intercourse carried on by the black troopers with the women of the tribes in the neighbourhood? I do not think that would be of much consequence if the officer did not tell his troopers where he was going.

58. You are aware that wherever the Native Police encamp they are always attended by a large number of the women of the tribes? They are in some instances; but I do not think it is general.

59. Where it does occur does it not inevitably lead to the dissemination of the intended movements of the force among the blacks? Yes. The troopers themselves should not know what was going to occur.

60. Then you think that if the officer in command exercised a proper discretion in keeping silence as to his intentions, no harm would result otherwise from this intercourse? Not so much harm.

61. Do you think the presence of these native women, and the intercourse thus going on, might not lead the troopers, in some cases, to neglect their duty—to show, in fact, a sort of favoritism to one tribe more than to another, when they were required to act? Yes, I think it would.

62. In that way it would act prejudicially? It does now, because the troopers are chosen from the immediate neighbourhood. If they were selected from the Murray, or any distant district, I do not think it would have so much effect. Again, if they were constantly on the move, as they should be in patrolling, they could have very little connection with the women of any particular tribe.

63. Do not the gins travel with them? They do; but they are said to belong to each trooper.

64. They are their wives, in a certain way? Yes. Each trooper is supposed to have a spare

- A. Brown, Esq.  
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- spare horse, and I have repeatedly seen the gins riding these spare horses. That is a thing the officers are to blame for.
65. Do you think it is for the public benefit that the wives of the troopers should accompany them in that way? I should imagine not.
66. It would be impossible, I presume, to prevent the troopers from having access to the native women? I think it would.
67. Have you observed at all that the officers since Mr. Walker's time have in their demeanour and in their intercourse with their men shown an improper familiarity—that they have treated them in a way that has led to their entertaining rather a feeling of contempt for their officers? I think they have.
68. Have you observed that very often to prevail amongst the young officers? I cannot say very often; instances have come under my notice.
69. It leads to insubordination among the troopers? Unquestionably.
70. In many cases, do you not think the troopers have had the management of their own movements—that they could do as they liked, because the officer felt himself unable to control them? In some cases that has been so. That arises from officers being sent up who know nothing of what should be done; and when once they have yielded themselves to be guided by their troopers, they cannot well regain their authority.
71. Do you not think that young men might be selected who would get over that first incapacity? I have seen instances of it.
72. Have not the cases you allude to been those, not of young men, but of men with regard to whom there is good reason to suspect that they were previously of intemperate habits—habits which, in fact, unfitted them for other offices, but which were overlooked when they were transferred to these remote localities? Yes.
73. So that the objection does not lie so much against young men, if properly selected, as against men who have been found unfit in other places, and have been put into these offices for which they are also unfit? The objection is against men that should not have been appointed—that I would not myself have appointed—from the evident failing they had.
74. You do not approve of the combination of blacks with whites, in general, as troopers? I think there should be rather more white troopers than blacks, in ordinary cases.
75. Do you not think a proportion of one white trooper to two blacks would be sufficient? I think a larger proportion of white men would be better.
76. The presence of white men would give the officer in command of each section greater confidence in doing his duty, and in controlling his force? I think it would, in a general way.
77. May not the want of control that you speak of on the part of young officers have arisen very often from a feeling of insecurity and a want of confidence in themselves, which would have some chance of being removed by the presence of white troopers? Exactly so. For that reason I recommend an almost entirely white force, where the country is tolerably quiet.
78. Has it come under your notice that a proposal was made some time ago that the Benches of Magistrates should have power to report as to the condition and proceedings of the Native Police, without any power of interference with them? I am aware the proposal was made.
79. Do you approve of it? I do.
80. You think it would have a beneficial effect? I do.
81. You would not give the magistrates any power of active interference? No; I think the direction of all active matters should be left entirely to the Commandant. If you have not confidence in him you can dismiss him.
82. Would you give the absolute appointment of his officers to the Commandant, or would you allow the Government to exercise a veto after he had appointed? He ought not to be swayed in any way by the Government.
83. Might not the entrusting this power solely to the Commandant lead to something like the same state of affairs as that which existed in Mr. Walker's time, so that serious dissatisfaction might arise long before a remedy could be applied? Of course there must be some resource in cases of that kind.
84. How would you propose to check the exercise of this extraordinary power on the part of the Commandant? In any case, it would not be until after the appointment was made that any officer would be found to be unfit. If the appointment were left in the hands of the Government, and the Commandant were to recommend an unfit man to the Government for appointment, the Government would of course, in blindness, approve of it—not being able to tell whether he were fit or unfit.
85. Have you not been aware that several appointments have been made of men who, from the very first, were obviously unfit for the office? Yes.
86. Such a thing might occur again, even under the Commandant, if he were a bad officer—he might appoint unfit men. Might not, in that case, a state of things arise that would lead to serious mischief before a remedy could be applied? Perhaps it would be wise to leave some power with the Government; but I would interfere as little as possible with the Commandant.
87. *By Mr. Buckley:* What course is adopted in the event of the troopers being obliged to pursue the blacks into the scrubs—are white men found to be of any service? They are not generally found serviceable; they are not quick enough.
88. How do the officers manage when the blacks are pursued into the scrub by the native troopers? They generally stay outside.
89. Would not that be the case with white troopers? I think they would get over it. I do not imagine they would ever be as well able to get through the scrub as blacks; but they would acquire a degree of celerity by practice.
90. If there were a very strong party of blacks to drive out of a scrub, what would be their position if the number of native troopers in each division were not sufficient to drive them out?

out? A few troopers could drive out almost any number. I should not be at all afraid of eight men attempting to drive out a hundred blacks.

91. Have you never heard of two or three hundred being in a scrub? There are seldom more than two hundred fighting men together.

92. Do you think eight men would be sufficient to drive out that number? Quite.

93. *By Mr. Jones:* Are black troopers difficult to manage, in your opinion, generally? No, I think not, provided they are managed judiciously from the commencement.

94. What is necessary to their judicious management? They never should be allowed to be idle for any time together. A degree of discipline should also be insisted on—particularly with regard to cleanliness, and the proper condition of their arms and accoutrements.

95. You think it is difficult to get officers to manage the blacks properly? That is one of the difficulties. You require sixteen or eighteen officers, and out of these you might get six or eight good ones.

96. From your knowledge and experience of the Native Police Force, you think it is difficult to obtain the services of men who are competent, and have a natural aptitude for managing blacks? I judge that it is difficult from the late appointments.

97. In the majority of cases you think the persons appointed are not well qualified? That is my impression.

98. And in consequence of that the force has been inefficient, and, in some cases, actually mischievous? Yes.

99. Looking at the difficulty of getting competent men, as proved by the selections already made, do you not think some change in the composition of the force is shown to be necessary? I do.

100. Do you believe that white men are more easily managed, by the average class of officers, than black troopers? I think they are.

101. You think there are special requisites, not often found in men, to enable them to command black troopers? Yes.

102. It is only such men as Mr. Walker, men of the same stamp, that are likely to be successful in their management? Do you allude to the Commandant—I thought you were also speaking of the junior officers?

103. I speak of the officers generally,—are you not led, by the experience you have acquired of the management of the Native Police, to believe that it is very difficult to find men with these special requisites? I think it is quite possible to find them if you pay them well enough.

104. Can you account for the circumstance that they have not been found up to this time? I do not think the Government have taken sufficient trouble in selecting proper men.

105. Do you think any guarantee can be taken that the Government will act differently in future—that what has been is not likely to be again? I think it is very likely to again occur. I have no confidence in the appointments by the Government.

106. Do you believe that if the character of the force were changed to a certain extent,—that is to say, if a certain proportion of white men were combined with it,—it would be more easy of management than it is as a purely native force? I have expressed my opinions before on that subject,—that in some districts an entirely native force would be advisable, and in quieter districts, where a patrol only would be possibly necessary, that nearly all white men should be employed.

107. But the point on which I wish your opinion is, whether, if a change were made in the composition of the force—if there were an infusion, more or less, of white men—it would be likely to be better managed than a purely native force? It would.

108. Do you not think that even in the more remote districts, where the scrub abounds, it would exercise a beneficial influence on the character and usefulness of the force if there were a small proportion of white men, so as to make the force more manageable, and to give the officer more confidence in acting? In places where they are likely to be required, I would suggest that the force should be composed entirely of blacks, good officers being appointed to command them, for the sole purpose of pursuing the natives through the scrubs; and where scrubs do not abound, I would have a chiefly white force, because I consider white men would display more enterprise. One of the objections I have is, that some of the officers permit what are called corrobories—the gathering together of blacks from all directions, north, south, east and west, to one spot. That has a very baneful effect. The blacks whom we employ as shepherds and stockmen, and who are very useful to us and very beneficial to the country, are obliged to attend these meetings, on pain of excommunication, or something of the kind. I have known many blacks who did not wish to go, but they have told me they were obliged to do so. These corrobories I have frequently wished the officer of Native Police to disperse; but he would merely ride among them and send them away a few miles, without seeing that every tribe went to its own neighbourhood. I attribute many murders and outrages to these corrobories.

109. You do not think any good would arise by sending any white force to the frontier scrub districts? I would have one or two sections of a purely native force at the disposal of the Commandant; but in some districts, within a few miles, there might be a station where a combination of white men and black would be judicious.

110. I understood you that you would keep a sort of special corps for scrub service? Exactly. I would place both white and black men at the disposal of the Commandant, and allow him to distribute them.

111. With regard to those divisions intended for scrub country, you would make it a *sine qua non* that the officer in charge of each should be really a competent man? Yes; not because it is scrub country, but because it is a force of blacks.

112. Have you had any opportunity of observing the conduct of the black troopers in their encounters with the native tribes, as to whether they needlessly destroy life? I think not. My experience is that they do not.

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113. Do you think they are under the control of their officers in these encounters? Yes, moderately so. There are some instances in which they are not; but that I attribute to the inefficiency of the officers. I think if they are well officered, and the officer acts as he should, they would be under control.
114. Do you think they are likely to be as much under control when actually engaged in encounters as a white force would? Not quite.
115. And, therefore, there is more risk of their taking life unnecessarily than there would be with a white force, or a force containing a large proportion of white men? Yes, I think there is.
116. *By Mr. Taylor*: If there were more white men than there are at present, would they require the same number of officers? Yes, I think so, for this reason, that there must be an officer to each section. The sections are small. With regard to the selection of officers, I would suggest that you would be more likely to find the description of officers you require in the way of sergeants—in that rank in life.
117. *By the Chairman*: Would you approve of a white trooper being attached to a body of native troopers to look after the saddlery; are you aware that the saddlery is very much neglected? I think very likely it is.
118. Do you think one white man to each section of black troopers would be sufficient to look after the saddlery? I think one white man to twenty blacks ought to be sufficient for that purpose, or he might look after forty.
119. I mean that this man should be a trooper, but that he should also see that the native troopers take care of their saddlery? Unless that saddler were a good trooper, I would rather pay a saddler to attend to the whole force.
120. You do not approve of Brisbane as head-quarters? I do not.
121. On account of its not being central? On account of its not being central.
122. Are you prepared to point out to the Committee what would be the best spot? If Brisbane does not require protection from the force still, I would have it even more north than Gayudah. I think if you have a seaport town, Gladstone would be the best place.
123. Is not Gladstone central? It is very central now. There are always teams going in and out thence in every direction.
124. Under all the circumstances within your knowledge, would you consider that sending up from twenty to twenty-five troopers from Sydney to the scene of the murders would be beneficial? Yes.
125. Is that your decided opinion? It is.
126. Have you allowed the blacks in at your station? Yes.
127. Always? Always.
128. Have you suffered from them? I have had no person killed on my station, but I have had them injured.
129. Are the blacks generally allowed in, in your part of the country? Yes. There is scarcely any station in my neighbourhood where they are not allowed in. I speak of the station where we are living; but I am forming a station where I would never think of allowing them in.
130. *By Mr. Richardson*: Do you think it desirable they should be allowed in? I think so, where they are quiet.
131. Can you gather anything of what is going on amongst the tribes, or of their intentions, from the blacks who come into the stations? Very rarely.
132. How would you enlist the troopers? I think it most essential that some power of control should be possessed by the officer over the men, and in the enlistment of the natives I would advise the adoption of regulations very similar to martial law. At present the troopers leave with impunity. We appear to have no power of punishing. In the case of European troopers also, a desertion by them I would treat, or rather have the power of treating, with severe punishment.

