

JULIUS CAESAR AND HIS TIMES

Unit 6 – Talking to Rome



CLAH7002

Praise for Caesar

“The war with Gaul, O conscript fathers, has been carried on actively since Caius Caesar has been our commander-in-chief... Even that great man, Caius Marius, whose godlike and amazing valour came to the assistance of the Roman people in many of its distresses and disasters, was content to check the enormous multitudes of Gauls who were forcing their way into Italy, without endeavouring to penetrate himself into their cities and dwelling-places... But I see that the counsels of Caius Caesar are widely different. For he thought it his duty, not only to war against those men whom he saw already in arms against the Roman people, but to reduce the whole of Gaul under our dominion.” – **Cicero** *On the Consular Provinces* 13.32. [speech deliver in 56 BC]

“Nature had previously protected Italy by the Alps... But still it will be the work of one or two summers finally to bind the whole of Gaul in everlasting... Let, then, Gaul be left in the guardianship of that man to whose valour, and good faith, and good fortune it has already been entrusted. If, in truth, he, having been distinguished by such marked kindness of Fortune, were unwilling to risk the favour of that fickle goddess too often; if he were anxious himself to return to his country, to his household gods, to that dignity which he sees in store for him in this city, to his most charming children, and to his most illustrious son-in-law [Pompey]; if he were impatient to be borne in triumph as a conqueror to the Capitol, crowned with the illustrious laurel of victory; if, in short, he were anxious of some disaster, as no event can now add so much glory to him as a mishap might deprive him of – still it would be your duty to insist on all those affairs being brought to a end by the same man who has begun them so successfully. But when he has not yet satisfied his own desire for glory and for the safety of the republic, and as he prefers coming at a later period to reap the rewards of his toils rather than not discharging to the full the duty which the republic has committed to him...” – **Cicero** *On the Consular Provinces* 13.33-34.

Signs of Opposition

- ▣ Attacks on Caesar's consular acts by L. Domitius Ahenobarbus and C. Memmius (Praetors of 58 BC).
- ▣ Publius Clodius – law exiling those who execute citizens without trial.
- ▣ Clodius takes son of Armenia king out of prison and strips Deiotarus of some of his privileges.
- ▣ Bill passed to allow Cicero's return (4th August 57).

“But as soon as it was known that he had fled, Clodius caused a vote of banishment to be passed upon him, and issued an edict that all men should refuse him fire and water and that no man should give him shelter within five hundred miles of Italy. Now, most men paid not the slightest heed to this edict out of respect for Cicero... As for Clodius, after driving Cicero away he burned down his villas, and burned down his house, and erected on its site a temple to Liberty; the rest of his property he offered for sale and had it proclaimed daily, but nobody would buy anything.” – **Plutarch Cicero 32.1, 33.1.**

- ▣ Cn. Cornelius Lentulus Marcellinus (56) proposes to make Cisalpine Gaul consular for 54 BC.
- ▣ Opposition by L. Marcius Philippus to the election of Crassus and Pompey for consulship of 55 BC.
- ▣ L. Domitius Ahenobarbus made known his intention to oust Caesar from his Command.
- ▣ Tribune L. Antistius attempted unsuccessfully to prosecute Caesar.

“After Caesar had fallen upon warlike nations and at great hazards conquered them, and when it was believed that he had attacked the Germans even during a truce and slain three hundred thousand of them, there was a general demand at Rome that the people should offer sacrifices of good tidings, but Cato urged them to surrender Caesar to those whom he had wronged, and not to turn upon themselves, or allow to fall upon their city, the pollution of his crime.” – **Plutarch *Cato the Younger* 51.1.**

The Renewed Compact

- Crassus travels to Caesar in Cisalpine Gaul at Ravenna (8-13 April 56 BC).
- Pompey meets Caesar (and Crassus?) on 17th April at Luca.
- 120-200 senators are said to have been present.
- Consulship for Crassus and Pompey (55 BC).
- 5 years proconsular commands for Pompey and Crassus.
- Extension of Caesar's command for further 5 years.
- Pay granted for Caesar's four new legions.
- Cicero starts to more clearly work for interests of the triumvirs.

“Later Crassus and Pompey were appointed consuls after an interregnum, as no one else of the earlier candidates opposed them. To be sure, Lucius Domitius, who canvassed for the office up to the very last day of the year, set out from his house for the assembly just after dark, but when the slave who carried the torch in front of him was slain, he became frightened and went no farther. Hence, since no one at all opposed them, and furthermore since Publius Crassus, who was a son of Marcus and at that time lieutenant under Caesar, brought soldiers to Rome for this very purpose, they were easily chosen...” – **Dio Cassius 39.31.**

“Accordingly, he filled all the rest with hopes and loaded them with money, and sent them away; but between himself, Pompey, and Crassus the following compact was made: these two were to stand for the consulship, and Caesar was to assist their candidacy by sending large numbers of his soldiers home to vote for them; as soon as they were elected, they were to secure for themselves commands of provinces and armies, and to confirm Caesar's present provinces to him for another term of five years.” – **Plutarch *Pompey* 51.4.**

The Partnership Breaks Down

Death of Julia (August 54 BC)

“Thus it came to pass that even those who found most fault with Pompey's friendship for Caesar could not blame him for the love he bore his wife. However, she conceived again and gave birth to a female child, but died from the pains of labour, and the child survived her only a few days. Pompey made preparations to bury her body at his Alban villa, but the people took it by force and carried it down to the Campus Martius for burial, more out of pity for the young woman than as a favour to Pompey and Caesar.” – **Plutarch *Pompey* 53.4.**

“...to retain his relationship and friendship with Pompey, Caesar offered him his sister's granddaughter Octavia in marriage, although she was already the wife of Gaius Marcellus, and asked for the hand of Pompey's daughter, who was promised to Faustus Sulla.” – **Suetonius *Divus Julius* 27.1.**

Death of Crassus (53 BC)

- In 55 BC Crassus raises an army in order to march on the Parthians.
- Crassus reaches Syria in the Spring of 54 BC – takes control of troops, about seven legions.
- Crassus crosses Euphrates at Zeugma (instead of going north through Armenia) in Spring 53 BC.
- In May Crassus reaches Carrhae – abandoned by his allied cavalry.
 - ▣ Romans suffer under hail of arrows until nightfall.
 - ▣ Crassus and his small escort were killed while heading towards “negotiations”.
 - ▣ About 10,000 Roman soldiers escaped to Syria, another 10,000 had been captured by Parthians.



Violence and Bribery in Rome

- ❑ Bribery scandal in September 54 – consuls and praetors not elected till summer of 53.
- ❑ Gang violence between Clodius and Milo (53 BC) – riots sparked by Clodius' murder on 18th January 52 BC.
- ❑ Pompey elected Consul without colleague for 52 BC – motion proposed by M. Bibulus.

The people in the city heard of this toward evening and were thrown into a terrible uproar; to the factions it served as an incentive to war and misdeeds, while those who were neutrals, even though they hated Clodius, yet on account of humanity and because on this excuse they hoped to get rid of Milo also, showed indignation.” – **Dio Cassius 40.48.**

“...the people carried the body of Publius Clodius into the Senate House where, after piling up benches, platforms, tables, and books, they cremated him. With Clodius the Senate House itself went up in flames, the Basilica Porcia, which adjoined the Senate House also burned down.” – **Asconius On Cicero's Milo 29.**