XII.—Pompey's Policy before and after the Outbreak of the Civil War of 49 B.C.

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This paper tries to prove the following points: Pompey's decision to evacuate Italy in case of an open conflict with Caesar was taken half a year before the outbreak of the Civil War; the indignation of the Senate, when Rome had to be abandoned, prevented Pompey from revealing his decision until the necessity of evacuating Italy had become apparent to everybody; the loss of a large army at Corfinium was the fault not so much of its commander Domitius as of Pompey, who failed to inform Domitius of his decision before it was too late.

In the first letters he wrote after the evacuation of Rome by the Senate on January 17, 49 B.C., Cicero complains repeatedly that Pompey, who up to then had been full of confidence, had completely lost his head after the first news of Caesar's rapid advance.[1] In a letter written on February 25, when he had received news of the siege of Corfinium, we find him for the first time expressing some doubt concerning the reasons for Pompey's strange behavior.[2] Two days later he is convinced that his previous explanation of Pompey's attitude was completely wrong:[3] Pompey had evacuated Rome

[1] *Att.* 7.10.1: Cnaeus noster quid consilii ceperit capiatve, nescio, adhuc in oppidis coartatus et stupens; *Att.* 7.12.1 (Jan. 21): nam quod rogas curem ut scias quid Pompeius agat, ne ipsum quidem scire puto, nostrum quidem nemo; *Att.* 7.21.1 (Feb. 8): Cnaeus autem noster—o rem miseram et incredibilem—ut totus iacet! Non animus est, non consilium, non copiae, non diligentia; *Att.* 7.22.1 (Feb. 9): De Pompeio scio nihil, eumque, nisi in navem se contulerit, exceptum iri puto. O celeritatem incredibilem! huius autem nostri—sed non possum sine dolore accusare eum de quo angor et crucior; *Att.* 7.25 (Feb. 11): omnia facilius credere possum quam quod scribitis Pompeium exercitum habere . . . o rem miseram! malas causas semper obtinuit, in optima concidit. Quid dicam? nisi illud eum scisse . . . hoc nescisse; *Att.* 8.8.1 (Feb. 24): (Pompeius) aluerat Caesarem, eundem repente timere coeperat. . . . nihil ad bellum pararat, etc.

[2] *Att.* 8.9.3: Et mehercule quamvis amemus Cnaeum nostrum . . . tamen hoc, quod talibus viris non subvenit laudare non possum. Nam sive timuit, quid ignavius? sive . . . meliorem suam causam illorum caede fore putavit, quid iniustius?

[3] *Att.* 8.11.2: Hoc (that is, to be a *moderator rei publicae* according to the ideal described by Cicero in *Rep.* 5.8) Cnaeus noster cum ante nunquam tum in hac causa minime cogitavit. dominatio quaesita ab utroque est, non id actum, honesta et beata civitas ut esset. nec vero ille urbem reliquit quod eam tueri non posset, nec Italiam quod ea pelleretur, sed hoc a primo cogitavit, omnes terras, omnia maria movere, reges barbaros incitare, gentes feras in Italiam adducere, exercitus conficere maximos. Genus illud Sullani regni iam pridem appetitur, multis qui una sunt cupientibus.

not because he thought the city could not be defended, and he was now preparing for the evacuation of Italy not because he was compelled to do so or because he was really afraid of Caesar's army. On the contrary, he had planned it that way from the beginning: he wished to plunge the whole world into war, to levy great armies, to invade Italy by force; he had prepared to go to the East so that he could come back as the savior and at the same time as the master of Italy, like Sulla.

In a letter written in the middle of March Cicero goes even further and says that this had been Pompey's plan two years before the actual outbreak of the war.[4] In the letters written between February 27 and the middle of March, however, Cicero vacillates continuously, sometimes from day to day or even within the same letter,[5] between these two contradictory explanations of Pompey's attitude during the first weeks of the conflict.

