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wasted the land, captured the town itself and destroyed it. After these operations they returned home, where they found that the Peloponnesians were no longer in Attica but had also withdrawn.

All the time the Peloponnesians were in Athenian territory and the Athenians were away on naval ventures the plague was taking its toll both of the Athenians in the armed forces and those in the city. Indeed it was even said that the Spartans were making haste to leave the territory through their fear of the plague, since they learned from those deserting the city that it was present there and they could at the same time see people burying their dead. But in this invasion they did in fact stay longer than ever before and despoiled all the land, remaining in Attica for about forty days.

During the same summer Hagnon son of Nicias and Cleopompos son of Cleinias, who were fellow generals with Pericles, took over the army he had employed and went straight on to attack the Chalcidians in Thrace and Poteidae (which was still under siege). On their arrival they brought siege-engines to bear on Poteidae and did all they could to take it. But they [2] made no progress either in capturing the city or in achieving any other objective commensurate with their efforts; for the plague had attacked them here too and was a terrible affliction for the Athenians, wreaking destruction on their army as even soldiers who had previously been healthy now caught the disease from those in Hagnon’s army. (Phormio, and his 1,600 men, however, were no longer in the Chalcidice.) Hagnon [3] therefore returned to Attica with his ships, having in the space of about forty days lost to the plague 1,050 hoplites from a total of 4,000, while the original force of soldiers stayed in the area and went on besieging Poteidae.

After the second invasion by the Peloponnesians the Athenians had undergone a change of heart. Their land had been ruined a second time and they were feeling the combined pressure of the plague and the war. They now began to criticise Pericles, holding him responsible for permitting them to go to war and for being the agent of the misfortunes they had encountered; and they became eager to come to terms with the Spartans. They even sent ambassadors to them, though to no effect. And in complete despair they turned their anger on Pericles. When he saw [4] that they were suffering in the present situation and were reacting just as he had himself expected he called a meeting (he was still a general), wanting to give them fresh heart and draw the sting of their anger and so

restore them to a calmer and more confident frame of mind. And he came forward and spoke as follows: [5]

‘I have been expecting your outbreak of feeling against me – and I know the reasons for it. I have therefore summoned this assembly for a particular purpose. I mean to administer some reminders to you and take you to task for any misplaced resentment against me or any undue weakening in the face of difficulties.

I hold that a city confers greater benefits on its individual citizens [6] when it is succeeding as a whole than it does when the citizens flourish individually but the city fails collectively. A man can be doing well in his own affairs, but if his country is destroyed he nonetheless falls with her; on the other hand if he is faring badly while his country is faring well, then he is more likely to come through safely. Therefore, since the state can bear the misfortunes of individuals but each one of them is incapable of bearing hers, [7] it must follow that all should rally to her defence – and not do as you are now doing! In your distress at your domestic misfortunes you are sacrificing our common security, and you are not only blaming me for advocating war but are also blaming yourselves for supporting that decision. I am the object of your anger, but I think I am as good as any man at knowing what has to be done and communicating it. I also love my city [8] and am above corruption. The man who can conceive a policy but [9] cannot expound it might as well never have had the ideas, while the man who can do both these things but is unpatriotic is unable to speak out with the same loyalty; and if he has the loyalty too but cannot resist money, then for that one reason all the other qualities would be up for sale. So, if you were persuaded by me to go to war because you believed me to be at least to some degree better qualified than others in these respects, then I cannot reasonably now be blamed for anything like misconduct.

If people are free to choose and are in other respects faring well, then it would be the height of folly to go to war. But if one is forced to

[1] This is Pericles’ last speech. Dionysius was highly critical of it, both on grounds of style and logic (Thuc. 1.24–7), but it is now rightly seen as a very powerful and important complement to the more famous Funeral Speech of 55–496, setting out the realities of Athenian imperial policy to justify his own military strategy.
[3] There may be a subtle point of logic or emphasis here in that Pericles chooses the formulation ‘each one of them is incapable’ rather than the expected ‘no one of them is capable’ (the usual rendering).
[4] Philopatia, a term Alcibiades later exploits for his own purposes at VI 90.2.
choose between giving in to your neighbours with the immediate result of subjection or risking danger to secure success, more blame attaches to the man who runs away from danger than the one who stands up to it. I have not changed and my position remains the same. What has happened is that you were persuaded to go to war when you were still unscathed but you regret it now that you are suffering harm, and with your resolve weakened you have come to think my policy wrong because each of you is already experiencing the suffering while none can yet see evidence of the benefit; and now that you have been visited by this great disaster – with very little warning – you lack the strength of mind to persevere with the policy you decided on. The spirit is crushed when something so sudden, unexpected and so completely unaccountable comes along; and that is what has happened to you, especially as regards the plague. Nevertheless, since you come from a great city and were brought up in a way of life worthy of her, you must willfully endure even the worst misfortunes and do nothing to eclipse your fame. After all, people feel as justified in blaming someone who is too faint-hearted to live up to the reputation he already enjoys as they do in hating someone who is arrogant enough to grasp at a reputation he does not deserve. You must therefore put aside private sorrows and concentrate on securing our common safety.

