

CRICHTON 2 - WILLS CASE

EXPEDITION READY TO PUNISH ARNHEM LAND BLACKS

**Party at Darwin Waiting For Authority
From Federal Government**

FIGHTING AND BLOODSHED FEARED

DARWIN, Friday.—A punitive expedition against the Caledon Bay natives who killed Constable McColl and five Japanese trepang fishermen, stands ready, awaiting authority from the Federal Government.

POLICE are mustered at headquarters, and the Government boat Maroubra is standing by. Fighting and bloodshed will be inevitable if the party is allowed to leave, for the Arnhem Land natives are fierce and cunning. Because of their reputation for savagery and treachery very few whites or Japanese venture into their territory.

CONSTABLE McCOLL lost his life while trying to arrest the murderers of the Japanese trepangers.

MINISTER WORRIED

Reluctant to Authorise More Bloodshed

CANBERRA, Friday.—The Minister for the Interior (Mr. Perkins) admitted tonight that he was perturbed at the prospect of an expedition of reprisal going out against the Caledon Bay aborigines. He had been advised from Darwin, he said, that an expedition would be necessary to uphold the prestige of the whites against the natives, but he was reluctant to set in train events which might lead to further bloodshed.

Before he would authorise the expedition, he said, he would talk the matter over with the Prime Minister and would also communicate with the secretary of the department (Mr. Brown), who had reached Mt. Isa on his way to Darwin on a departmental tour of inspection.

"I discussed the question with the Minister in Charge of Territories (Mr. Marr) today," added Mr. Perkins, "and he said that in similar circumstances he would have no hesitation in sending an expedition against one of the New Guinea tribes. I feel, however, that in the case of the Australian aborigine the position may be different, and I intend to make inquiries as to the tribes involved before I let the expedition go."

As certain necessary equipment has still to be provided before the expedition can start, Mr. Perkins says that there is no urgency about making a decision.

Urges Parley Instead of Expedition

THE Rev. C. Nash, who is well acquainted with the locality and the tribe, said last night a punitive expedition against the Caledon Bay natives would serve no useful purpose.

"The blacks in this part of the north have repaid their independence more fully than those in any other part of Australia," he added. "Far better would be to send some one whom the blacks can trust, for instance a missionary from Groote Eylandt. It might be advisable for the Government to ask the missionaries to parley with the natives."