The same uncertainty or disagreement concerning the motives of Pompey's attitude can be found in the modern literature on the period. Mommsen accepted Cicero's first explanation. In his opinion Pompey had at first been disposed to defend the capital, but in the general panic following Caesar's invasion of Italy, he first gave up Rome and later, when Caesar continued his rapid advance, the whole peninsula.[6] Mommsen's opinion was adopted by W. E. Heitland [7] and, it seems, by F. E. Adcock.[8] For, though Adcock does not discuss the question directly, he seems to imply

[4] *Att.* 9.10.6: Hoc turpe Cnaeus noster biennio ante cogitavit: ita sullaturit animus eius et proscripturit iam diu.

[5] *Att.* 8.16.2 (March 2): coniungoque me cum homine magis ad vastandam Italiam quam ad vincendum parato, dominumque expecto; *Att.* 9.1.3 (March 6): cedamus igitur et, ut boni cives simus, bellum Italiae terra marique inferamus et odia improborum rursus in nos, quae iam exstincta erant, incendamus et Lucceii consilia et Theophani persequamur; . . . dabimus hoc Pompeio quod debemus. Nam me quidem alius nemo movet: non sermo bonorum, qui nulli sunt, non causa, quae acta *timide* est, agetur improbe. Uni, uni hoc damus, ne id quidem roganti, nec suam causam, ut ait, agenti sed publicam; cf. also *Att.* 9.2A.2; 9.6.7; 9.7.1 and 4–5.

[6] Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte* 3^5.385ff. It is, by the way, noteworthy that Mommsen follows Caesar's account with such disregard of all other sources as to make Pompey leave Rome after the arrival of the news of Caesar's advance into Picenum, though Cicero's letters leave not the slightest doubt that Pompey had left Rome long before Caesar crossed the boundary of that territory and more than two weeks before news of this event arrived at Rome, and that he never came back to the capital afterwards (see *TAPhA* 72.128ff.).

[7] W. E. Heitland, *The Roman Republic* (Cambridge, 1909) 3.282ff.

[8] F. E. Adcock in *CAH* 9 (1932): "In the meantime (that is, while Caesar was conquering Picenum) Pompey had moved from Campania to Apulia. . . . He realised that it would be necessary to abandon Italy."

that Pompey did not arrive at the decision to abandon Italy until Caesar had occupied Picenum.

The first to object to this explanation was E. Meyer,[9] who contended that both in his earlier and in his later letters Cicero completely misunderstood the situation. In his opinion it is not true that long before the outbreak of the Civil War Pompey had planned to follow the example of Sulla, as Cicero suggests (*Att.* 8.11.2 and 9.10.6), but neither is it true that when the war broke out he completely lost his head. On the contrary, Pompey was the only one who saw the situation clearly and realized at once when he received the news of Caesar's advance, that the peninsula had to be abandoned. From this moment he took all the necessary steps to meet the situation, and it was only the stupidity of his republican associates that spoiled his plans during the first phase of the campaign. This latter point was elaborated more in detail by T. R. Holmes,[10] who, on the whole, adopted Meyer's views. Holmes also states expressly that Pompey committed a great initial blunder by committing himself to a struggle for which he was inadequately prepared, but that from then on he did everything to make good his initial error.

All the scholars mentioned so far, though differing from one another, agreed in rejecting Cicero's second explanation. The only one, as far as I can see, to accept it, at least to some extent, is R. Syme.[11] But his explanation is not quite identical with that of Cicero. He takes up Cicero's comparison between Pompey and Sulla and states that Pompey had always been playing a double game, and that he had hoped to employ the leading *nobiles* to destroy Caesar and so to gain the mastery. But—and in this respect Syme differs from Cicero—Pompey "became entangled in the embrace of perfidious allies" (that is, Cicero's republican friends) and so had to follow a course different from the one he would have preferred. This, according to Syme, led to the downfall of both Pompey and his allies.

There is one clearly marked difference between Syme's opinion and the views of almost all his predecessors. All earlier scholars explained Caesar's success either, like Mommsen, by the complete

[9] Eduard Meyer, *Caesars Monarchie und das Prinzipat des Pompejus* (Stuttgart, Cotta'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 3. Aufl., 1922) 300, note 2.

[10] T. Rice Holmes, *The Roman Republic and the Founder of the Empire* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1923) 3.12ff.