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W. E. Plunkett, Esq., Secretary to the Crown Law Officers, called in and examined:—

- W. E. Plunkett, Esq.  
15 July, 1858.
1. *By the Chairman*: Do you produce some papers sent to the Attorney General by Mr. Commissioner Wiseman, relative to the Murders on the Dawson by the Aborigines? I do. There are some other papers I have brought also, as likely to afford the Committee information. There is a Report from the Government Resident at Brisbane, forwarding a communication from Mr. Commissioner Wiseman. There are also some letters from Mr. Frederick Walker, the late Commandant of the Native Police, complaining of the murder of an aboriginal named Tahiti; and also some papers relating to the murder of the Frazer family at Hornet Bank. I have brought the whole of the papers relative to the murders in the Northern Districts. [*The witness produced the papers referred to.*]

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William Henry Gaden, Esq., called in and examined:—

- W. H. Gaden, Esq.  
15 July, 1858.
1. *By the Chairman*: You are a squatter? I am.  
2. Where do you live? On the Fitz Roy River.  
3. How far from Rockhampton? Twenty-five miles.  
4. Did you form your station yourself? No; I bought it from Mr. Elliott last year.  
5. How long have you been there? Since January last.  
6. Have you had many opportunities of seeing the blacks in that part of the country? Not a great deal there, but I have seen something of them in other parts.  
7. Where? In the Burnett and Wide Bay districts, and out further to the north.  
8. How long have you been in the Northern Districts? Three or four years.

9.



9. During that time have you seen much of the working of the Native Police? Yes. I have been out with them sometimes, when I have had occasion to call for their assistance. W. H. Gaden.  
Esq.
10. What is your opinion of the force at the present time? It is not an efficient force. In many cases the officers are not efficient, and a great number of the men are selected from the country in the immediate neighbourhood, and therefore they have every facility of leaving the force, and going to their own tribes again on the slightest provocation. 15 July, 1868.
11. What remedy would you propose? To get blacks from the southward.
12. You think that practicable? Yes.
13. In what way would you carry it out? I would send one of the experienced officers with means for getting them. He would require to take horses, probably, and military uniforms. I think an experienced man, who knows the ways of the blacks, would get any number.
14. To what district would you send him? About the lower part of the Murray and Murrumbidgee. The men who came from there originally were the best men they have had. There are a few of them in the force now, and they are very good men.
15. Did you know the force under Mr. Walker? No, I did not.
16. Mr. Walker had been superseded previous to your arrival in the Northern Districts? Yes.
17. Do you think it advisable to introduce any white troopers amongst the native troopers? I do not think so.
18. Under no circumstances? Under no circumstances whatever. I think they would be quite useless; the sergeant they have with them is quite sufficient.
19. What sergeant? At each police station there is one white sergeant, merely to look after the saddlery, and see that they keep their accoutrements in order.
20. Is that the case now? Yes; there is a white sergeant attached to each police camp.
21. How many men does a camp consist of? The men are not stationed at the camp, but the sergeant is resident there; and the different sections of the police are backward and forward—it is always a calling place.
22. Are you aware how many camps there are? I am not, for the police have been moved about so much lately, on account of the Dawson murders.
23. Under no circumstances do you think it advisable to introduce white troopers? Decidedly not.
24. Not even in the open country? Not even in the open country. I think black troopers, properly disciplined, are far preferable.
25. Do you think any jealousy would exist on the part of the black troopers if white men were joined with them? I do not think they would get on together at all; and, moreover, the white men could not follow the blacks; and I do not think the men themselves would agree: constantly knocking about in all weathers, they would get tired of it, and would always be quarrelling among themselves.
26. Could you suggest to the Committee the best site for the head-quarters of the Native Police? I do not think I could exactly, for I have been in the outside districts lately, and I do not know the nature of the country about Brisbane and Wide Bay.
27. Do you allow the blacks in at your station? I do not.
28. Are they allowed upon any of the neighbouring stations? Mr. Archer allows them in; he is the only one.
29. Do you think it objectionable? I do; I should never allow them in. Where we are now is a new station, and it is only within the last few months that there have been any stations outside of us.
30. What are your reasons for not allowing the blacks in? They are constantly backwards and forwards about the run; they collect in numbers, and we require to keep a strict watch, to know whether they will be up to mischief or not. They might take us by surprise at any time.
31. Do you think the present Native Police Force a mischievous force? No.
32. Do you think it tends to the protection of life and property? Yes, it does.
33. Have you confidence in the present police force? I have; but I think it might be more efficiently managed.
34. Do you know the present Commandant? Yes.
35. Do you think him an efficient Commandant? I do not think he has had a fair trial yet; nor has he had a fair trial with the men, having been obliged to get recruits from the immediate neighbourhood where the blacks are troublesome.
36. Do you know the officers? I know some of them.
37. What do you think of the officers generally? Most of them are very inefficient.
38. From what cause? From not having any idea of the bush, or of the management of blacks. A great number of them had not been in the bush before their appointment.
39. They are what we vulgarly call "new chums"? Yes.
40. Would you recommend that the Commandant should have the sole power of appointing his officers? Yes; and in that case he would be answerable for their conduct. He has better opportunities than any one else of selecting men who would be efficient, travelling so much about the country as he does.
41. You think he would be more apt to select good officers for his own credit? Yes. Most of them he would know before he gave them appointments; he would know their characters and abilities.
42. *By Mr. Richardson:* Where would you select the officers from? From different parts of the country. There are great numbers of persons who are, or have been, in situations as superintendents or managers of stations, possessing the necessary experience, who would join the force if they had the opportunity.
43. Do you think that men from Sydney, properly disciplined, would be useful in the northern districts? I do not think they would in the outside districts. They have no idea of the bush, and do not know how to manage the blacks.
44. They might be men naturally adapted for the bush, who would soon acquire that? You might

W. H. Gaden, Esq., might get one or two out of half a dozen who would, but the others would not. If you put an officer over the native troopers who is not efficient they soon find that out, and they have not the same respect for him as for another.

15 July, 1858.

45. *By Mr. Cribb*: Do you think that, acting under officers of that description, they would be more likely to have less regard for the lives of the wild blacks when engaged against them? No; but, under efficient officers, they would know their duty better; they would patrol more; and then the police would be in much better discipline, and, consequently, they would prevent murders and robberies.

46. You do not consider the present Native Police in an efficient state—they are disorganized, to a certain extent? Yes. They have been moved about very much lately, and they are constantly bolting, and men who have deserted have been taken up again in case of necessity.

47. Do you think officers from the interior, acquainted with the bush, would be able to make these same troopers efficient? I think they will require fresh troopers. Those taken from districts so near where they are to do their work will be constantly running away.

48. Supposing that an efficient corps of Native Police could be obtained ultimately, do you not think it would be best to send a body of white troopers from Sydney at once to meet the present emergency? No; if you have white troopers at all, I think more murders would be committed. When they have committed murders the blacks keep close to the scrubs, and, if once they get into them, the white troopers would never see them again. If they caught them on the open country, or plains, they might do something; but it is not often the blacks are to be caught so.

49. What steps would you propose to take now to render the Native Police efficient? By changing a number of the officers, and giving the Commandant full power to appoint his officers.

50. *By Mr. Jones*: Have you ever known the Native Police to be in an efficient state? I did not know Mr. Walker; but I believe they were, under him, a most efficient force.

51. Within your own experience, have you known any of them to be in an efficient state? Yes. I was at Mr. Bligh's station three years ago, and he had a section of men from the Murrumbidgee and Murray, who were quite efficient. The different sections of men who came from the southward are, I believe, efficient now.

52. These men you speak of were good men, and Mr. Bligh, being a competent officer, kept them in a good state of discipline? Yes; he was as good an officer as I have seen.

53. Have you known any other sections to be in an efficient state besides Mr. Bligh's? No, none excepting that.

54. How many sections of Native Police have you been acquainted with, or come in contact with, during your experience in the Northern Districts at different times? Eight or nine, or perhaps ten.

55. Out of that number you have only found this one section which you would consider in an efficient state? Yes.

56. To what do you attribute the inefficiency of the other sections? To different reasons. In some, the officers are not efficient, and in others the men are not. The greater number of the men are from the Burnett and Wide Bay Districts—quite new men—and they never can keep them long enough to become efficient troopers.

57. Supposing we had men from more remote districts, such as the Murray and Murrumbidgee, and the men so obtained were placed under the charge of the officers you have seen in command of other sections, do you think they would be maintained in good discipline? In some cases they would.

58. Of the officers you have known, what proportion do you think were men qualified to command black troopers? About one-half, I think.

59. You do not think it would be very difficult to obtain men qualified to command black troopers? No. If the Commandant had power to appoint, he would get efficient men. There are a great number of men in the bush who are acquainted with the customs of the blacks, and with bush life, and those are the principal qualifications required.

60. Then, you think that if the troopers were obtained from remote districts, and efficient officers were appointed to command them by the Commandant, a black force would be more efficient than a white force, owing to the greater facility with which they could follow the natives after they had committed outrages? Yes.

61. Do you not think that a mixture of white men, in the proportion of one white to two black, or one to three, would give the officers more control over their sections? I do not think it would. I think the black troopers require to be kept distinct.

62. You would not advise or recommend any admixture of whites with blacks? None whatever, excepting the camp sergeant.

63. *By Mr. Buckley*: Would the admixture of whites be likely to create discontent among the black troopers? I think it would. They would not agree at all. When black men and white are brought together they never do agree, even on station work.

64. It would do more harm than good, you think? I think it would. I would rather be without them.

65. Would a few white troopers be of any use in the scrub? None whatever.

66. Do the officers accompany the black troopers on these occasions? I do not think they enter the scrub. The blacks are so quick that it is quite impossible for white men to follow them.

67. Who takes care of the horses when the troopers are in pursuit in the scrubs? Very often the officer and one of the troopers.

68. *By Mr. Forster*: You seem to think it essential that the officers should have previous acquaintance with the bush—do you mean by that that they should be squatters? They should be men who have been employed in the bush, and have a good idea of it.

