At times we have all heard people crying out against the waste of resources that are being put into the defence of our country. This attitude, with hungry millions of people not far from our northern shores, at the least is playing into the hands of the communists at the worst it is support of Communist propaganda. The question is just how much is this country worth with its great potential of haven for millions more Australians than we have at present.

Defence of our country is insurance and safeguard for future generations. It is normal practice for farmers to insure their buildings, fences and stock against fire in our summer months, we insure our cars against theft or damage, while shops, houses and factories in the towns and cities are insured by their owners against damage of many kinds. Many of us insure our lives that we may enjoy greater prosperity as we get older or so that when we die, greater security and provision will be left for our families. All these things are so normal and accepted that we are surprised more if they are not done than if they are.

In every corner of the land the Government does its best to insure us all against danger from within. Many of you will remember the riots that broke out in Melbourne during Cup week in 1927, after the police were withdrawn from duty because of a strike. It was necessary to call for volunteers to keep order and peace in the city and even so one volunteer and several rioters lost their lives. Calmly and quietly our police force goes about its business enforcing the just and fair law. In things great and small, whether it be a parking offence, or a question of murder, they add their bit to our general peace, that we may leave our homes and expect to find them as we left them when we return, that our children may wander about without fear of molestation.

In these things the police are an insurance against civil disturbance. We expect the police and the government to do this job, if they did not we would soon demand the reason why.

When we move further afield the need for insurance is not so evidently recognised, but what is the good of safeguarding domestic peace if we do not take steps to prevent disturbance from without our borders. The only way we can do this is to be strong within ourselves, to develop our resources that we may support more people and finally to have the nucleus of a defence corps constantly at our disposal. The £200 million a year we spend directly on defence and defence research surely is not too high a price to pay for the future security and happiness of Australia.

It is a wrong thing to suggest that possession of such a defence corps shows a warlike attitude. Within our borders we do not hear people saying that the existence of a necessary and efficient police force displays an anti-social attitude. We know very well that if these men were not present everywhere to protect our lives that it would be an open invitation to that small band of law-breakers, the failures and mistakes found in every community, to steal and pillage without fear of apprehension. In the same way a defenceless country is at the mercy of people in other lands, who having failed to create peaceful societies within their own borders, seek only to conquer and disrupt the peace and prosperity of contented nations.

We must remember too that a strong country is less likely to be attacked than a weak and wealthy one. Australia is obviously wealthy with great resources yet undeveloped, weak and defenceless she is an open invitation to the 1000 million Asians in the north.

We must combine to insure Australia just as each year we insure on our houses, farms shops and factories. The two things are not separate units but part of one live body, a part of our Australia which offers a great future for all of us, a future that must be safeguarded and defended that Australians may always remain free (and proud) in their own country.

Above all we must not betray our men and women who have fought in four wars, we must remember wives who lost their husbands, and children who have grown up without knowing their Australian fathers, we must remember the men who were disabled and who suffered in these wars, many of whom made the greatest sacrifice that we may live and prosper.
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