

## Defence begins at home

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Politicians talk endlessly about defence spending, weapons, and armies. But the first line of defence in any country is not military hardware. It is the stability of the society itself.

Do people feel secure?

Do they trust their institutions?

Do they believe government works for them?

When living standards fall, housing becomes unaffordable, and public services collapse, a country becomes divided and fragile. And a fragile society cannot defend itself.

At a time when global tensions are rising and economic shocks are becoming more common, resilience at home may be the most important defence strategy of all.

In this video, I explain why national security begins with social security and public trust.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZEe-oaqNPs?si=n6R9db1log2fSojE>

This is the audio version:

[https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=pgywr-1a672d2-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&fonts=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=auto&logo\\_link=episode\\_page&btn-skin=c73a3a](https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=pgywr-1a672d2-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&fonts=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=auto&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a)

This is the transcript:

It's annoying to discover that the world is emerging into an economic crisis at a moment when I don't feel physically at my best, as is apparent, I suspect, to you if you are watching this video, but there are things to still talk about, so I hope you'll put up with the fact that I sound a bit nasally this morning.

Number one on my list of concerns is that if you want to defend a country, and right now our government is talking about defence, the first thing you must do is defend the people who live within it. That is not what governments usually talk about when it comes to defence, though. They talk about weapons, armies, and military spending, and, of course, those things do matter; I'm not pretending otherwise, but they are not the first line of defence in any country.

The first line of defence is whether a society itself is stable and resilient.

Do the people who live in a country feel secure?

Do they trust their institutions?

Do they believe their government is on their side?

Those are the questions that have to be answered, or else the country itself will become fragile.

People cannot be encouraged to fight for a country when the country itself is weak.

When living standards fall, when housing becomes unaffordable, when public services collapse, and when people lose trust in the system, they become angry and divided, and a divided country is a weak country.

That's the sort of country we are living in now, and this matters greatly because we are entering a far more uncertain world than normal at present.

Wars are becoming more common. Global tensions are rising. Economic shocks are happening more frequently. In that kind of world, resilience is the number one defence strategy. A country that supports its people is stronger. A country that leaves its people insecure is unstable.

So, if governments want to deliver national security, and I think that ours needs to, at this point in time, they need to understand something very simple. You cannot build a strong country by making its people afraid, because in the end, defence begins at home.