As for your misgivings about the hardships involved in this war – that they may prove to be great and yet we may still lose in the end – I have often enough demonstrated to you on other occasions that these fears are groundless, and those arguments should now suffice. But I have a further point to make about what your empire and its sheer size mean for you, which you never seem to have fully taken in yourselves and which I have not dealt with in earlier speeches either. Nor would I do so now, since it involves a rather boastful claim, if I did not see that you were so unreasonably dejected. You think that your rule extends only over your allies, but I would point out that of the two realms available – the land and the sea – you are absolutely dominant throughout the latter, including not only the parts you already occupy but anywhere further you might wish to go too. With the naval power you now possess there is no one to stop you sailing the world’s seas – neither the Great King of Persia nor any other people on earth.

1 Pericles several times emphasizes his consistency, here and at I 14.1 and II 13.2. Clion imitates the claim at III 38.1.
2 It was in fact stated, but not developed as an argument, at II 47.4.

This power cannot be compared with the use of your houses and land, which you regard as such a great deprivation. That is self-evident and there is therefore no good reason to take these things so hard. By contrast, you should make light of them and regard the land and houses just as the gardens and ornamental symbols of your wealth. You should also recognize that if we hold fast to our freedom and come through safely we shall easily make good these losses, but that once you become subject to others then even past acquisitions have a habit of disappearing. You must match the twofold example of your fathers: they worked hard to gain their possessions, which were not inherited from others, and then in addition they handed them on safely to you. Remember that losing what one has is more shameful than failing to acquire something more.

Confront your enemies not just with confidence but with disdain. Any fool who strikes lucky can boast, even a coward; but the pride of disdain belongs to the man who has the good judgement to believe that he is better than his opponents – which is the case with us. When luck is not a factor on either side it is intelligence, derived from this sense of superiority, that fortifies one’s courage, placing its trust less in hope, whose force depends on desperation, than in a judgement based on the facts, which offers more reliable foresight.

It is right for you to uphold the honour, in which you all take such pride, that your city derives from its empire; but if you pursue the privileges of prestige you must also shoulder its burdens. And do not suppose that what is at stake here is a simple issue of freedom versus slavery. On the contrary, it is also about loss of empire and the danger from the hatred your empire has brought you. Nor can you now give up possession of the empire, should anyone be frightened by the present situation and try to make a manly virtue of non-involvement. For by now your empire is like a tyranny, which it seems wrong to take but perilous to let go.

1 *edos* (what is 'reasonable' or 'fair' or 'right') is grammatically the key word introducing all the clauses in this long and complex sentence (which in the Greek extends right to the end of section 3). The word is repeated at 63.1.
2 There is word-play in the Greek here between *phronema* ('pride') and *kaiaphronema* ('contempt'), which Dionysius criticized as vulgar and sophistical rhetoric (Thuc. 46).
3 'Intelligence' here is *noun* and 'judgement' is *gnome*. Sections 4–5 are very complex and compressed but the basic thought seems clear: it is reasonable to be confident when you know you have certain definite advantages.
4 *Apragnosia*, see glossary. Here it is clearly ironic.
5 A similar thought is expressed by the Corinthians at I 12.3, Clion at III 37.2 and Euphemus at VI 85.1.
Men who can suggest this would soon destroy their city if they persuaded others to share their view – as they would destroy any other city they set up under their own control elsewhere. The inactive can only survive, accompanied by an active element, and inactivity is not an advantage in a state that rules others, only one that is subject and seeks safety in submission.