[11] Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford, Clarendon Press) 43ff.

panic and confusion into which Caesar's rapid advance had thrown both Pompey and his allies, or, like Meyer and Holmes, by the stupidity and lack of insight on the part of Pompey's republican associates.[12] In Syme's opinion, on the contrary, the failure of Caesar's opponents was caused rather by the too great eagerness with which the different groups and individuals followed their own diverging and often conflicting interests. They may have been lacking in long-range vision. But in the pursuit of their special and direct interests the majority of them was not apathetic or stupid or blundering, as most earlier scholars suggested, but acted with great intelligence and energy. Since Syme, however, does not discuss the pre-Augustan period very fully, he does not try to prove his theory by following it out in detail.

This disagreement among the most eminent modern historians of the epoch is not surprising if one considers the evidence provided by the ancient sources, which is puzzling and often contradictory. The fact, however, that these contradictions are found, not only in the secondary sources where they might be due to misinformation and misunderstandings, but also in the letters and contemporary utterances of the main actors on the political scene may perhaps show that the truth was more complex than indicated by the simple explanations that appear in most modern works. Since the civil war of 49 B.C. is indubitably not only one of the most interesting periods of ancient history but also the only one about which we have the most direct and intimate information, it is perhaps worth while to take up the question again, in an attempt, not to formulate a sweeping new theory, but merely to make a better balanced estimate of the great variety of factors that entered into a complicated historical situation.

It is obvious that if Cicero's second explanation[13] is correct we cannot hope to determine the exact time at which the strategic plan which Pompey later tried to follow took shape in his mind for the first time. For if this plan was not prompted by purely military necessity but was the result of preconceived long-range political considerations it was in the nature of a plan like this that it had to be kept utterly secret. Likewise it would be against all psychological probability to assume that anyone who begins to play with

[12] All the scholars quoted are extremely harsh in their judgment of Domitius Ahenobarbus. See also infra, p. 162.

[13] See supra, p. 145f.

a plan like this would at once decide upon its early execution. There can therefore be no direct evidence as to its early existence. But since we are dealing with a period concerning which we know so many details, a careful scrutiny of all ascertainable facts ought to yield some indirect evidence concerning the existence or non-existence of the plan before the actual outbreak of the war.

We shall begin our inquiry by attempting to answer a few questions of fact concerning the period immediately following Caesar's attack on Italy proper, namely: 1. what was Pompey's exact position in regard to the command of the republican forces? 2. did Pompey ever consider a defense of parts of the Italian peninsula by force of arms, and if so, what measures did he take to effect it? 3. when did Pompey for the first time make it clear to his associates that he no longer contemplated a defense of Italy under any circumstances? 4. what was the reaction of his associates to his plans, when he revealed them?

The first of these questions is comparatively easy to answer. At the last meeting of the Senate before the evacuation of Rome Cato proposed that Pompey be given supreme command over all forces.[14] But that Pompey did not receive an *imperium maius* then is proved both by the fact that he received it later in Epirus,[15] and by Pompey's letters to Domitius and the consuls[16] whom he addresses as equals in command. These same letters, however, show with equal clarity that in fact the grand strategy of the war had nevertheless been entrusted entirely to Pompey. There was no supreme war council, and, while Pompey is always careful to add *si vobis videtur*[17] or something to that effect[18] when addressing his equals in command, he never asks for their advice but always tells them of his decisions and views and urges them to act accordingly.

The remaining three questions which we have asked above must be answered together. Appian[19] opens his account with the statement that the consuls did not permit Pompey to follow his own

[14] Plut. 61.1. The expression used is στρατηγὸς αὐτοκράτωρ which technically would mean *dictator*. But everybody agrees that Plutarch rather meant some kind of *imperium maius*.

[15] Caes. *Civ.* 3.4; Lucan 5.44–49; cf. Holmes, *op. cit.* (see note 10), 432f.

[16] Cic. *Att.* 8.12A; 12B; 12C; 12D; cf. also *Att.* 8.6.2.

[17] *Att.* 8.12A.3.

[18] *Att.* 8.12B.2; 12C.3; etc.