69. Are there many men of that class to be got? I think so.

70. Are not the best men of that class generally found at some occupation more profitable than an appointment in the Native Police? I do not think so. I have known several who would have given up situations to have gone into the police. W. H. Gaden,  
Esq.
71. Persons employed by squatters? Yes. When I have been speaking to them they have expressed a wish to get into the force. 15 July, 1858.
72. How do these gentlemen you speak of manage when they first go into the bush—they have to learn? Yes; but they are not then placed in the same position as an officer of Native Police.
73. Do you think there is anything in the duties of the Native Police that may not be acquired in a few months by a young man who is determined to do his duty? No; but when he is first put in command of a section of Native Police, if he has not a proper method of managing them, the men do not respect him; and it is with difficulty, if at all, that he can afterwards regain his authority.
74. Admitting that it is desirable that men of the kind you speak of should be appointed, do you think it possible to fill all the offices with them? I think so, from different parts of the country.
75. *By Mr. Richardson:* Do you not think that some men would become as good bushmen in a few months as others in as many years? Decidedly.
76. Would not that be good reason for not confining the choice of officers to bushmen? If you were to send young men into the bush for some months before putting them in command of sections, they might then be qualified.
77. Have you not known some men who have lived for years in the bush who never became good bushmen? Yes; but they would get into the way of bush life.
78. What style of men would those be that you recommend—educated men? Yes; superintendents, and young men who go into the bush merely for colonial experience, getting small salaries from the squatters who employ them.
79. You think many of these persons are inclined to go into the Native Police? I think so.
80. *By the Chairman:* Are the Native Police force generally well received at the different stations? Generally they are.
81. Have they any difficulty in obtaining rations? At some of the stations they have. A short time back they had great difficulty, on account of the debts not paid by Mr. Walker.
82. Is that difficulty removed now? Yes, I think it is.
83. But at some of the stations you say they are still not well received? Yes.
84. Why is that? It is hard to be accounted for; but at all stations where there is any need for them they are well received. At some stations, where they are not required—where the country is tolerably quiet—they are thought to be an annoyance, knocking about the place; and some object to them from a spirit of opposition.
85. Are you aware whether the troopers are under any agreement when enlisted in the Native Police Force? Those from the southward were.
86. But they are not at present? Not at present. Those they have enlisted lately have not been under agreement, for they have been obliged to get recruits wherever they could; they were very short-handed on the Dawson.
87. Are you aware whether the native troopers are in the habit of absconding in a body? In some instances they have done so.
88. Could you suggest any remedy for that? No, I think not, excepting getting them from the southward, or at too great distance for them to go back; and any that did abscond I should treat as deserters, and shoot them.
89. Do you think, if an officer going from the northward to the southward, for the purpose of enlisting troopers, were to mention that to the natives there, that they would, under those circumstances, enlist—if told they would be shot? I do not think they would. The idea of being shot would frighten them. They would not have sufficient sense to understand the meaning of it, and would suppose it would be done for some trivial offence, or that you wanted to get them away for the purpose of shooting them. I think they should be enlisted for a certain number of years; and perhaps there would be some intelligent men found who could explain to the others that it was for a certain period, and that then, if they wished, they were to be carried back to their own country.
90. You think that could be effectually carried out under agreement? Yes.
91. Are the Native Police horses generally in good condition—serviceable? I do not think they have enough horses.
92. Do you know how many horses they have—has each trooper a spare horse? No.
93. Have you ever seen gins riding on the horses, in company with the troopers? I have.
94. Is that usual? It is generally the case when the section is moving some distance. Most of the troopers now have gins of their own; and if they are moving from the Burnett to the Dawson, for instance, they take their gins with them; but if they are going out on duty they do not, generally.
95. To whom do the horses they ride on belong? I believe they are the police horses.

FRIDAY, 16 JULY, 1858.

**Present:—**MR. HODGSON,  
MR. CRIBB,MR. BUCKLEY,  
MR. TAYLOR.

ARTHUR HODGSON, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Daniel Connor, Esq., examined:—

D. Connor,  
Esq.

16 July, 1858.

1. *By the Chairman*: You reside in the Northern Districts? Yes.
2. In what part? On the Fitz Roy River.
3. What is the name of your station? Princhester.
4. Which is the nearest seaport town? Rockhampton.
5. Rockhampton is your shipping port? Yes.
6. Did you form that station yourself? Yes.
7. How long ago? About eight months ago.
8. Have you been long resident in the Northern Districts? Yes, I have been out four years.
9. In what other district? The Dawson.
10. I suppose you have had constant opportunities of noticing the conduct of the Native Police Force? Yes.
11. What is your opinion of that force? I think at present it is inefficient.
12. From what cause? There are not sufficient men, and most of those raw recruits.
13. Are you aware of the number of men the force is at present composed of? About forty.
14. Are there only forty troopers at the present time? That is about the number.
15. Do you know why the numbers are so few? On account of desertions—owing, in a great measure, to the men having been enlisted from the neighbouring districts. A section deserted a very short time ago, from the Fitz Roy River, under Mr. Wheeler.
16. He is a Lieutenant of Native Police? Yes.
17. Do you know where they were enlisted? On the Clarence.
18. Do you know the cause of their desertion? No.
19. Have any of them been taken? I think not.
20. Where do you imagine they have gone to? Back to the Clarence.
21. Did they take their arms and accoutrements? No.
22. Nor their clothing? Nothing.
23. Could you offer any suggestion to the Committee as to the best mode of increasing the numbers of the Native Police Force, and rendering it more efficient? I think an efficient officer should be sent down to the southward to enrol men for the Native Police. That would be the best place for recruiting.
24. Do you think he would experience any difficulty in enlisting them? I think not.
25. Would you recommend that horses should be sent? Decidedly, and clothes. On the Lower Balonne, also, I think you might get men, and on the Macintyre.
26. Do you know any officer of Native Police who would be better fitted for such an expedition than the rest? Yes; I think Mr. Murray is best suited for it, or Mr. Bligh.
27. Do you know the present Commandant? Very slightly.
28. Do you know whether he is an efficient officer, fit to undertake the duties of Commandant? I cannot say. I have not seen much of him. I should think he is. He is a very active. He has had great difficulties to encounter since he has been in command of the force. It was very inefficient when he took the command, and he has been laboring under great difficulties ever since: he has not had a fair chance.
29. Do you think that if he has a fair chance he is likely to perform the duties satisfactorily? I do.
30. Would you recommend any mixture of white men with the native force? I should not, indeed.
31. For what reasons? Because the natives will not work with Europeans.
32. From a feeling of jealousy? Yes.
33. Do you know the wages paid to the black troopers? Five-pence a day.
34. Do you think that sufficient? No, I do not.
35. What amount would you think sufficient? I should think about a shilling a day.
36. Do you not imagine that the low wage paid to the troopers tends materially to their deserting? No, I think not.
37. Do they care for their wages? Yes, they do.
38. Upon what grounds should you recommend an increase of wages? I think they would be more satisfied if they could get what they wanted in the shape of extra clothes, or anything else which one shilling a day would give them: five-pence a day is not sufficient to keep them in clothing. I have known the officers to be obliged to pay a great deal for them out of their own pockets.
39. Do you imagine that raising the wages of the troopers would make the force more efficient? I think so, decidedly.
40. You are decidedly opposed to any admixture of white troopers? Yes.
41. Not even one or two to each section? Certainly not.
42. Are you aware whether any white troopers are now attached to the Native Police? None.
43. No white sergeants? There are white sergeants.
44. How many do you think? There is one wherever there is a force stationed.
45. Do you not approve of that? Yes. A person is required to take charge of the barracks in the officer's absence.
46. Even in the open country, would you not approve of white police? Where is there any open country? It is all cut up with scrub to the northward.
47. You are aware of the murders on the Dawson lately? Yes.



48. Could you suggest to the Committee any means of putting a stop to these murders? Only by raising a more efficient force of native troopers. D. Connor,  
Esq.
49. Increasing the force? Increasing the force, and increasing the number of horses as well. I think one horse to each man is not sufficient to do the work. 16 July, 1868.
50. Do you think every trooper ought to have a spare horse? I think so.
51. Do you think that the Native Police, if fully reorganized, are calculated to protect life and property in the northern districts? Yes, I think so.
52. You still think that? Yes.
53. In spite of their inefficiency? In spite of their inefficiency at present.
54. I mean, is the force in its present state calculated to protect life and property? No, I think it is not, at present.
55. Do you consider the present force a mischievous force? Yes, rather.
56. That is to say, from its inefficiency you consider the present force mischievous? Yes. All the men have been recruited from the neighbouring districts, which is a great disadvantage. That is the reason there have been so many desertions.
57. Even the distance of the Clarence River is not found to act as a preventive to desertion? No.
58. If the Native Police Force could be made efficient would you consider it a measure of humanity? I do think so.
59. That it would suppress outrages, both on the part of the blacks and whites? Yes.
60. Could you suggest to the Committee the best place for the head-quarters of the Native Police—the most central position? On the borders of the Dawson and Burnett districts, I should think, would be the most convenient spot.
61. Could you mention the name of the place? Somewhere on the Auburn. Mr. Pigott's station is a very central position.
62. How far is that from water carriage? About a hundred and eighty miles, I think; I am not quite certain of the distance.
63. Would not that be a great drawback to head-quarters? I do not see that it would.
64. Do you allow the blacks in at your station? No.
65. Have you ever done so? Yes.
66. Why did you put a stop to it? Because they killed a black boy of mine.
67. Are they allowed in, in your neighbourhood? Yes, at Mr. Archer's run.
68. On grounds of insecurity you do not allow the blacks in now? Yes.
69. But Mr. Archer allows them in, and does not suffer inconvenience? He suffers a little. They steal sheep, and kill cattle sometimes; but they have not committed any murders there.
70. Are the Native Police well received at the different stations? Very well on the Fitz Roy; they have not been well received on the Dawson, I understand.
71. Do they experience any difficulty in getting rations? None whatever.
72. Have the settlers any difficulty in getting paid for these rations? No; with the exception of the former accounts due by Mr. Walker.
73. Did you know the force under Mr. Walker? Yes.
74. Did you consider it then efficient? Yes, very efficient.
75. How do you account for the change? Through Mr. Walker's misconduct he was dismissed. Then Mr. Marshall took the command. He had not the command very long before the Government disbanded most of the troopers; and I think that was the cause of the inefficiency of the Native Police Force.
76. Mr. Marshall does not now belong to the force? No. I do not think there could have been a more efficient force than it was under Mr. Walker.
77. Do the troopers get well fed? Yes—that is, the quality of the rations is good.
78. The rations are sufficient? Hardly sufficient.
79. Do you know what the ration for each man is? Yes,—1lb. of flour, 2lbs. meat,  $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. tea,  $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. sugar, half a fig of tobacco, and  $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. soap, a day.
80. They obtain clothing from the Government? Yes.
81. When you spoke of their pay not being sufficient to provide them with clothing, to what clothing did you allude? Blankets and shirts.
82. Are not those provided by the Government? I think not. The clothing they get I do not think is sufficient.
83. *By Mr. Cribb*: Have you any grounds for supposing troopers could be obtained from the south? I think Mr. Walker had no difficulty in enlisting men when he brought them out first.
84. Supposing they could not be obtained from the south, would you recommend then a mixture of white and black men? No, I should not. I do not think Europeans would work at all with the natives. I should either have a white force entirely, or a Native Police Force.
85. A white Police Force with one or two blacks as trackers? Yes. At the same time I do not think they would be of any use in keeping the blacks in check.
86. In case of outrage now, the whites frequently meet together and give chase to the blacks, do they not? I do not know that they do, I am sure. It is a well known fact that the whites have never been able to follow the blacks through the scrubs. Even the officers of the Native Police, when out with their men, always stop outside, or in the vicinity.
87. If blacks could not be obtained for the police from the southward, to what other quarter would you go for them? They might be recruited on the Macintyre, the Balonne, the Barwan, and other rivers in that locality.
88. Would there not be the same objection to them as to those from the Clarence? No. I have never heard an instance of any of them from that quarter bolting yet. There were some very fine men disbanded when Mr. Marshall had command, obtained from the Macintyre and Balonne, some of the best men in the force.
89. You say you do not allow the blacks to come on your station—what steps do you take to prevent them? I go out after them.