Do not be led astray by citizens like these and do not direct your anger at me when you yourselves joined me in the decision to go to war – not even though the enemy has invaded us and has reacted as you might expect to your unwillingness to submit; and even though this plague has been inflicted on us, coming out of nowhere (it is in fact the only thing out of all that has happened to have defied prediction). I know it is largely because of this that I am even more a hated figure now – unjustly so, unless you get some positive gain you did not reckon on you put that down to me as well. We must treat afflictions sent by the gods as necessary ills and bear with courage those that come from our enemies. That was the character of our city in the past and you should do nothing to reverse it now.

Remember that the reason why Athens has the greatest name in the world is because she never yielded to misfortunes but has to an extraordinary degree, lavished her lives and labours upon war. She has acquired the greatest power that has ever existed, whose memory will live on for ever, and even if we do now have to accept some inevitable loss (everything being subject to natural decline) posterity will always recall that we were the Greeks to rule over most fellow Greeks, in the greatest of all wars we held out against them, whether in combination or separately, and that we inhabited a city which was the richest in every resource and the greatest.

True, those given to apathy may disparage all this; but men of action and ambition will want to emulate us and those who fail to match these achievements will be envious. To be hated and unpopular in the short term has been the common experience of all those who have presumed to rule over other people than themselves; the wise decision is to accept the odium in pursuit of the larger purpose. For hatred is short-lived, but the brilliance of present deeds shines on to be remembered in everlasting glory.

Fix your minds, then, on achieving that fine future to come and on incurring no present shame, and commit yourselves to both objectives. Do not negotiate with the Spartans, and do not let them see you weighed down by your present troubles, since those who in the face of misfortunes show the least distress of mind and the greatest active resistance, be they cities or men, these are the ones to prevail.

With such words Pericles tried to dispel the anger the Athenians felt towards him and distract them from their present troubles. On matters of public policy they did take his advice – they made no more approaches to the Spartans and committed themselves more wholeheartedly to the war; but as individuals they were all feeling the pains of their sufferings. In the case of the populace this was because they started out with little enough and were now deprived even of that; while in the case of the leading men it was because they had lost their fine property in the country with all their buildings and expensive furnishings, and worst of all because they had war instead of peace. Indeed the people as a whole did not put aside their anger towards him until they had punished him with a fine.

But not much later, in the way typical of people when acting as a crowd, they again chose him as general and entrusted all their affairs to him, having now become inured to their private pains and because they regarded him as indispensable to the needs of the city as a whole. Indeed, as long as he was the city's leader in the time of peace he ruled them with moderation and kept Athens safe and secure, and under him it reached the height of its greatness; and after the war broke out he then too showed himself a far-sighted judge of the city's strengths.

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1. There is a constant repetition of the same superlatives in this section, which I have reproduced as part of the rhetoric.
2. Literally, 'we Greeks ruled over most Greeks', which could mean 'we ruled over more Greeks than any other Greek state ever did' or 'we ruled over most of the Greek world, being ourselves Greeks'. I have tried to preserve something of the ambiguity, which may of course be deliberate.
3. This striking sentence has been much worked over. Literally, it is 'the brilliance of the moment and the future glory are left in everlasting remembrance'. Stalls and others have queried the text on the rather pedantic grounds that 'the brilliance of the moment' cannot logically last forever in the same way as 'future glory' can. But Macdonald is surely closer to the spirit of the original when he says, 'In this phrase Pericles rolls "present splendour and future fame" into one syntactical ball and tries to test them through the gates of oblivion' (Collected Essays, p. 153).
4. Whatever view one takes of Thucydides' authorial voice in the speeches it is clear that section 65, in which he ascribes Pericles' and his policies and gives his explanation for Athens' eventual defeat in the war, is one of the most important direct political statements of his own opinions in the whole work; it was evidently written at a late stage in composition since it refers to the failure of the Sicilian expedition in 413 and some subsequent events.
5. Surprisingly, Thucydides gives us no further information about the nature of the charge or the penalty in what must surely have been a celebrity case.
Pericles lived on two years and six months longer, and after he died his foresight about the war became still more fully recognised. He told them that if they held back, looked after their navy, did not try to extend their empire during the war and did not expose the city to risk, then they would prevail. But they did just the opposite of this in every way, and in other respects apparently unconnected with the war they were led by private ambition and personal greed to pursue policies that proved harmful both to themselves and to their allies; for when these policies succeeded they brought honour and benefit just to individuals but when they failed they were detrimental to the city in its war effort. The explanation for this was that Pericles, through his personal ability, his judgement and his evident integrity could freely restrain the masses. He led them more than he was led by them. That is, he did not say things just to please them in an unseemly pursuit of power, but owed his influence to his personal distinction and so could face their anger and contradict them. At any rate, whenever he sensed that arrogance was making them more confident than the situation merited he would say something to strike fear into their hearts; and when on the other hand he saw them fearful without good reason he restored their confidence again. So it came about that what was in name a democracy was in practice government by the foremost man.