[19] App. *BC* 2.36.

plans, which were those of a military expert,[20] and urged him to leave Rome for Southern Italy and to collect an army there as if the city had already been conquered, a statement which seems to imply that Pompey was unwilling to leave the city at this juncture. But in continuing his story Appian says that when Favonius reminded Pompey of his previous boast that he had only to stamp and armies would rise from the ground, Pompey exclaimed: "You will have these armies if you follow me and are not afraid to leave Rome, and if need be, Italy also." [21] He adds that Pompey at once left Rome for Campania and threatened those senators who, out of regard for their property, would refuse to follow him in order to take up the fight for the Republic. This latter utterance is also mentioned by Dio,[22] who does not mention the first one. But Dio adds in the next chapter [23] that the senators who left Rome did so in the expectation that they might have to go to Macedonia and Thrace,[24] "for they were well aware of Pompey's plans."

Both accounts agree that Pompey, immediately after the arrival of the first news of Caesar's invasion of Italy, gave very strong hints that Italy might have to be abandoned and in his public utterances placed great hope on a plan of reconquering Italy from the East, but that he left his associates some hope that Italy might be successfully defended by military force, and did not make it clear that the plan of abandoning Italy and waging war from the East was to be followed under all circumstances if Caesar was determined to seek a military decision.

So far there is nothing strange in the account given by the ancient authorities with the exception of the fact, which, according to Dio, Appian, and Plutarch [25] was at once pointed out by Favonius and others, namely, that up to the actual invasion of Italy by Caesar Pompey had always seemed extremely confident that Caesar could easily be crushed by military force, while now he spoke suddenly of the possible or even probable necessity of so staggering a measure as the abandonment of the whole peninsula, including the capital, to Caesar. Apart from this it seems natural and wise strategy in a situation like this to have two alternative plans, one for

[20] ἐμπειροπολέμως.
[21] App. *BC* 2.37.
[22] D.C. 41.6.1–2.
[23] *Ibid.* 7.3.
[24] This seems to be the meaning of καὶ in κἂν τῇ Μακεδονίᾳ in the passage quoted.
[25] Plut. *Pomp.* 61.1.

the defense of Italy and one in case this defense should fail. But if there were two alternative plans of this kind we should expect the first military measures taken to be for the execution of the first plan. Let us examine Cicero's and Pompey's letters in order to find out whether this was done.

In a letter written on January 19, the second day after the evacuation of Rome, Cicero says that Pompey had quoted Themistocles as his model.[26] This may refer merely to the evacuation of Rome though the fact that Themistocles took to the sea might lead to a different conclusion. But in a later letter of March 18 Cicero states that on January 17 he had seen Pompey full of fear, speaking of nothing but flight, and that he had continually repeated: "Sulla could do it. Am I not able to do the same?" [27] This reference to Sulla certainly points to a plan of conquering Italy from the East. Apart from this it is perhaps pertinent to point out that Pompey's words, while implying abandonment of Italy for the present, do not exactly express fear.

In a letter of March 17 Cicero says that he himself was present when Pompey discussed in detail his plans for a blockade of Italy.[28] These plans certainly implied that Italy would be abandoned by Pompey and his associates. Since Cicero when he wrote this letter had not met Pompey since January 23 the discussion referred to must have taken place between January 16 and 23. In a letter written on January 28 Cicero says that Pompey personally had informed him that within a few days he would be in possession of a reliable army and that the senators would be able to return to the city as soon as he (Pompey) had arrived in Picenum.[29] Consequently in a letter written on February 2 Cicero refers to the plan of evacuating Italy as if this plan had now been abandoned.[30] This sequence of letters certainly creates the impression that during the first week after the arrival of the news of the invasion of Italy the plan of abandoning the peninsula was not merely a second alternative in case the defense of Italy should fail, but that in all discussions it was very much in the foreground and in fact probably the only plan discussed as far as Pompey was concerned. But it

[26] *Att.* 7.11.3.

[27] *Att.* 9.10.2.

[28] *Att.* 9.9.2.

[29] *Att.* 7.16.2.

[30] *Att.* 7.17.1: de pueris cogitabam tum cum fuga ex Italia quaeri videbatur; cf. also *Att.* 7.26.1: itaque fuga quae parabatur repressa est.

may still seem that in the second week after the evacuation of Rome Pompey became more hopeful and changed his plans accordingly, but later, on account of Caesar's rapid advance through Picenum, returned to his earlier plan.