- D. Connor, Esq.  
 16 July, 1868.
90. If you see a number of blacks coming on the station you immediately drive them off? Yes.
91. *By Mr. Buckley*: What became of all these men that were disbanded? They went back to their own country on the Macintyre and Balonne.
92. Did any of them go to the Murrumbidgee? Some of them were Murrumbidgee blacks, and worked their way back to that district.
93. Are there any Murrumbidgee blacks on the Macintyre? I do not know; I think they have all worked down.
94. *By Mr. Taylor*: You think all that is required to make the Native Police efficient is merely to supply more troopers and more horses? I think so.
95. Do you think black troopers are likely to commit more murders than are necessary when they come in contact with the wild blacks? I am not aware that they do.
96. Do you not think they would be checked in their disposition to destroy life if there were a few Europeans with them? No, I do not think they would; because they would never see the whites when once they got into the scrub.
97. *By Mr. Buckley*: Have you ever been in company with the Native Police when in pursuit of wild blacks? Yes; on several occasions.
98. Are the wild blacks generally very frightened of them? Yes; but they show fight very often.
99. Generally speaking, so far as your observation went, were the men under pretty good command? Yes, very good. Still, I think they should be amenable to some military law. I think they should be punished for disobedience, by flogging, or something of that kind.
100. Is any punishment now inflicted for desertion? No; I have never heard of it.
101. There is no summary mode of punishing them on the spot? I think not.
102. *By Mr. Taylor*: Would not the Commandant require some white force to enable him to carry out any system of punishment: do you think the black troopers themselves would carry it out under his orders? Yes; they always used to do it under Mr. Walker. He used to flog them when he was Commandant, and I do not think there could have been a more efficient force than they were under Mr. Walker.
103. *By the Chairman*: Do you think the wild blacks have the same fear of the Native Police Force now as they had when it was under Mr. Walker? Yes, I think so.
104. Still the same fear exists? Still the same fear exists.
105. Do you know many of the officers? Yes, I know several.
106. Are they generally efficient? There are some that are not efficient.
107. From what cause? Inexperience in the bush, and in the management of the blacks.
108. Would you recommend that the Commandant should have the sole power of appointing his subordinate officers? I think he should.
109. You think that would work well? I think it would work much better than the Government appointing men from Sydney who are not adapted for the situation.
110. Is it not the fact that many "new chums" are sent to the northern districts to undertake the duties of the Native Police? Yes; there are several.
111. Are those the appointments to which you particularly allude as being inefficient? Yes.
112. Do you think it possible the Commandant might select his officers in the northern districts? I think so.
113. Are you aware what is the pay of an officer of Native Police? £220 a-year, I believe.
114. Do you consider that sufficient? No, I should think it is not, not to get good men—men who are adapted for the work, in the way before described. Good men could do much better, I think, selected.
115. Do the Government find them horses? No, I think not.
116. Nor rations? I believe they get rations.
117. Could you suggest any steps to be immediately taken with regard to these Dawson murders? I do not see what immediate steps could be taken very well.
118. Would you approve of twenty white troopers being sent up immediately, to be placed at the disposal of the Commandant? I suppose there would be no harm in trying them.
119. But you evidently do not approve of it? I do not approve of white men being employed there at all.
120. Are there not parts of the country free from scrub in the northern districts? Yes; but the blacks always make to the scrubs. You never find them in the open country.
121. Do they never commit depredations in the open country? Yes; but they are off again to the scrub before anybody knows anything about it—perhaps forty or fifty miles away.
122. Do you not think a constant patrol would tend to decrease these outrages? Yes, I think so.
123. Might not that patrol be carried on by white troopers? Yes, it might.
124. Have you ever given the subject your serious consideration, as to the mixture of white men with the Native Force? No, I have not.
125. But you are prejudiced against their employment? Yes. I have seen white people go out, and know what they are. Whites never could quell the disturbances on the Dawson.
126. What white men do you allude to? Stockmen and others.
127. Do you not think that if twenty white troopers were sent up from Sydney to the headquarters of the Commandant, they might at the present time materially tend to decrease the number of outrages in the Northern Districts? I think they might.
128. *By Mr. Taylor*: The very presence of a force of twenty men would tend to awe these wild blacks? No, I think not. The Dawson country is very difficult to travel over; it is cut up with scrubs in every direction; the stations are surrounded by scrubs; the blacks may commit a murder, go into the scrub, and be off some hundreds of miles, scarcely coming out into the open country at all.
129. *By the Chairman*: Have you any suggestion to make as to the saddles used by the  
 Native

- Native Police? I do not think they are large enough, in the first place, and they are too narrow in the tree; that is the reason the horses always get sore backs. D. Connor,  
Esq.
130. Are sore backs very general among the police horses? Yes, very. There is not a horse in the police that has not a sore back; it is owing to bad saddles, and their not being properly stuffed; the men are not able to stuff them. 16 July, 1858.
131. Are there no saddles attached to the forec? No.
132. *By Mr. Cribb*: Have they regular stockmen's saddles? No; a sort of military saddle, very badly made, and very narrow in the tree.
133. *By the Chairman*: Saddles with wings behind? No; some of them have not that.
134. You think an improvement might be made in the saddles provided for the Native Police? Yes, a great improvement; I do not think they could have worse saddles than they are supplied with at present.
135. Are the saddles generally taken care of? No, they are not; it is impossible to get black boys to keep saddles in order.
136. Upon these grounds would you not think it necessary that a white sergeant should be appointed to each section? I think it necessary one white sergeant should be appointed to every section.
137. *By Mr. Cribb*: Besides the Commanding Officer? Yes.
138. *By Mr. Taylor*: I think you have said already that there was one white sergeant to each section? Yes.
139. *By the Chairman*: Have you any other suggestions to offer to the Committee? I beg to call the attention of the Committee to the state of the McIntyre Districts some years ago, which have been rendered peaceable by the efficiency of the Native Police Force under Mr. Walker, and the whole of the northern frontier could be made equally so if an efficient officer was selected to proceed to the southward to obtain recruits, taking horses and clothing with him. By adopting this course the whole of the blacks could be brought into subjection, and few, if any, lives sacrificed. No time should be lost, as the aborigines are becoming more bold every day, and the occupation of the country more difficult to retain.

John Miller, Esq., called in and examined:—

1. *By the Chairman*: I believe you have prepared a written statement of your views respecting the Native Police, for the information of this Committee? Yes: it contains my opinion; but with respect to the calculations at the end, as they were done hastily, I cannot vouch for their strict correctness. (*The witness handed in the same. Vide Appendix A. The document was read.*) John Miller,  
Esq.
2. You consider the present Native Police Force inefficient? I do. 16 July, 1858.
3. Have you had many opportunities of seeing the force? Yes, both at Weranga and Dulacca.
4. Where is Dulacca? Adjoining Mr. Ferrett's station, Waltami, and Gordon and Coxen's.
5. In what district? Darling Downs. It is on a creek running into the Dogwood.
6. Have the blacks annoyed you at all? Never. They have never molested me in any way. There were a number of the Dawson blacks, I am led to believe, on my station when I came away. They can come from the Dawson to Dulacca in about fifty or sixty miles.
7. Do you know the present Commandant of the Native Police? I am not particularly acquainted with him. He stopped a couple of nights at Weranga, when he came up first, but he was not Commandant then: that is the only acquaintance I have of him.
8. Do you know whether he is an efficient officer? I could not say. The station at Wandai Gumbal, under Mr. Francis Nicol, was only eighteen miles from Dulacca, so that I had a good opportunity of knowing the Native Police.
9. Did you know the Native Police when under Mr. Walker? Yes; they used to stop always at Weranga.
10. Were they then efficient? Yes, very efficient.
11. To what cause do you attribute their present inefficiency? Various causes. In the first place, most of the old Murray blacks were disbanded, and therefore they have had to recruit out of the blacks surrounding the very places where the murders have been committed. That is one reason.
12. Do you imagine that a fresh force might be enlisted to a large extent in remote districts—down the Darling, for instance? Well, I do not know really whether the blacks are numerous there or not. If they could be got from there I consider they would be just as efficient as those that Mr. Walker had, if they were equally well managed.
13. Can you suggest to the Committee any reason for the numerous murders that have taken place in the Dawson River District? It is a very difficult question. You see the great thing a squatter has to do is to be at peace with the blacks, and not commit the first aggression: that is what I have always studied. For instance, it has been known that squatters have gone out with the police, and certainly they have punished the blacks when they could get at them; but if a relative of a black who happens to be killed is left, of course he takes revenge. The great thing is, not to be the first aggressor. Punish them, but do not shoot them for the first offence.
14. Have you been in the habit of allowing the blacks in upon your station? Yes.
15. With impunity? They never did any harm.
16. Do you think the squatters, generally, unnecessarily molest the blacks? I am not aware of any having done so. I was told that at Hornet Bank station—but I could not vouch for it—they destroyed some of their dogs. I have done the same to the blacks at Dulacca.
17. How did you destroy them? With poison, when they came and molested the sheep at night. They never resented it. I told them the cause.
18. Have you heard that the destruction of those dogs at Hornet Bank was the cause of the murders



John Miller,  
Esq.  
16 July, 1868.

murders there? I have heard that the blacks were very much offended at their killing a lot of their dogs; but whether that was the cause is a question.

19. Do you know the Dawson River District personally? I have never been at Hornet Bank; but I have been further out. I have been at Scott and Thompson's station on Palm-tree Creek, and at Kinnoul, Miller and Turnbull's, and several other places.

20. You would approve of a white police force being mixed with the Native Police? Yes. If there were six white men in a section, and two trackers for every six men, it would, I think, work very well.

21. How would you get over the difficulty of scrub fighting? If there were two trackers they could divide, three in each wing, with a tracker to each. Then they would do very well. Certainly they are not so quick in sight as blackfellows; but the trackers could point out the others when they saw them planted.

22. *By Mr. Cribb*: Planted in the scrub? Yes.

23. Not in clear spaces in the scrub? No. These blacks are very difficult to see; and a white man has not the sharpness of sight necessary to see them. Without trackers they would be very little good, except in the open country.

24. *By the Chairman*: Where would you suggest that the head-quarters of the Native Police should be? That is a thing I never gave any thought to.

25. Have the Native Police been always well received at the stations, as far as you know? As far as I know they have. I know that always when they came to Dulacca I received them well for my part; and I believe they have generally.

26. Are you aware of the daily pay the native troopers receive from the Government? I am told it is five-pence a day.

27. Do you consider that sufficient? They get rations and clothing as well. Really I am not prepared to say. I should think it is too small.

28. Would you consider that a larger sum would assist to render the force more efficient? I think it would.

29. Are you aware that many desertions now take place among the Native Police? I have known two or three cases where they have deserted.

30. *By Mr. Taylor*: You think a white force would be more effective than this force of Native Police? On the whole, I do, with the assistance of blacks.

31. A proportion of two trackers to six white men would change the nature of the force completely? Yes.

32. If you put one white man to two blacks, would not that be a more effective force in a scrub? The larger number ought to be white men, if you have white men among them at all.

33. You do not think they would work well together? No.

34. Do you think the present Native Police Force can be made effective? I do not think they can, without getting white men amongst them.

35. *By the Chairman*: Have you any further suggestions to offer? There is one observation which I wish to make. There is very bad and broken country at the back of Kinnoul, Hornet Bank, and Mr. Cardew's station, and the blacks get there, and there are such precipices and ravines that they cannot be followed. What I would take the liberty of suggesting would be, to put up some barracks on that frontier, and then the blacks would be checked from coming in. Now, they come in and murder the shepherds, and before they can be followed they are away into this broken country. There might be two stations of police there.

36. Where would you place them? Somewhere about the centre of that country, where they go back. They would be frightened then to come past these stations.

#### APPENDIX A.

*Sydney, 6 July, 1858.*

To the Chairman and Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly, appointed to inquire into the Native Police, and Murders lately committed on the Dawson.

As I have been for many years on the outer stations on the Darling Downs, with your permission I offer the following observations as to the Native Police and its general management.

I would, upon consideration, recommend a corps of white men. If the present force is continued, the first difficulty to be overcome is that of recruiting. As long as the troopers are raised from among the tribes they are supposed to quell, they never will be effective, not even if they are taken 100 miles from their actual nativity.

Mr. F. Walker succeeded in making troopers enlisted in the Northern Districts highly serviceable, because they were kept in check by the original men brought from the Murray.