His successors, by contrast, being more on a level with each other and in competition each to be first, began to surrender even the conduct of affairs to the whims of the people. The consequence was — this being a great city and one in possession of an empire — that many mistakes were made, in particular the Sicilian expedition. That was not so much a mistake of judgement about the enemy they were attacking as a failure on the part of those sending the men abroad to follow up this decision with further support for them. Instead they engaged in personal intrigues over the leadership of the people and so blunted the effectiveness of the forces in the field and for the first time embroiled the city at home in factional turmoil.

Despite their failure in Sicily, involving most of their fleet as well as other forces, and the arrival of civil disorder in Athens, they nonetheless held out for eight years longer against their original enemies, who were joined now by the Sicilians and by the majority of the allies in revolt. They were also joined later on by Cyrus son of the King of Persia, who provided the Peloponnesians with money for their fleet. And they only finally capitulated when they fell on each other in private disputes and brought about their own ruin.

Thus there were ample reasons why Pericles was in a position to make his prediction that the city could easily prevail in the war over the Peloponnesians alone.

In the course of the same summer the Spartans and their allies made an expedition with 400 ships against the island of Zacynthus, which lies opposite Elis. The people of Zacynthus are colonists of the Achaeans from the Peloponnesian and were in alliance with the Athenians. There were 1,000 Spartan hoplites on board the invading fleet under the command of the Spartan Cnemus. They made a landing and devastated most of the land, but as the Zacynthians would not come to terms with them they sailed back home.

At the end of the same summer Aristaeus the Corinthian and three Spartan envoy, Aneristus, Nicolaus and Pratomidas, together with Timagoras of Tegea and Pollis of Argos (in his case in a private capacity) set out for Asia to visit the King and see if there was any way of persuading him to give them financial support and join in the war on their side. On the way they first called on Sitalces son of Teres in Thrace, meaning to do what they could to persuade him to break away from the Athenian alliance and lead an expedition to Potidaea, where there was a besieging Athenian force. They also wanted, as a particular objective, to arrange through him...
to cross the Hellespont to visit Pharnaces son of Pharnabazus who was to convey them up-country on to the King.

It so happened, however, that two Athenian envoys, Learchus son of Callimachus and Ameinides son of Phielenon, were with Stilaces and they persuaded his son Sadocus, who had become an Athenian citizen, to deliver the men into their hands in order to stop them crossing over to the King and so harming his adopted city. He agreed and while they were travelling across Thrace to get to the boat in which they were to make the crossing of the Hellespont he had them arrested before they could embark. He had already sent out a party of men to accompany Learchus and Ameinides with orders to hand the captives over to them, and they duly received them and conveyed them to Athens. When they arrived there the Athenians became afraid that Aristeus might escape and do them some fresh harm,1 because even before this he had evidently been responsible for all the incidents at Potidaea and in the Thracian region. They therefore put them all to death that very day, though they were given no trial and had things they wanted to say,2 and threw them into a pit. They claimed the justification that they were using the same means of defending their interests as the Spartans had done earlier when they put to death and threw into pits the Athenian and allied traders they had caught sailing round the Peloponnesse in merchant ships. For at the beginning of the war the Spartans had indeed killed everyone without exception whom they captured at sea, regarding them as enemy agents whether they were fighting on the side of the Athenians or were on neither side.

