

R E P O R T

BY THE

COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES,

SITTING IN CONFERENCE,

ON THE

DEFENCE OF THE COLONY.

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, BY COMMAND OF
HIS EXCELLENCY.

WELLINGTON.

—
1871.

REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEE ON COLONIAL DEFENCE.

REPORT by the Committees of the Legislative Council and the House of Representatives, sitting in Conference, on the Defence of the Colony.

1. The Committees of the Legislative Council and the House of Representatives on the Defence of the Colony having met in Conference, and had scientific reports on the best means of defence against external aggression submitted by the Government, and having examined witnesses, both on the subject of the external and internal defence of the Colony, beg to report as follows:—

External Defence.

2. This part of the subject has been considered both as regards the Coast or Harbour Defences which have been recommended by Colonel Jervois and Captain Hutton, and the improvement of the existing means of defence at the command of the Colony.

3. The Committees are of opinion, in terms of their Interim Report, that, on account of the large Harbour Defences. outlay necessary in order to carry out efficiently the recommendations of Colonel Jervois and Captain Hutton, and considering the extent of seaboard to be protected, it is not expedient, with the means at the disposal of the Government, that any expenditure be incurred in that direction for the present.

4. The only existing means of defence against external aggression consist of the various forces Existing means of defence. throughout the Colony. It is not probable that any large force will ever come to New Zealand for the purpose of attack, but it seems desirable that the local forces should be in so efficient a state as to be able to repel an attack by any small force or privateer which might visit our harbours for the purpose of plunder.

5. With that view, Volunteer Corps should be organized and maintained, where they can readily be made available for the protection of the seaports; the force to consist of Naval Companies and Artillery and Rifle Volunteers. The Naval Corps should be composed of seafaring men, accustomed to boat service, who should be trained as artillerymen as well as to the use of small arms. Special attention should be given towards increasing the greater efficiency of Artillery Corps; as far as practicable the Rifle Corps should be drilled in the use of Artillery.

Internal Defence.

6. The means at command for the purpose of internal defence are—1st, the Armed Constabulary; 2nd, the Militia; and 3rd, the Volunteer Corps.

7. With the view to the better management of matters relating to the pay, discipline, and general efficiency of the Colonial Forces of all arms, the Committee would recommend the reorganization of the General Staff of the Colony, as follows, viz.:—

1 Colonel-Commandant, who should be the medium of all communications between the General Staff. Defence Minister, or the Government, and the heads of Military Departments.

1 Lieutenant-Colonel, Adjutant-General and Military Secretary.

1 Lieutenant-Colonel, Quartermaster-General and Colonial Storekeeper.

1 Lieutenant-Colonel, Paymaster-General and Military Accountant.

1 Lieutenant-Colonel, Inspecting Field Officer of the Colonial Forces, with necessary clerical assistance.

8. The Committee recommend that the Armed Constabulary should, as early as possible, be Armed Constabulary. organized as follows:—

2 Inspectors 1st Class.

8 Inspectors 2nd Class.

1 Sub-Inspector 1st Class, Adjutant and Musketry Instructor.

10 Sub-Inspectors 1st Class.

10 Sub-Inspectors 2nd Class.

6 Medical men.

50 Sergeants 1st Class.

50 Sergeants 2nd Class.

900 Constables.

9. That the above non-commissioned officers and men should be enlisted for a period of five years; a discharge may be granted upon receiving one month's notice, and upon payment to the General Government of a sum of £20; and to be engaged to serve under the provisions of the Militia Act of 1870, the Mutiny Act, and Articles of War, and such other rules and regulations as are now or may hereafter be in force for the better government of Her Majesty's Forces.

10. It is recommended that the pay at present issued to non-commissioned officers and men of Pay. that force be altered as follows:—

1st Class Sergeants 6s. per day.

2nd Class Sergeants 5s. per day.

Constables, whether mounted or on foot, 4s. per day.

When in the field or on Public Works duty, all ranks to have 1s. per diem extra pay.

11. It is recommended that no man shall be enlisted under the age of eighteen or over the age Enlistment. of twenty-five years; and that all officers commanding detachments of Armed Constabulary, and

officers of the Militia Permanent Staff, be gazetted recruiting officers, by which means no difficulty will be experienced in obtaining the requisite number of men to replace any of those of the present force who may be disinclined to re-engage under these regulations.

12. It is expected that the force, by being employed on contract road-making, will recoup to the country two-thirds of the amount voted for their maintenance.

Drill.

13. Men should be drilled one month (four hours in each day on joining) afterwards one day; or four hours per week.

Reserve Force.