Troopers intended for service in the Leichhardt ought not to be taken from any place nearer than the Barwan or Severn Rivers.

I still believe a body of Native Police, well organized under a competent Commandant, and officers of energy, and brought from a distance of 200 miles, would in many respects be superior to a body of whites. Every man would be a tracker in scrub fighting; they would be better able to cope with the savage, from their natural sagacity in tracking and the quickness of their eye, and not afraid of losing each other, as whites would be; they act more independently while in scrub,—this is a great advantage, as they can spread over more country.

But, taking the Native Police as they at present exist, a corps of whites would be more efficient. I may observe, that within the last twelve months the depredations of the blacks have been excessive, simply for the reason that they are very seldom punished for what they do. The fact is, that the present force are not able to cope with the blacks on the Dawson.



Dawson. I don't think that in the whole of Her Majesty's service there is a lot more ill-used horses. I will briefly give my reasons for supposing that white men, with one or more trackers, in the ratio of two blacks to every six whites.

They would take better care of their *material* and *horses*, and the question relative to gins would be *got over*; and I still further think that whites, after some practice, might so far improve in bush tactics as to be able to equal black policemen, and they would be less expensive. I shall, to the best of my belief, give the necessary numerical scale.

Black Police, according to Estimates, 120 men and 20 officers, besides sergeants, £16,000, viz. :—

Leichhardt District .....	18	white, and	6	trackers.
Port Curtis .....	6	"	2	"
Wide Bay and Burnett .....	12	"	4	"
Maranoa .....	6	"	2	"
Moreton Bay ..	6	"	2	"
Clarence River .....	6	"	2	"
White men.....	54		18	Blacks.

One officer to every six men, exclusive of the two blacks.

I think a most efficient force could be kept for £12,000 per annum.

I have, &c.,

JOHN MILLER.

A larger number of men may be required in the Port Curtis country, more so as it is opened up.

J. M.

WEDNESDAY, 21 JULY, 1858.

Present :—

MR. HODGSON,  
MR. FORSTER,

MR. TAYLOR,  
MR. BUCKLEY,

MR. RICHARDSON.

ARTHUR HODGSON, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

William Small, Esq., called in and examined :—

1. *By Mr. Forster:* You are a resident on the Clarence River? Yes.
2. How long have you been there? About sixteen years.
3. Residing there, backwards and forwards? Yes.
4. I suppose you are pretty well acquainted with the habits of the aborigines? Yes.
5. And you are also acquainted with the state, condition, and management of the Native Police, while they have been on the Clarence? Yes.
6. What is your opinion of that force at present, from what you have seen of it—do you think it efficient? I do not.
7. Do you think it very inefficient? Yes.
8. As the force at present exists, do you think it rather mischievous than otherwise? I should say it is.
9. Do you think the blacks would be managed better if there were no Native Police Force? I do; if there were Europeans instead.
10. Will you state to the Committee in what way the present Native Police Force on the Clarence renders the blacks more troublesome? They are allowed to keep gins belonging to the other blacks; and whenever they are ordered to go out, the gins know from the police the direction they are going in, and away they start and give the blacks information; and when the police come to the camp the blacks are all gone.
11. How do they get these gins—do they take them by force, or threaten the blacks, to induce them to give them up? I think they threaten the gins to make them go with them.
12. Do the blacks of the tribes generally acquiesce, or do they allow them to remain from fear? I think it is from fear.
13. Then you think the Native Police use their authority as police to compel the wild tribes to give their women up to them? I do.
14. Is it the common practice of the Native Police to take these gins about with them? No; they leave them at the police station.
15. Then I suppose you have not seen the gins travelling about on the police horses? Never.
16. Are we to infer that at every new place they come to they have a supply of gins belonging to the place? Yes.
17. What is the nature of the outrages generally committed by the blacks on the Clarence? There has only been one for some time.
18. Do they commit murder generally, or confine themselves to killing cattle? Killing cattle, and petty thefts.
19. Have any outrages on women been committed by the blacks? Yes; there was one a short time ago.
20. Is not the Clarence rather remarkable for outrages on women by the blacks? Yes; there have been three within my knowledge.
21. Have the perpetrators of these outrages ever been dealt with? Only one, who was taken by the blacks of his own tribe.
22. What was done with him? He is now in Darlinghurst Gaol waiting his trial.

Wm. Small,  
Esq.

21 July, 1858.

- Wm. Small, Esq.  
21 July, 1858.
23. Are the perpetrators of the other outrages, who were not dealt with, still at large in the District? No; I think they are dead.
24. Is there a general feeling of dissatisfaction with the Native Police, or otherwise, among the settlers on the Clarence? There is dissatisfaction.
25. Do you think the settlers would rather be without them, than with them as they are now? They would, if there were two or three Europeans instead. I think they would be satisfied if there were two or three Europeans joined to the ordinary police force there, with a native for a tracker.
26. Could you give any reason to the Committee for the force being so inefficient as it is—do you think it is owing to the bad management, or the bad character, of the officers? No, I think it is the natives. When Mr. Morrisset was there first he had natives from other parts of the country, whereas they have at present taken them from the tribes close at hand.
27. Whose fault is that? I suppose that of the parties authorised to get recruits.
28. Do you think the officers who command the force in general are good officers? Yes, as far as I know them.
29. You do not attribute the inefficient state of the Native Police to the officers? No.
30. You think it is owing to the bad system of employing blacks from the neighbourhood? Yes.
31. Do you think if the troopers were obtained from distant places it would be a good force? Yes.
32. Do you think the settlers would rather have it than be without it? Yes.
33. From what you say, the cattle-holders on the Clarence would seem to be the principal sufferers from the blacks. Yes. A short time ago I had occasion to go to the outside of the run mustering—Mr. Dempster, the lieutenant in charge of the Native Police, was away at New England, and on the main camp I found two gins and one of the police hunting for game, and, of course, when we brought the cattle there, they went away in every direction.
34. Have you any reason to believe that the Native Police join in hunting your cattle, or spearing them? No; I never saw them.
35. Do you think that when sent after the blacks, to punish them for any depredation that has been committed, they do their duty properly, or show any favoritism to one tribe more than another? I cannot say.
36. I think you have suggested that the employment of white troopers in conjunction with the blacks would be a good step? Yes.
37. What proportion would you suggest? I should say three whites and one black, for a tracker would be quite sufficient for the district.
38. Do you think white police would be able to follow the blacks? Yes, I am sure of it.
39. To follow them through the scrubs on the Clarence? Yes.
40. Are the scrubs on the Clarence as bad as in other parts of the country? No, I do not think so.
41. Are there not what are called coast scrubs? I have been a good deal on the coast, and I never saw any scrubs there.
42. Are there not scrubs on the banks of the river? Yes.
43. Would it be easy for white police to follow the blacks through those scrubs? I think it would.
44. Do you think the officers of the Native Police have a proper control over the men they command? No, I think not; for, if they speak sharp to them they abscond.
45. Then the officers are afraid to give them orders for fear they would run away? I think so.
46. Do you think they are personally afraid of them—of their violence? No.
47. Would you approve of an alteration in the law to make the Native Police a military force, and to authorise the Government to shoot them in extreme cases? I do not think they would join if that was explained to them.
48. Do you think the Native Police are actually required on the Clarence? I do not.
49. You think it would be better to have a certain number of white police? White police altogether, with one native for a tracker.
50. Then, in fact, your suggestion amounts to abolishing the Native Police altogether on the Clarence, and substituting white troopers? Yes.
51. You consider the Clarence District has arrived at that stage when it does not require black police? Yes. The natives have been very quiet lately. There has been only one depredation for some time.
52. You do not mean to say black police are not required in other districts? No.
53. An extension of the common police would be sufficient for what is wanted down there? Yes.
54. Do you think that is the feeling of the inhabitants generally? Yes. The only thing I have known the black police to do for the last twelve months was to go to New England for recruits; and those they brought down were mere boys, who would not be fit for service for two or three years.
55. Do they travel about a good deal? Not a great deal.
56. Do they keep to the high roads when travelling? Yes.
57. Do they remain long at one place without moving? No. They have not been through the district as far as Mr. —'s station since they returned from the Macleay, except to get recruits.
58. By Mr. Richardson: Would you have the proportion of one black to three whites apply to all parts of the Colony? No, only to the Clarence.
59. What proportion of blacks would you have in places where the scrub is very dense? I should say two natives to one white.
60. You think the native police, as at present constituted, inefficient? Yes.

Wm. Small,  
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21 July, 1853.

61. And you think it necessary a thorough change should be made? Yes.
62. *By the Chairman*: We may understand that your information applies entirely to the Clarence? Yes. I do not know anything of any other district. I have never been in any other, except the Murrumbidgee some years ago.
63. Do you know the number of the Native Police on the Clarence? Eight, under two officers—Lieutenant Dempster and the camp sergeant.
64. Are you aware of any blacks having been recently enlisted on the Clarence, and sent to the north? Yes.
65. Do you know under what circumstances that enlistment took place? I do not.
66. Do you know the blacks that were sent? No; they were brought from about sixty miles from Grafton.
67. Do you know what has become of those troopers? They started for the north just before I left Grafton.
68. You are not aware they have absconded? No. One, I know, absconded as soon as he came down to Grafton.
69. Have the blacks diminished in numbers on the Clarence? Yes, very much.
70. From what causes? Deaths, from different diseases. The measles took off a great many.
71. Do you attribute the number of deaths among them to their association with the whites? In great measure.
72. From drink, and so on? Yes. A short time ago there were one or two murdered through drink. It is a thing they have got very fond of.
73. Have you ever been acquainted with Mr. Morrisset, the Commandant of the Native Police? Yes.
74. Do you think him an active and efficient officer? Yes.
75. Do you think he is well acquainted with the manners and customs of the blacks? Yes. The blacks behaved very well under him.
76. Would you recommend that the appointment of the subordinate officers should be vested in the Commandant? I should think so; he should know those that would suit him better than others.
77. Are you aware of the amount of pay the troopers of the Native Police receive? Six-pence or eight-pence a day, I believe.
78. It is five-pence—do you consider that sufficient? No, I do not.
79. Why not? They are people who are fond of buying things when they come to Grafton, and if they are not humoured in their fancy they are very soon dissatisfied.
80. Do you think increased pay would make the force more efficient? No; I think the more they get the more they look for.
81. You are against giving them increased pay? Yes.
82. You do not consider that the Native Police Force is necessary on the Clarence? I do not: I think two or three mounted constables would be sufficient in that district, with a tracker.
83. Where is the Native Police camp at present? About ten miles from Grafton.
84. Are there barracks there? There is a place for the lieutenant and for the camp sergeant. The natives put up a place for themselves, and keep shifting it about almost every week, the same as the natives generally do.
85. Are the horses of the Native Police in good order? Some of them are, but generally speaking they are not. The blacks are worse on horses than white men, a great deal.
86. *By Mr. Buckley*: Is the whole of the Clarence District settled? Yes. A great deal of the scrub on the bank of the river has been taken up lately by the Hunter River settlers.
87. As the district is now, is there much covert for the blacks? Nothing like as much as there was in former years.
88. Do you think it is necessary to have a force of any kind to repress the depredations of the blacks? I should say it is. If the blacks found there was no force they would commence to play their tricks again.
89. Are they still in great numbers on the Clarence? Nothing like what they were. One time you could see them going about in large tribes; now it is very seldom you will see them.
90. Is it a common practice with the blacks to commit depredations on the Clarence and then go over the range to New England? No, never.
91. Or *vice versa*? No. The blacks at the Bellinger, whenever they commit any depredations there, come over to our side.
92. You think it quite possible for a white man to follow the blacks through such scrubs as you have on the Clarence? Yes. I think a blackfellow could get away from one of the native troopers quite as easily as from a white man. The only advantage in having black troopers is for tracking.
93. If the scrubs were very dense, do you think it would be possible for a white man to pursue a fugitive with the same facility as a black? No, I think not.
94. Then your remarks do not apply to other parts of the country where dense scrubs prevail? No.
95. You mentioned Lieutenant Dempster—was he at one time a sergeant in the force? He was.
96. Do you know by whom he was promoted? I am not aware.
97. Is he a good officer? Yes, as far as I have known him.
98. Did you know much of him during the time he was a sergeant in the police? He has been backwards and forwards to my station several times, and I have seen him about Grafton; but as regards his public duties I cannot say much. At the time the blackfellow who is now awaiting his trial committed the assault on the woman, he came out to my station and  
said