So far the evidence may still to some extent seem in agreement with Cicero's earlier opinion, which is also that of Mommsen, namely, that Pompey lost his head when he received news of Caesar's sudden action, was frightened at first, then unjustifiably hopeful, and then again full of fear. There remain, however, two somewhat incongruous facts. As pointed out above,[31] Pompey's reference to Themistocles and Sulla, especially in the form related by Cicero, does not express fear, but rather confidence in a prearranged plan. There remains at least a possibility that these utterances were made in order to cover up fear and confusion, so that Cicero's explanation may still be correct. The second incongruity consists in the fact that in a letter written on February 27 and addressed to Pompey himself Cicero complains that Pompey never before had given him a hint that he contemplated the evacuation of Italy.[32] Both the context and the wording leave no doubt whatever that Cicero in this passage is not complaining because Pompey did not inform him of a later decision to return to an earlier plan, but is actually saying that he had not been informed of the existence of the plan as such. Some commentators [33] have tried to justify Cicero's statement by pointing out that Pompey obviously had not informed Cicero personally of the plan. But this does not make the statement less insincere,[34] since, according to his own admission,[35] Cicero had been present when the plan was discussed, and at that time had been under the strong impression that this was the plan that would be followed. On the other hand, Cicero could hardly have made such a statement in a letter to Pompey, if the latter, when he discussed the plan in the middle of January, had instructed his officers and associates that in the immediate

[31] See supra, p. 151.

[32] *Att.* 8.11D.6: nam de Italia (sc. relinquenda) ***nihil*** mihi ***umquam*** ostenderas; cf. *Att.* 9.2A.2: qui enim amisso Corfinio denique certiorem me sui consilii fecit, is queretur Brundisium me non venisse?

[33] See, for instance, Tyrrell and Purser (*The Correspondence of Cicero*, vol. 4) in their comment on *Att.* 8.11D.5.

[34] J. D. Duff in *Journ. of Philol.* 33 (1914) 154–160 has shown in detail that this same letter of Cicero contains a great many other insincere statements and evasions of the truth, which do not concern us here.

[35] In addition to the passages quoted in notes 26–30, cf. also 8.21.2.

future all measures would have to be taken in accordance with this plan.[36] So far then we may state two rather strange facts. At the outbreak of the war, the man who was *de facto* the commander-in-chief discussed only one plan of action, giving the strongest hints that in all likelihood this plan would have to be followed, but did not instruct his officers that, unless events should take an unexpected turn, all measures were to be directed by this plan. One of his highest ranking associates, on the other hand, who in addition had accepted an important military commission, and who had been present when the plan was discussed, later denied that he had ever had the slightest suspicion that execution of this plan might be seriously considered.

Let us then turn to the period between January 26[37] and February 17, during which a double change in Pompey's plans might possibly have taken place.[38] For on the latter date, as we shall see later, Pompey definitely informed his associates that he was going to leave Italy as quickly as possible. This period was marked by Caesar's advance through Picenum, which started in the last days of January,[39] and the beginning of the siege of Corfinium, where L. Domitius Ahenobarbus was in command. The most important documents of this period are Pompey's letters to Cicero, Domitius, and the consuls.

On February 10 Pompey was informed by Q. Fabius that Domitius, when Fabius left him, had made preparations to leave Corfinium early on February 9 with all his troops in order to join Pompey at Luceria.[40] A few days later Pompey received a letter from Vibullius with the news that Domitius had changed his mind and decided to stay at Corfinium "because Caesar had arrived at Castrum Truentinum (north-east of Corfinium) from Firmum."[41] Pompey in his reply calls this reason *levis* and points out that the nearer Caesar approached the more urgent it was to unite the two major parts of the republican army before they could be separated by Caesar's legions.[42] He therefore urges him again to come to

[36] As to the strategic consequences of Pompey's attitude, see infra, p. 165.

[37] This is the date on which Pompey must have written the encouraging letter which Cicero quotes in *Att.* 7.16.2.

[38] See supra, p. 152.

[39] See my article in *TAPhA* 72 (1941) 138ff.

[40] *Att.* 8.11A.