At about the same time, towards the end of summer, the Ambraciots together with a large barbarian force they had raised launched a campaign against Amphilochian Argos and the rest of Amphilochia. The origin of their hostility to the Argives was as follows. Amphilochian sons of Amphilochius founded Amphilochian Argos and colonised the rest of Amphilochia in the Ambracian Gulf after returning home after the Trojan War and finding himself dissatisfied with the state of affairs in Argos. He called it Argos after his native city. This city was the largest in Amphilochia with the most powerful group of settlers. Many generations later, under the pressure of misfortunes, they called in as fellow settlers the Ambraciots, who live on the borders of Amphilochia; and it was from them that they first learned to speak the Greek language, as they do now, as a consequence of living alongside them, while the rest of the Amphilochians remain barbarians.3 Eventually the Ambraciots expelled the Argives and took control of the city themselves. When that happened the Amphilochians placed themselves under the protection of the Acarnanians and together they called in the Athenians, who sent Phormio as general with thirty ships. When he arrived they took Argos by force and enslaved the Ambraciots, and the Amphilochians and the Acarnanians settled the place jointly. It was after this that the alliance between the Athenians and the Acarnanians was first concluded.

The Ambraciots originally conceived their enmity towards the Argives as a result of this enslavement of their people, and later in the war they launched this offensive with their own men, joined by some Chaonians and various other neighbouring barbarians. They came to Argos and took control of the countryside but were unable to capture the city by assault, so they returned home and the different tribes dispersed.

Such were the events of the summer.

Winter [II 69–70]

The following winter the Athenians sent twenty ships round the Peloponnesse under the command of Phormio. He made his base at Naupactus and kept watch to stop anyone either sailing into or out of Corinth and the Crisaean Gulf. They also sent six others to Caria and Lycia under the command of Melesanderus to collect tribute from them and prevent pirates from the Peloponnesian basing themselves there and interfering with the movement of merchant shipping from Phaselis and Phoenicia and from that part of the mainland. Melesanderus went inland with a force of Athenians from the ships and other allied troops, but he was killed in battle and lost part of these forces in the course of the defeat.

The same winter the Potidaeans found they could hold out against the siege no longer. The Peloponnesian invasions of Attica had done nothing to make the Athenians abandon the siege. The Potidaeans' own supplies of grain had run out and the people there were by this time forced to

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1 Aristaeus was last heard of at I 65 and was clearly a thorn in their side.
2 Another small atrocity that is made more poignant by the matter-of-fact reporting. The right to at least a hearing and a statement in self-defence was a basic one in Athenian judicial practice.
3 Literally, 'they were hellenised in respect of their language'. See note on I 2 for the importance of language in defining 'Greek' and 'barbarian' culture. This is the only fifth-century use of the verb helenizein.
extremes just to get food, and some had even tasted each other. In these circumstances, then, they opened discussions about terms with the Athenian generals in charge of operations against them: Xenophon, son of Euripides, Hestiodorus son of Aristocleides and Phanomachus son of Callimachus. The Athenians accepted the terms, conscious of the sufferings of their army in a place so exposed to winter weather and of the fact that their city had already expended 2,000 talents on the siege. The terms they therefore agreed were that the Potidaeans were to leave the city with their children, women and mercenaries, taking one garment apiece (two in the case of the women) and a fixed sum of money for the journey. So they left Potidae under protection of a truce and went into Chalcidice or anywhere they could. The Athenians back home, however, were critical of the generals for making an agreement without consulting them (thinking they could have taken control of the city on any terms they liked), and they later sent settlers of their own to Potidae and colonised it.

These were the events of the winter, and so ended the second year of the war Thucydides wrote.

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**Third year of the war, 429–28 [II 71–103]**

Summer [II 71–92]

The following summer the Peloponnesians and their allies did not invade Attica but instead launched a campaign against Plataea under the command of Archidamus, son of Zeuxidamus and king of the Spartans. After establishing his army's position he was about to start wasting the land, but the Plataeans quickly dispatched envoys to him with the following message:

'Archidamus and Spartans, this invasion of the territory of Plataea is an act of injustice and one unworthy both of you and of the men who were your fathers. Remember the commitment made by Pausanias son of Cleombrotus, himself a Spartan, when he had liberated Greece from the Persians with the help of those Greeks who were prepared to share the danger in the battle that was fought on our land. He made sacrifices to Zeus God of Freedom in the market-place of Plataea and, summoning together all the allies, granted the Plataeans the right to hold and occupy their land and city as an independent people; no one was to take up arms against them without just cause or to enslave them; and if they did so the

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1 The critic Dionysius of Halicarnassus greatly approved of this group of speeches (II 72–74) as models of style and relevance (Thuc. 36) and he contrasts them favourably with the [now more famous] Medean dialogue of V 84–113, though this may tell us more about him than the speeches themselves.

2 The Battle of Plataea of 479 BC.