- Wm. Small, Esq.  
21 July, 1858.
- said it was a bad job, but there was no more notice taken of it. It was close to my station that the assault was committed. Two blacks of the same tribe made the blackfellow drunk and took him.
99. Was that the last outrage? Yes.
100. Was the blackfellow committed from the Grafton Bench? Yes.
101. If the country is so open as you say, do you think it necessary to have a black with the white police as a tracker? I do.
102. You think the Commandant should have the nomination of his own officers? Yes.
103. Do you think there are any young gentlemen in the bush who would be willing to undertake the duties of the Native Police, if they had the opportunity? I do not think there are in the Clarence District.
104. *By Mr Richardson*: Where would you recommend that officers should be obtained for the Native Police? I should think those that are under Mr. Morrisset now would be the most fit.
105. In making other appointments, do you think he should confine himself to the bush? I think persons acquainted with the bush would be the most suitable.
106. Do you know most of the present officers of the force? I know Mr. Bligh, Mr. Dempster, and Mr. Morrisset.
107. Are they generally efficient? Yes.
108. Is that the feeling in your district? Yes. I never heard a complaint otherwise.
109. What pay would you give the native troopers? They would not be satisfied, whatever you gave them.
110. If we gave them more would they do any good with it? No; if you gave them more they would drink.
111. The present pay is sufficient, you think? Yes; although they do not think so.
112. Is drinking practised to a large extent amongst the blacks? Yes; not among the troopers; I never saw any of them drunk.
113. You said the native troopers are hard on the horses—from what cause? The slovenly way in which they ride. Their horses are always poor.
114. Do you attribute that to their being heavier on the horses, or to their not seeing them fed? I should say it is from the awkward manner in which they sit on their horses.
115. *By Mr Buckley*: Generally speaking, they do not weigh so heavy as white men? No.
116. What weight do they ride with their accoutrements? Perhaps twelve stone.
117. *By Mr Richardson*: I asked you if the officers you knew were generally efficient, and you said they were—is there not a general feeling that in other parts of the Colony the officers are inefficient? I have heard so.

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FRIDAY, 23 JULY, 1858.

Present:—

MR. HODGSON, | MR. BUCKLEY,  
MR. TAYLOR.

ARTHUR HODGSON, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Captain Maurice Charles O'Connell, called in and further examined:—

- Capt. M. C. O'Connell.  
23 July, 1858.
1. *By the Chairman*: In your evidence you recommend the neighbourhood of Port Curtis as the best point for the head-quarters of the Native Police? Yes, I think so—that is my opinion.
2. Do not you think a more central spot would be found north-west of Gayndah? I think not, not with all the advantages which the spot I have named has attached to it. You must recollect occupation is progressing to the northward. We have new stations one hundred miles north of Gladstone. The distance westward of occupation is not much more than 150 miles; and the distance to the southward, towards which the operations of this corps have to be conducted, is between 200 and 300 miles; therefore, looking to the gradual progress of occupation towards the north, I think there cannot be a more convenient and central spot than the one I have indicated.
3. In the event of the Government consenting to send up white troopers from Sydney, where would you recommend them to be landed? At Gladstone.
4. Would you recommend that they should take their horses with them? I suspect they ought to do so. It would be better they should.
5. Would horses be easily procurable in the neighbourhood of Gladstone? Not to the extent required, I think.
6. Suppose the troopers were landed at Maryborough, would not the journey from Gladstone to Maryborough be an easy one? By no means difficult; it is 160 miles.
7. As there is no steam communication to Gladstone, would it not be more convenient to send them by steamer to Maryborough than by sailing vessels to Gladstone? It seems to me it would save trouble if they were landed at the place they were to remain at.
8. You are aware that horses by the steamer might be forwarded to Maryborough? Yes.
9. And by sailing vessels it would be, to a certain extent, impracticable? I don't know that it would be impracticable; it depends on the kind of ship. A large vessel would take up the whole force in five or six days, and perhaps do it as cheaply as a small steamer.
10. Do you consider that the buildings to which you have alluded in your printed report are absolutely necessary? I think so, if you wish to carry out the system efficiently and to do the thing properly.

11.



11. Would there be much difficulty in getting these buildings erected? I think not.
12. Do you think the cost would not exceed £5,000? That was but a rough calculation of mine, not having sufficient data to go by. I fancy it would not cost more, presuming the buildings were to be constructed of mere slab and shingles. I think this would be sufficient, supposing that in the course of time the position of the head-quarters of the corps would have to be moved as occupation extended further north, and that the districts which are now disturbed became settled.
13. You have doubtless given the subject much consideration—would you be good enough to state to the Committee what steps you would recommend to be taken immediately with regard to the suppression of the murders in the Dawson River District? If the object to be attained is the immediate suppression of the outrages, and present security to the districts disturbed, I apprehend the most effective mode of giving relief would be by raising or obtaining a number of tolerably qualified men, and dispatching them at once to the scene of the disturbances.
14. What number would you suggest? I have prepared a statement of what I thought might be the expense of the measure, which, however, can only be considered as an alternative one, and more of a temporary nature than the one I previously proposed. It is only a rough estimate, but it will give you a notion of the force required. (*Witness handed in a statement of expenditure for Mounted Police Force for the Port Curtis and Leichhardt Districts. Vide Appendix A.*)
15. Many witnesses have recommended that a certain number of white troopers should be forwarded to the Northern Districts, not to be amalgamated with the native troopers, but to patrol in parties of six or eight, principally in the open country,—what is your idea of that? I think a great deal will depend on the description of men you obtain, and upon the manner in which they are governed; and I think it is an experiment liable to very great risk of failure, judging from the style of men I have seen sent up as sergeants formerly.
16. Do you think the fact of the Government sending up twenty mounted troopers from Sydney to the Northern Districts would be circulated widely amongst the natives? Their presence ought to be made known by their appearance on the spot. I think it would have a good effect if you were enabled to obtain good men.
17. You think the very appearance of these men would have a beneficial effect? Yes, I think so.
18. Do you think further, that the fact of their continually appearing in the public thoroughfares in bodies of six would be beneficial? I think so, decidedly. As I stated before, the patrolling system is one of the most likely to be beneficial in its effects. I adopted that course myself when the districts immediately in the neighbourhood of Port Curtis became disturbed: I directed the ordinary constabulary to patrol one week, and the Native Police the alternate week, throughout the disturbed districts, and during the continuance of this arrangement no outrage occurred. The Native Police, however, being taken away from me, it fell on the constabulary alone, and I was obliged to discontinue it.
19. *By Mr. Buckley:* You say you propose Gladstone for the head-quarters? The neighbourhood of Gladstone, on the Calliope River.
20. How far is that from the districts which are disturbed? 150 miles.
21. Would not that be an immense distance to have to communicate with a force like this in case of an outbreak? I think not. I propose the force should be distributed all over the disturbed districts at out-stations:—one station at Taroom, another at Rannes, on the Fitz Roy, at Maryborough and Brisbane, and two intermediate stations. The out-stations are so placed that they could easily communicate with each other, and reinforcements could be sent by the head-quarters to supply these places as the men there moved on to the disturbed places.
22. Would you not imagine a party of five white troopers equal to ten or twelve aboriginal troopers? It depends on the leader of the aboriginals. The aboriginals are certainly equal to the whites; but I don't believe that five whites are equal to ten blacks, properly led.
23. You know a good deal of the blacks—do not you suppose if the whites and blacks were mixed together, and any differences arising between them—the whites wishing to have their own way—it would cause the blacks to be dissatisfied? The management of the blacks is a very difficult matter. I said so in my evidence before. I should select those to lead them who have most tact; and I believe the blacks are capable of forming great attachment to white men—to those they like, and whom they feel confidence in. It is necessary to select those whom the blacks have confidence in, and they are the men only qualified for that duty.
24. Do not you think it desirable to have a given point at which the main force is to be stationed, in a central part, in order that they may disperse on either side—would it not be more desirable to have a central point rather than a seaport for the head-quarters? I think not. My object is to select a central point—such a point in the circle as to make the radius nearly equal to any point of the surrounding country.
25. From that position the country is affected north and south, but how would it affect the western portion? Equally. I believe it would be equally as advantageous for the protection of the western country as for the north and south.
26. You propose to erect buildings—how much will they cost? £5,000, fencing and building.
27. If this force is required to be moved, does not that expenditure appear almost unnecessary? I calculate that it will not be necessary to remove the force from that spot for ten years. Supposing the buildings were constructed of slabs and shingles, they would not be expensive, and they would be available for sale, so that there would be a return of some of the money expended: I don't see how the organization of the force could be carried out without.
28. You propose that £5,000 should be expended in buildings for the whole force of blacks and whites? Not the whole force—for such a number as are at head-quarters, where the

Capt. M. C.  
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organization is to take place: the want of space in the first instance could be relieved by having the men under canvas.

29. How many men do you propose this building should accommodate? 60 men; the total number is 120.

30. *By Mr. Taylor*: If, then, white troopers were sent out, do you think it better to let the Commandant have the whole charge, and distribute them as he might think fit, and would you give the Commandant charge of both? Whoever is responsible ought to have sole charge.

31. And either distribute them among the blacks or otherwise? Whoever is responsible for the district must have the whole force under his charge, and do as he pleases.

32. It was suggested that they should not be mixed in any way? You must give the officer in charge full power to do what he likes.

33. *By the Chairman*: Do you happen to know the present rate of pay for Native Police? I understand that it is 1s. 6d. per diem, to cover the expense of rations and everything else.

34. At the present time it is only five-pence a day, with clothing and rations? I was not aware of it. I did not know that any sums of money were distributed among the black troopers.

35. Do you consider that sufficient? I apprehend that money given to the black troopers is thrown away; I do not see that it is of any use to them.

36. You would not recommend an increase in their pay? Decidedly not.

37. Rather a reduction? No, I recommend no reduction; but I think the 1s. 6d. a day given is sufficient to provide for their cost of living and provisions, and such luxuries as they require—tobacco and pipes, &c.

38. Do you not think that the white troopers could be enlisted at a less amount of pay than that mentioned in your printed evidence? I have taken the amount of pay from that given to the constabulary, and I presume you cannot get a man for a lower amount for this service than the pay for ordinary service.

39. Do not you think the system would work better if Government found the rations? I am hardly prepared to say. The provision of rations requires a great deal of account work. There might be some person charged with commissariat supplies and commissariat rations accounts. I have found in the bush, with my own orderlies, there is comparatively little difficulty in their providing themselves; they take their small quantities of supplies. I apprehend each man could regulate his own accounts, and supply himself.

40. Do you not think that the Secretary attached to the Native Police Force could carry out the duties of a commissariat officer, that is, at the head-quarters? It depends on the number of vouchers required by the Commissariat and Audit Office. If vouchers are multiplied—the duties of the force extending over such a tract of country, in which communication is unfrequent—trifling items would entail the necessity of complicated accounts, and be difficult of arrangement.

41. As Commissioner of Crown Lands, did you find any difficulty in getting your ration accounts made up? My troopers find themselves.

42. In the Burnett? Yes, unless for their private convenience, their supplies were provided for them sometimes.

43. You would not recommend the transport of any white troopers, unless previously drilled and organized in Sydney, under Captain M'Leerie? I think, most decidedly, they should be organized and drilled in Sydney before being sent up.