[41] *Att.* 8.12B.1.

[42] *Att.* 8.12A.2.

Luceria as quickly as possible, adding that he had urged him to do so in his previous letters.

Had Pompey, when he wrote these letters, previously informed Domitius of his definite decision to evacuate Italy? If one examines Pompey's letters in the light of the general situation, it is perfectly clear that he had not done so. For if this had been the case, Domitius' decision to stay at Corfinium and his demand that Pompey should come to his support with all his troops [43] would have meant a complete reversal of Pompey's prearranged and well-known plan. Under these circumstances it is perhaps still possible to regard it as Domitius' share in the perfidy of Pompey's noble allies,[44] if he attempted to overthrow Pompey's whole strategy under the flimsy pretext—too silly almost to serve even as a pretext —that he had to stay at Corfinium because Caesar was at Truentinum. But it is hardly conceivable that Pompey should not have mentioned this fact in his reply.[45] Yet his reply does not say one word of the evacuation of Italy, but speaks exclusively of the necessity of uniting all troops in Apulia. If this argument seems insufficiently convincing, a passage in a later letter of Pompey to Domitius leaves no doubt whatever.[46] For here Pompey writes that he had sent M. Tuscilius with the message that Domitius should join him as quickly as possible at Luceria "because we must take care that the two legions (which Pompey had at Luceria) be not allowed, without the cohorts from Picenum, to come within sight of Caesar." For if Pompey wished to urge Domitius to revert to their previous and well-known plan of evacuating Italy, the point was not to prevent the two parts of their army in Italy from coming in sight of Caesar separately, but to get all available troops out of Italy as soon as possible. They could then become part of a larger army in the East which would be able to defeat Caesar if the blockade of Italy was not sufficient to make the peninsula untenable for him. It is therefore quite clear that Pompey, when he sent Do-

[43] Caes. *Civ.* 1.17.1–2. Concerning the reliability of this statement of Caesar, see infra, p. 162; cf. also D.C. 41.10.2ff.

[44] See Syme, *op. cit.* (see note 11) 43.

[45] Still stronger proof can perhaps be found in Domitius' first letter to Pompey (quoted by Pompey in *Att.* 8.12c.1), in which he wrote that he would try to join Pompey in Samnium. This makes sense only if the plan had been to fight Caesar in Italy, and would have been perfectly insane, if Domitius had previously been informed that Italy was to be evacuated as early as possible.

[46] *Att.* 8.12c.2.

mitius the message through Tuscilius, still deliberately left him in the belief that possibly they would fight Caesar in Italy.

But the whole letter in which Pompey mentions this previous message to Domitius is a master-piece of evasion and obscurity. Pompey again tells Domitius how dangerous it would be to face Caesar with their troops divided and that he must consider not only those troops which Caesar has at his disposal at the present moment but also those which he will be able to muster in the near future.[47] He warns him not to be disturbed if he should hear that Pompey has retreated somewhat farther south (how could he possibly have written these words if previously he had made it clear that he was anyway going to evacuate Italy as quickly as possible?) and tells him that he has neither an army sufficiently strong to break through nor places sufficiently fortified to enable him to act on the defensive.[48] His conclusion is "that they must be careful and look to the interests of the Republic" (!!). But still there is no word that clearly pronounces his decision to evacuate Italy.

There are, however, some sentences in the letter which are rather revealing. The consuls, Pompey says, are going to bring all the garrisons to me or else they will go to Sicily.[49] What does this mean? A little earlier in the same letter Pompey had informed Domitius that both consuls had decided to join him with all their forces at Luceria. What, if taken literally, would be a contradiction may perhaps be interpreted to mean that, in case it should be too late to effect a union of all the troops in Italy and to fight Caesar there, the consuls should withdraw to Sicily. Domitius could hardly have understood it otherwise. This together with the vague reference to "the interests of the Republic" would then be the first hint that the evacuation of Italy was by now seriously contemplated, not yet as a definite decision but as a possibility which was on the way to becoming a very definite probability.

So far so good. But in a letter to the consuls written before February 20[50] Pompey says that some time before he had sent

[47] *Att.* 8.12c.1.

[48] *Att.* 8.12c.3.

