

PART I.—RECOMMENDATIONS.

STRATEGICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

1. It is an axiom held by the British Government that the Empire's existence depends primarily upon the maintenance of adequate and efficient naval forces. As long as this condition is fulfilled, and as long as British superiority at sea is assured, then it is an accepted principle that no British dominion can be successfully and permanently conquered by an organized invasion from overseas.

2. But in applying this principle to Australasia, considerations of time and space cannot be disregarded. The conduct of a great war depends upon the calculated and proper combination of naval, military, and diplomatic forces; and it is quite conceivable that in the future, as in the past, national considerations may require the concentration of British naval forces in one or other theatre of operations. It follows that, in seas remote from such a concentration, the British naval forces may find themselves for the moment inferior in force to an actual or potential enemy. In such a situation, although our ultimate superiority at sea might not be a matter of doubt, some time might elapse before our command of the sea was definitely assured in all waters. It therefore becomes the duty of all self-governing dominions to provide a military force adequate not only to deal promptly with any attempt at invasion, but also to insure local safety and public confidence until our superiority at sea has been decisively and comprehensively asserted. For this reason it has recently been agreed that the Home forces of the United Kingdom should be so organized as to compel an enemy contemplating an invasion to make the attempt on such a scale as to be unable to evade our naval forces. The same arguments apply to Australasia, and its land forces should be calculated and organized on this basis.

STRENGTH REQUIRED.

3. In estimating the strength of the land forces necessary to meet this requirement, three principal factors should be considered—

- (a.) The great ocean distances which lie between Australia and the territory of any possible enemies.
- (b.) The armed strength and power of transportation over sea of any conceivably hostile nation.
- (c.) The vast extent, and railway communication, of the Australian Continent, which covers an area of 2,948,366 square miles, and possesses a coast-line of 12,210 miles; as contrasted with the smallness of its population, 4,275,000 souls, of whom 1,295,000 are males of a fighting-age.

4. Consideration of these factors leads me to estimate the land forces required at 80,000 fighting-troops. Of these numbers, half would be required to secure the larger cities and defended ports from attack, and so to maintain the public confidence and national credit, while the other half would be free to operate as a mobile striking-force anywhere in Australia.

5. But the best defence is generally by taking the offensive, and there should therefore be no difference in the enrolment, organization, and equipment of any unit.

ORGANIZATION OF FORCE.

6. The Defence Bill, 1909, which has just been passed by the Commonwealth Parliament, gives effect to the principle that every citizen should be trained to defend his country, and I therefore propose to base the following advice as to the manner in which the force of 80,000 fighting-men should be enrolled, organized, and trained on the principle embodied in that Act, which is designed to call into existence a National Citizen Force.

7. In my opinion, the forces should be organized as—

- 21 brigades of 4 battalions each—84 battalions of Infantry.
- 28 regiments of light horse,
- 49 four-gun field batteries, and
- 7 four-gun heavy and howitzer batteries, the whole totalling 224 guns.
- 7 communication companies and 14 field companies of Engineers.

Departmental troops to be provided in proportion.

8. The peace and war establishments of units are given in detail in Tables V and VI, but the rank and file may be summarised as—

	Rank and File.	
	Peace.	War.
Battalion	750	1,001
Regiment of light horse	350	470
Battery	130	146

9. The peace establishment would be found from the 80,000 trained soldiers, and the augmentation to war establishment will be provided by the addition of the recruits and the 25-26-year men.

10. In this connection I wish to explain that, while taking the Defence Acts, 1903-9, as the basis of my proposals, I have departed from the training-periods therein prescribed, because—

- (a.) While the cadet-training is valuable as a preparation, it cannot, in my opinion, replace recruit-training, which is a necessary preliminary to the production of an efficient and trained citizen soldier. For this reason I class the 18-19-year men as recruits, over and above the peace establishment of 80,000 men, but liable to be put in the ranks in war.
- (b.) Soldiers to be efficient should be exercised in camp annually, otherwise the men lose the incentive to home training, the habit of working in units, of moving and living in numbers, and of ready obedience to orders.