44. You imagine there would not be much difficulty in procuring these men, discharged out of the regiments previously quartered here? I think a number of men, who had previously had training, would not require to remain a long time under Captain M'Leerie's superintendence.

45. Would you prefer old soldiers, if physically capable and of good character? It would be desirable to take those who have been discharged, if physically capable. I have seen a great many here with good characters, and quite competent for these duties when they get some acquaintance with the bush.

46. *By Mr. Buckley*: You lived in the Burnett District some time? Yes.

47. Do you think it at all likely that there are parties (young gentlemen, for instance,) who go into the country to obtain colonial experience, who would volunteer to go into the service—regular competent men? I doubt it very much.

48. Do you recollect any volunteering during the time you were in the Burnett District? The Native Police only came two or three years before I left the Burnett District.

49. You recollect no gentlemen volunteering? I recollect no instance of a person volunteering.

50. And you are not aware of any person joining the Native Police? Yes, I am aware of Mr. Murray, in the Wide Bay District, joining the Native Police.

51. Do you recollect any others? I do not recollect any others.

52. *By Mr. Taylor*: Do not you think these troopers have considerable difficulty in getting rations at the different stations: when they have no money in their pocket do the store-keepers give them rations on their responsibility? I think travellers obtain rations without any difficulty in that way. These men are constantly travelling as a moving body. If one man is responsible for the whole company, the settlers have no objection in giving them what is required. I should have no hesitation myself in trying it without any provision of rations from the Government. I believe it would work well, from what I have seen in the bush. I know, with the ordinary constabulary and Commissioners' orderlies there is no difficulty; I have heard there has been great complication of accounts, arising from the difficulties of communication. If rations are issued by the Government, the Government require, very naturally and properly, a strict account of the number to whom rations are issued daily. There must be a sort of form filled up by the Commanding Officer of the names and rank of each person receiving rations. This account, kept in a particular form for several days,

is

is then forwarded to the officer in charge of the section, and then forwarded to the head-quarters, or Auditor General's Office. So many transmissions causes a difficulty, and I think great complication of accounts would arise by this plan. At the same time I acknowledge it is a question open to a difference of opinion.

Capt. M. C.  
O'Connell.  
23 July, 1868.

## APPENDIX A.

## ESTIMATE of Expenditure for Mounted Police Force, for the Port Curtis and Leichhardt Districts.

	£	s.	d.
1 Lieutenant, per annum ... ..	365	0	0
1 Sergeant-Major, ditto ... ..	150	0	0
1 Pay Sergeant, ditto ... ..	150	0	0
10 Sergeants, at 6s 6d. per diem ... ..	1,186	5	0
20 Troopers, at 5s. 6d. ditto ... ..	2,007	10	0
18 Aborigines, at 1s. 6d. ditto ... ..	482	15	0
	<hr/>		
4 Supernumerary White Troopers, at 5s. 6d.... ..	733	10	0
	<hr/>		
	5,075	0	0
54 Suits of Clothing, at say £7 each ... ..	378	0	0
Forage, say... ..	600	0	0
Contingencies ... ..	400	0	0
	<hr/>		
	6,453	0	0
	<hr/>		
Say £7,000 per annum.			
Preliminary Expenses in raising the above Force :—			
90 Horses, purchased at £30 ... ..	2,700	0	0
54 Sets Saddlery and Accoutrements ... ..	540	0	0
54 Sets Arms (sword, carbine, and revolver)... ..	540	0	0
Recruiting expenses, say ... ..	600	0	0
Buildings .. ..	2,000	0	0
Forage, first year ... ..	1,000	0	0
	<hr/>		
	7,380	0	0
	<hr/>		
Say £8,000.			

E. B. Uhr, Esq., J.P., called in and examined :—

1. *By the Chairman* : You are a magistrate of the territory, I believe? I am.
2. You reside at Maryborough? Yes.
3. How long have you resided there? For the last nine years.
4. You have been constantly resident in the Northern Districts? I have, for the last fifteen or sixteen years; fifteen years, I think.
5. Have not the head-quarters of the Native Police Force been stationed at Maryborough? About eight miles from Maryborough, on the south side of the river.
6. How long have the head-quarters been there? I cannot say the year; from Mr. Morissett's arrival at Maryborough, I think it was some three or four years back.
7. Was that Mr. Morissett the officer stationed at Maryborough? He was the officer in command—the first lieutenant.
8. Under whom? There was no Commandant of the Force. I think the time the force was stationed there he was Commander of the Force.
9. Are you inclined to think him an efficient officer? I am hardly able to speak of that. I think he is as competent as any person I know, and he has had a good deal of experience.
10. Is he active? He appears to be active and energetic, and does all he can with the force under his control; but he has had many difficulties to contend with.
11. Are these difficulties at an end? No, certainly not.
12. From what cause? From the inefficiency of the natives, and the difficulty of getting proper men.
13. Do you remember the force under Captain Walker? Yes; I remember when he first came to Maryborough. That was eight or nine years back.
14. Was the force then efficient? I considered it most efficient, and I considered him (Captain Walker) a most efficient officer. The men were well disciplined, and there was every energy used to suppress the aggressions of the blacks at that time.
15. And did the force deteriorate? It did not on account of the force itself, but in consequence of the discrepancies of the Commandant, and he himself fell off in his management.
16. You are aware he was dismissed? I am.
17. You are also aware of the alleged cause of his dismissal? The alleged cause was drunkenness.
18. Have you, during your residence in Maryborough, had many opportunities of becoming acquainted with the officers of the Native Police Force? Yes, I have frequently seen them.
19. Do you think them efficient? Yes, I think so, if they had proper men to control. The efficiency is void by their not having proper troopers.
20. Without particularising names, are you not aware some are notorious drunkards? Yes, it is so reported. One, I believe—with regard to one I have every reason to believe such is the fact.
- 21.

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21. Then your knowledge only extends to one? Yes, only one. I have heard reports and observations from parties that he is rendered unfit for his duties on account of his love of drink.
22. What is the nature of the building near Maryborough? I have never been up to the police camp. The troopers' buildings are made of bark and slabs of the rudest description.
23. Are they still in use? Yes, they are; and as parties of Native Police come to Maryborough the buildings are used as head-quarters.
24. When you left Maryborough was the Native Police Force there at the camp? There were officers and two sergeants, but very few of the Native Police there. I believe there are very few of the Native Police in the force.
25. Can you give the Committee any idea of the present number of the officers of the force? I cannot, except from rumour—that it consists of 18 or 20.
26. Can you give any idea of the number of troopers? That I can only do by hearsay. I am told there are 30 or 40—there may not be so many. I am of opinion there are not so many; that is the rumoured number.
27. If your information is correct, do not you consider the number of officers is far in excess? Yes, I do. I consider it a great drag and expense to the Colony in the present state of the Native Police Force. I have considered it so for a long time.
28. From your knowledge of the Native Police Force, how many officers should be appointed to a section of troopers? I think every 12 troopers would require one officer at least.
29. If the number of troopers amounted to 120, how many officers would you recommend should be appointed to the force? At the rate of one to 12, and the Commandant.
30. Of course, exclusive of the Commanding Officer? Yes.
31. Are you aware that the native troopers have been recruited in the immediate neighbourhood of these murders? I don't know that they have been recruited from the immediate neighbourhood of the murders, but in Maryborough. Many who have joined the force find their way back into the town after joining the force.
32. Would you suggest any remedy to prevent such an evil? The remedy I should suggest would be either to have a white force or get the natives further south of Moreton Bay. They never will make efficient troopers from any that can be got in the district. They may join the force for the novelty, and for a time, but they abandon it at their earliest leisure.
33. If enlisted from a distance the blacks so enlisted would be afraid of absenting themselves? Yes; on account of the strange tribes they would have to pass through—so they would become good soldiers. It was that which made Mr. Walker's force so efficient in the first instance.
34. Would you recommend an amalgamation of white troopers with native troopers? Certainly not. I would recommend a white force, similar to those we used to have under Sergeant Temple, in the old convict time, and black trackers when necessary to go after the blacks; these may be got in the immediate neighbourhood.
35. Do you not think the force might be made efficient by sections of black troopers being employed in the most scrubby part of the country, leaving the white force to be employed in the open country? I think the white force generally as good as the blacks; they are more persevering. I don't think there is much perseverance in the blacks; they may take a camp, but they don't follow it up like the whites. I think a white force with trackers would have more stability, and be more beneficial in the end.
36. Do you not think the white troopers would find the impenetrable scrubs in the Northern Districts great obstacles to their being useful? Certainly, in the scrubs they would have a good deal of hardship and difficulty to contend with; but we have had the experience of gentlemen, going out and protecting their stations, going into the scrubs and successfully protecting themselves against the murders and outrages of the blacks. Now, if gentlemen could do this, I think paid men ought to be able to do it with blacks as trackers.
37. Is it not a matter of notoriety that black troopers on entering the scrub take off their clothes? Yes; I always understood that to be the case when they are going to surprise a camp, but the white troopers would have the benefit in having a couple of trackers.
38. Could you suggest to the Committee the best site for the head-quarters of the Native Police Force? My experience is hardly sufficient; I think somewhere in the centre of the frontier districts—somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Dawson; that is the position I should suggest for the head-quarters, so that they immediately could be distributed in the disturbed districts whenever disturbances took place. At Wide Bay, I apprehend, the natives will yet be very troublesome. Civilization always seems to make these fellows more troublesome than when in their wild state; they come to know their power, and, consequently, there is a good deal more trouble to contend with them. At Maryborough we have frequently robberies on sawyers knocked down, and besides, they rob people of money. In Maryborough, if they see a drunken man they rob him, and knock him down. There was a case the other day, brought before the magistrate sitting, against a man named Darby, who knocked down a sawyer, and robbed him.
39. You would rather have the spot nearer to Gayndah than Port Curtis? The only advantage to Port Curtis is the communication with head-quarters sooner. I think I would have the site nearer the frontier.
40. Is there not a steamer constantly plying between Wide Bay and Sydney? Yes, monthly; it used to come fortnightly.
41. How many horses could it convey? I think fifteen is the number it is chartered for; it can carry twelve.
42. Suppose the Government sent up some twenty troopers from Sydney to the Northern Districts, would you recommend the horses being sent with them, or should the horses be got there? I think the horses should be sent, certainly.
43. You think it would be less expensive? Yes. There is not a sufficient number of horses equal to that demand, if they were to be got at Maryborough.
44. You have had an opportunity of observing the native troopers of late? I have.



45. Are they clean and orderly, or do they impress you with an idea that they are not sufficiently looked after? Well, some of them look rather smart, others look like hogs in armour. Their clothes sit uncomfortably on them. I suppose they make themselves as decent as their nature will allow them. Some are smart, and take pride in their dress, others are not so. It is very difficult to make the blacks look well in their dress. The old troopers, those under Commandant Walker, were very natty in their dress.

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46. Are you aware how the rations are given to the force at present? I believe they are allowed so much a day, and that they are procured by the Commandant, or officer in command, as required. That system seems to work very well.

47. You think that system is preferable to any other? Yes, to any other that could be adopted. Contracts might be issued. It would be difficult to get a contractor to furnish rations at the different stations. I think the present system is the only one that could be adopted.

48. Are you aware what the native troopers receive? Only from hearsay. Altogether, or rations?

49. Altogether? I have heard they get the sum of 4d. or 5d. as a money payment; and their rations consist of 2 lbs. of meat, 1½ lbs. of flour, with a small quantity of tea, sugar, tobacco, and soap, also salt, per day. The quantity of meat is larger than usually allowed by the Government.