[49] *Ibid.:* consules praesidia omnia (sc. ad me) deducturi sunt aut in Siciliam ituri. Nobody could understand these words to mean that one of the consuls should go to Sicily while the other was to join Pompey, though this, according to another letter of Pompey, was his plan at that time. Cf. infra and note 56.

[50] *Att.* 8.12A.3. That this letter must have been written before Feb. 20 follows from the fact that by that time the consuls had already joined Pompey's forces. As to its actual date see infra, p. 158.

D. Laelius to them with the message that one of them, with those troops which had been recruited in Campania and the troops which Faustus Sulla had brought together,[51] should go to Sicily, while the other consul with the rest of the troops in Southern Italy was to join him in Apulia. He adds that, according to the plan outlined in the message, the 12 cohorts of Domitius [52] were to join the consul who was to go to Sicily, while all the other troops were to be assembled at Brundisium and thence to be transferred to Dyrrhachium. That this message was sent before February 16 is proved by a letter from Cicero to Pompey written on February 27. For here Cicero writes [53] that he was informed of the contents of Pompey's message before an earlier letter of his to Pompey had arrived. We know from Pompey himself [54] that the letter in question arrived at Canusium on February 20. Cicero therefore must have been informed of Laelius' message before that date. Consequently, considering the distances and the fact that the message first went to the consuls and thence to Cicero, the message cannot have been sent later than February 15.[55] We have then the following incontestable facts. Up to and including February 16 Pompey had not informed Domitius of his definite decision to evacuate Italy,[56] but on the contrary had again and again hinted at the probability that they would fight Caesar in Italy as soon as all the troops were assembled. Yet he affirms in a letter to the consuls that in a message undoubtedly sent before February 16 he had made it clear that Italy

[51] See also *Att.* 8.3.7.

[52] Concerning the size and the different parts of the army assembled at Corfinium see infra, p. 163.

[53] *Att.* 8.11D.1.

[54] *Att.* 8.11C. The date of this letter is fixed by *Att.* 8.11D.4.

[55] O. E. Schmidt, *Der Briefwechsel des Cicero von seinem Prokonsulat bis zu Caesars Ermordung* (Leipzig, Teubner, 1893), p. 136f. has tried to show that D. Laelius must have received his orders on Feb. 13 at the latest. He calculates that the transmission of the message first to the consuls and then to Cicero, who received it on Feb. 17, must have required four days. If the consuls happened to be not too far from Formiae this may be too long. But Schmidt's arguments show beyond doubt that the early morning of Feb. 15 is the very latest date for the sending of the message, while Pompey's letter to Domitius (*Att.* 8.12c) was written after Pompey had received a letter from Domitius which arrived on Feb. 16, at least one, but probably from two to three days after Laelius had departed.

[56] O. E. Schmidt, *op. cit.* 138, has suggested that in the sentence "consules praesidia omnia deducturi sunt" in Pompey's letter to Domitius (note 48) *Brundisium* is to be supplied before *deducturi* instead of *ad me*, which was accepted by most editors. But the rest of the letter shows clearly that even at that time Pompey cannot yet have told Domitius definitely that Italy was to be evacuated (see supra, p. 155).

was to be evacuated and had indicated what part was to be played by Domitius in this evacuation. The conclusion is inevitable that Pompey either kept Domitius deliberately in the dark concerning his intentions and decisions, or lied in his letter to the consuls, or both.

In order to find out which of these three explanations is correct we have to examine Pompey's letters to the consuls and Cicero's reactions when he received copies of these letters. That the consuls had stayed in the western part of Southern Italy since January 17 is proved by the following facts. They were in Formiae on January 21,[57] in Teanum Sidicinum on Jan. 22,[58] at Capua from Jan. 25 to Jan. 27;[59] Lentulus was again at Capua from Feb. 5 to Feb. 7,[60] and Marcellus also was at Capua on Feb. 7.[61] According to Pompey's letters[62] they had been busy collecting troops in Campania and the neighboring regions. Since on the specific dates mentioned above they were occupied with affairs of a different kind, their military duties cannot have left them any time to leave southwestern Italy in the short interval between Jan. 17 and the middle of February. This consideration, together with Pompey's suggestion that one of the consuls should take part of the troops to Sicily if Pompey should go to Dyrrhachium,[63] shows further that the consuls were still in southwestern Italy when they received Pompey's message through the agency of D. Laelius. The exact location, however, at which they received this message is unknown.