14. That with the view of establishing a valuable Reserve Force in the Colony, it is urged that a scheme be devised whereby non-commissioned officers and men of the permanent Colonial Force, at the expiry of their five years' service, be located on land (not too extensive in area) upon occupation and improvement terms for a further period of five years during which time they should be exercised and trained with the permanent force for twenty-four consecutive days annually, and be paid at the rate of 4s. per diem. At the end of the ten years they will be discharged from the force and revert to the ordinary Militia forces of the Colony.

15. That where practicable the Colonial forces of all arms should be trained to the working of garrison and field guns.

Arms.

16. The Committees are of opinion that the arm best suited for the Infantry and Artillery Forces in the North Island is the short Snider rifle with a saw-backed bayonet 18 inches in length, including the handle or socket, and for Cavalry the Snider carbine; for the South Island, the medium Snider rifle.

Militia.

17. The Committees strongly urge the expediency of maintaining the efficiency of the Militia forces in all outlying or disturbed districts in the North Island, and that the Militia Districts as laid down in "The Militia Act, 1870," should be so altered that a Militiaman or Company, say at Ngarua-wahia could, in the event of an outbreak, be marched to any point within the Waikato Electoral District. That the 1st and 2nd Class Militia of these districts should be paraded and drilled, as a minimum four days of four hours each per annum, and that they be paid at the rate of 1s. per hour for these drills. With the view of carrying out the above suggestions it is necessary that care be taken that the staff authorized by "The Militia Act, 1870," be so distributed as to ensure each district having a proper supervision in all matters, not only as regards the training of Militia and Volunteers but in the training of cadets and boys at school in military exercises.

Volunteer Militia.

18. The Committees are of opinion that in outlying districts, until a Reserve Force can be established in aid of the permanent Constabulary Force, that it is desirable that the Government should encourage the formation of Militia Volunteer Companies consisting of approved men of the First Class Militia; these men should be engaged for a period of five years. Upon enlistment a bounty of £1 10s. should be offered; they should be clothed, and drilled with the permanent force for twenty-four consecutive days at some convenient season of the year, being paid at the rate of four shillings per day for such drills; and that they be allowed to wear their clothing on Sundays throughout the year.

19. In the event of internal disturbance, these Volunteers (Militia) to be first called out, and first marched in support of the permanent force.

20. That the number of such Militia in each district be limited to such extent as the Government may deem necessary.

21. The Committees invite the attention of the Government to the great want of rifle ranges and targets throughout the Colony generally. They have been informed that in the Waikato district, where a force of 200 Armed Constabulary and 600 Armed Settlers are on actual service, there is only one range (made by the settlers), and that the signal flags are the property of a private individual. They recommend that a range and three regulation targets should be established at the head-quarters of each company of Militia or Volunteers in scattered districts, or at some central and convenient place in large centres of population; and that, in the matter of practice ammunition (under proper supervision), the Government be liberal.

22. It is desirable that proper magazines be formed at the chief centres of population, and that assistance should be granted to the Volunteer Corps in the erection of drill sheds and armouries. Also, that every Adjutant of Militia or Volunteers throughout the Colony be supplied with implements for the instruction of musketry.

23. The Committees further recommend, in regard to the ordinary Volunteer Corps, that the whole numbers of men to be accepted and enrolled in each Province in the Middle Island should be limited to 1½ per cent. of the whole population, and to ¼ per cent. in the North Island.

24. That the capitation grant be paid to the Treasurer of each corps, and form part of the funds of the company, and that the standard of efficiency be raised. Each corps or battalion to have power to make by-laws, for the regulation of their drill, suited to the circumstances of their position; the rules to be approved by the Defence Minister.

25. The Commanding Officer of a district to have power to dismiss a Volunteer from the service, on the report of the captain of the corps, for non-attendance, irregularity, inefficiency, or insubordination; but such Volunteer shall have the right to ask for a Court of Inquiry, to be composed of three officers not of his own company; the report of the Court to be final. Any Volunteer so dismissed shall not be eligible for admission into other corps. An amendment of the Volunteer Act to that effect is required.

26. Candidates for admission to the force to be required to undergo a preliminary drill; when certified as efficient in squad drill, and in the manual and platoon exercises, a candidate shall be eligible to fill a vacancy in any particular corps.

27. It is also recommended that the boys at the public schools throughout the Colony should be trained in military exercises, and that Cadet Corps be formed of the most efficient—the number of Cadets in the Middle Island being limited to one-half per cent. of the population, and in the North Island to one per cent. The captain in each Cadet Corps should be an adult.

27th October, 1871.

W. D. H. BAILLIE,
Chairman of Joint Committee.