50. Are you personally acquainted with Lieutenant Murray? Yes.

51. Do you consider him an efficient officer? Yes, a most active officer, and a man of great experience.

52. Are you acquainted with Lieutenant Bligh? I do know him.

53. Could you mention the names of two officers whom you would select in preference for sending them to the Southern Districts for the purpose of enlisting troopers? Yes. I think the two gentlemen you named are most suited to the purpose; yet I would hardly recommend their being taken out of the district at the present time, their services are so useful. They are the best, and only two, I would recommend for such an undertaking.

54. If their services could be dispensed with, they are the best men to select? Yes.

55. Are you aware that the Government sent Lieutenant Allman on such an expedition some few months since? I am not; this is the first I have heard of it. I heard Lieutenant Allman was in Sydney on leave of absence; I was not aware of it; afterwards I heard he was not in the force.

56. Do you know where Lieutenant Allman is now? He was some two or three months since in Maryborough.

57. Would you suggest that the appointment of the subordinate officers should rest with the Commandant? Yes, most certainly.

58. Without the Government veto? I think he should be held responsible for the appointments, and if he made an improper one, it would be for the Government to mark their sense of it.

59. Are you aware that young men have been forwarded from Sydney to join the Native Police as officers, who afterwards were found thoroughly incompetent? I have been so informed. All the Native Police officers ought to have a knowledge of the bush and the native character before they can make efficient officers for such a corps.

60. *By Mr. Buckley:* You say there should be one officer to twelve troopers, would that be sufficient? That is my opinion.

61. What would you style him? Lieutenant.

62. In the event of any accident occurring to him, or sickness, what would be the position of the division? If the officer were taken sick it would be necessary, of course, to have some one to relieve him.

63. Would you not then recommend the continuance of sub-lieutenants? I would have a few supernumerary officers in case of accident. I would not recommend more than one officer to twelve troopers, excepting two or three sub-lieutenants, in case of sickness or accident of any description. That may not happen once in seven years, or it may occur every day.

64. According to your statement, that would be one officer to eight troopers, including supernumeraries? That would require calculation.

65. The troopers are in sections of 12? I would have three or four supernumeraries, in case of their being required. One of the sergeants might take charge of the corps in the absence of the officer from sickness.

66. What is your opinion of the estimation in which sub-officers were held by native troopers in former times—were they ever fond of sergeants? I believe they were. There was Sergeant Dowling, under Commandant Walker, they were very fond of him.

67. Has it not been remarked that they do not pay attention to officers, except the Commandant? I never heard that before I came to Sydney.

68. Are you aware that the scrub is as dense in Wide Bay as it is in the districts further north? Yes, I think so.

69. You think, of your own knowledge, that the district is intersected by the scrub as much as those further north? Yes, from my knowledge.

70. And affords a considerable cover for the blacks? Yes.

71. In that case, with a body of white troopers and two trackers, what would be the position of these men if they found that only the trackers could penetrate the scrub? I do not think the scrubs so dense that a white man could not follow the trackers. A white man might not be able to go as fast as the blacks can, but I know gentlemen who have done it.

72. If these men were not efficient enough to drive the blacks out they would be, of course, useless—I mean the white troopers? I should suppose that eight troopers would be always sufficient when they came up to the blacks to drive them out, or, at all events, to disturb their camp. The black trackers—I should also make use of them in case of attack.

73. Are they very careful of their horses? Yes, very. That is another reason why I recom-

- E. B. Uhr,  
Esq., J.P.  
23 July, 1858.
- mend white troopers. The horses are more taken care of, and fit for service when required.
74. Do the blacks abuse their saddles, harness, and their garments? No doubt, if not looked after.
75. You invariably see their horses with sore backs? Yes; they are bad horse masters.
76. Is it from hard riding, or the severe pace they go at? I may say from their severity in galloping horses. The black troopers when they have no head with them will go as hard as they can pelt.
77. *By Mr. Taylor*: Do you think it better to have appointed a greater number of whites or blacks? If you get the blacks from the south, and such a force as originally was under the charge of Commandant Walker, I think we should be equally well protected.
78. Do you think it better to have all white troopers? Or those I am speaking of.
79. Would you have more white troopers than blacks? I would say have black troopers, if they were as efficient as those under Commandant Walker. I would sooner see no Native Police than as it is at present.
80. Then you think the present force does more harm than good? They certainly are not doing much good, and they tend to do much harm; the natives having got a contempt for them. If you get good troopers—the natives of the south—they will not amalgamate with the natives of the north, and will cause more dread, and keep them in better check.
81. If twenty white troopers were sent in the meanwhile, it would have a good effect on the district? That is difficult to say. If you got a good force, as under Sergeant Temple in the convict times, this white force would be superior. The difficulty of organizing such a force would be very great and very expensive. I certainly think the way the Native Police Force is at present constituted is not at all effective. I don't consider that this ineffectiveness is attachable to the Commandant. The expense is going on without any benefit being derived from it.

THURSDAY, 29 JULY, 1858.

Present:—

MR. DONALDSON,		MR. RICHARDSON,
MR. HODGSON,		MR. SMITH,
		MR. TAYLOR.

ARTHUR HODGSON, ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

John McLerie, Esq., Inspector General of Police, called in and examined:—

- John McLerie,  
Esq.  
29 July, 1858.
1. *By the Chairman*: Do you think it possible to send up from ten to twelve mounted troopers to act in the Northern Districts, to be attached to the Commandant of the Native Police? Do I understand you to mean men of the mounted force now existing?
2. Yes? No, not at all.
3. For what reason? The necessities of the service in Sydney and the Sydney District, in the first place.
4. Do you think there would be any difficulty in enlisting that number? I do not think there would, if the terms offered were commensurate with the price of labor in the Colony.
5. How long do you think it would take to enlist from ten to twelve troopers? I am aware that there are a number of young men in Melbourne waiting for police employment, who have recently arrived from Ireland. The Irish Revenue Police have recently been amalgamated with the general constabulary of Ireland, and these men have been thus thrown out of employment, and have emigrated in consequence. I have taken three of them within the last few days—very intelligent, well drilled men. I think, by communicating with the police authorities in Melbourne, I could raise, and drill sufficiently for service on the borders, any moderate number of men that may be required.
6. What pay per diem would you suggest should be given them? I do not think, having in view the present wages of labor in the Colony, that you could offer them less than five shillings a day, and rations.
7. With clothing? With clothing, of course.
8. You think with that pay there would be no difficulty in raising a body of men for the purpose? I do not anticipate any difficulty. I think I would be able to raise a sufficient number of men for the purposes required on the borders in a month, and instruct them in Sydney under my own officers.
9. You think such a force would be useful in the bush? I do, if amalgamated with the native troopers, and divided into parties of six white and four native troopers. I think in that proportion they would tend to the suppression of the outrages that have been taking place for some time in the Northern Colony. I think, in my evidence before a Committee of the House some time ago, I suggested that the parties should consist of ten men each. Small parties, with ready means of concentration, in case of necessity for an increased force, are a more effectual means of repressing crime than large bodies confined to certain districts. I think it is necessary to join native troopers with the white men; for, I served myself against the natives in New Zealand with troops, and I know the services of the troops would have been a perfect nullity without the assistance of natives. I presume that the denseness of the scrubs in the Northern Districts prevents the ready action of Europeans.
10. You are aware that there are large tracts of open country in the Northern Districts where Europeans would be useful without native blacks? I am aware that during the existence of the old Mounted Police they never went into the bush without trackers; in fact, trackers were regularly paid for the purpose—each party had a tracker attached to it.
11. *By Mr. Richardson*: You say there should be a proportion of six white men to four blacks? Yes.

12.

12. Would you apply that to all parts of the country where they were required—where the scrubs are more dense, for instance? Of course, if the scrubs were dense, and the number of aboriginals assembled for hostile purposes were great, it would require a concentration of parties. Instead of one party with six whites and four blacks, you would have two with twelve and eight, or three with eighteen and twelve. John M'Levie,  
Esq.  
29 July, 1858.

13. You think the sending up of some Mounted Police from here would be a decided improvement on the present force? I do. I have no official knowledge of what is going on on the borders.

14. But you know something of the working of the Native Police, having had them under your control for a short time? Yes.

15. Has it been your impression for some time that a larger infusion of white men would be beneficial to the corps? It has.

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SEPARATE APPENDIX.

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A.

*Camboom, Leichhardt,  
April 29, 1858.*

Sir,

I do myself the honor to transmit to you herewith depositions concerning the murder of four white men.

2. At the same time I take the liberty, which I hope your courtesy will consider pardonable, of trespassing on your valuable time, by claiming your sympathy and assistance, as a member of His Excellency's Government, for the stockholders and their men in this exposed district. The unfortunate shepherds, I think, more particularly require consideration, for their lives can always be taken, the more so as the aborigines seem to have some settled plan to murder as many as they can. On this occasion, the natives who committed this murder did not take any sheep, but only a carbine, powder and balls, and some axes. On the second day after the murder Lieut. Murray was on their trail, and he has not since been seen. Sub-Lieut. Powell and two troopers also went after Mr. Murray. The murderers proceeded to the Banana, about 45 miles north from here, a station of Messrs. Hay and Holt, where they attacked a sheep station, at which there were three men. These white men, being alarmed, offered the aborigines everything they possessed, but the latter said that they would have only their lives; and "that they would take the lives of all the b——y white men in "the country;" thus shewing their malice, and that amongst them were blacks who had long been living with the whites. The blacks then showered their spears and waddies. The whites were all wounded, but fortunately they defended themselves, and killed one black and wounded others, when the rest fled. In the first week of this month a white man was found lying near the road, about thirteen miles from here. He was shot through the ear; he was lying on his back, with a pistol lying on his breast, but close to, yet not grasped in his hand; there were bruises on his neck and back. He was not robbed, but his dog was missing. He was a travelling shepherd on foot, and his dog had been seen at the Banana. Shepherds with £30 in cheques do not commit suicide, even though they may have been tired and half dead with thirst; indeed, hard working laboring men seldom take their own lives. I believe that he was murdered by two blacks who had lately absconded from the Banana. On the 16th instant, or thereabouts, two shepherds were murdered at the now ill-fated Eurombah, Mr. Cardew's station, Upper Dawson, now so fully protected by Mr. Frederick Walker, ex-Commandant, Native Police, and ten ex-troopers, as also by the proximity of the Police Camp, not twenty miles distant. But there are bold men with the blacks, and experienced; on this occasion, as the door was found fastened, the blacks entered by the chimney during a dark night. The sheep station huts on Cracow Creek, by which I came here yesterday, had been robbed, and the shepherds threatened.

3. The Native Police do not, and cannot, afford the protection contemplated by the Government. The officers are active, and are now constantly on the patrol, as I know; but the recruits are not sufficient as yet to supply the number of troopers allotted for the Leichhardt, and many of these desert. Sub-Lieutenant Wheeler lost ten troopers, who all absconded at once. But even fifty men is but little to look after the now numerous inimical blacks which line the Dawson and Fitz Roy, on a frontier of more than three hundred miles. The scrubs and broken impracticable country occupy, perhaps, one-third of this district so continuously that the aborigines can travel, perhaps, from one end to the other under shelter. Nor do the new officers and recruits as yet know the bush, so as to be able to surprise the natives at their scrub-surrounded lagoons.

4. The remedy of high wages securing the services of men for shepherds whose courage will intimidate the blacks will be ruinous to the capitalist, and would ultimately cause the desertion of the district; and this will, I feel, never be permitted by His Excellency's Government. The substitution of Hottentots as troopers might succeed. The interest of the stockholders and their perplexity will, I trust, be my excuse with you for venturing these remarks on this occasion, when I cannot help giving some expression of the feelings of the persons amongst whom I live to one who is very capable of rendering them assistance.

I have, &c.,

W. H. WISEMAN, J. P. & C. C. L.

To The Honorable  
The Attorney General,  
Office of Attorney General,  
Sydney.

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