The message sent through the agency of Laelius seems to have been revoked a few days later when Pompey wrote to each of the consuls individually a letter in which he urged them to come quickly to his headquarters in Apulia.[64] That these letters could not have been written before February 17 is proved by the fact that Pompey enclosed a letter from Domitius which, according to his own statement, he had received on that date. At first sight there may be

[57] *Att.* 8.12.2.

[58] *Att.* 7.13B.3.

[59] *Att.* 7.15.2 and 8.11B.2.

[60] *Att.* 7.21.1–2.

[61] *Ibid.* The expressions used by Cicero leave some doubt as to whether Marcellus arrived at Capua late on Feb. 7 after Cicero had waited for him in vain. But what Cicero says about Cassius' message to the consuls proves that Marcellus cannot have been far from the town.

[62] *Att.* 8.12A.3.

[63] *Ibid.*

[64] *Att.* 8.6.2.

some doubt whether actually both consuls received letters of exactly the same content, though Cicero speaks of *litterae ad consules*. For Cicero is not always very accurate in what he says and he quotes only one letter. But the phrase *quanti rei publicae intersit omnes copias in unum locum . . . convenire* leaves hardly any doubt that when he wrote this letter Pompey meant to revoke the suggestion that one of the consuls might go to Sicily, and now wished both of them to join him in Apulia.

This revocation was confirmed by a longer letter, written a little later, which contained another change in the directions given to the consuls:[65] they were no longer asked to join Pompey at his present headquarters but to proceed directly to Brundisium[66] with all available troops in order to take ship for Dyrrhachium. This letter did not leave any doubt that Italy was to be evacuated immediately. But the letter either did not reach the consuls at all or reached them when they were already on their way to Pompey, as can be proved by the following considerations. Since the letter was written later than the letter quoted by Cicero in *Att.* 8.6.2 it cannot have been sent before the evening of Feb. 17 at the very earliest.[67] It must have been sent before Feb. 20 since by that time Pompey knew that the consuls had reached his army in Apulia.[68] Since Pompey was at Luceria on Feb. 17 and at Canusium on Feb. 20 the letter must have been sent from one of these places. It is obvious that the time from Feb. 17 to Feb. 20 is not sufficient; a. for the letter to be carried from Pompey to the consuls in Campania or some still more distant point in southwestern Italy; b. for the consuls to travel from there to Brundisium, as they were asked to do in the letter;[69] c. for the news of their arrival at Brundisium to have reached Pompey at Canusium. This shows conclusively that the consuls were already on their way to Pompey when this last message reached them, if it reached them at all before they made

[65] *Att.* 8.12A.

[66] This shows clearly that this letter must have been written later than the letter quoted *Att.* 8.6.2. The situation had further deteriorated and it seemed safer to have the consuls go directly to Brundisium rather than to some place farther north.

[67] See supra and the preceding note.

[68] See *Att.* 8.11c and *Att.* 8.11D.4.

[69] Pompey, when informing Cicero (*Att.* 8.11c) that the consuls had joined his troops does not say to what place they went. He seems to imply that they did not go to Canusium where he himself was, but does not mention Brundisium either. Probably they went to some place in between.

contact with Pompey's troops.[70] Furthermore, if, as seems likely,[71] the consuls were accompanied or followed by a considerable body of troops, preparations for joining Pompey in Apulia must have been made by the consuls before they received the letter quoted by Cicero in *Att.* 8.6.2. This point will be of importance for our further inquiry.

We have then to return to Pompey's earlier letter to the consuls. Cicero, on receiving a copy of this letter, seems to have been convinced that it revealed Pompey's intention to fight Caesar in Italy and that this was the reason why he urged the consuls to join him in Apulia. He further affirms that all persons to whom he talked about it were of the same opinion.[72] There has been a good deal of discussion concerning the sincerity of Cicero's statements, but the prevailing opinion seems to be: [73] 1. that Cicero, however mistaken, was sincere in his interpretation of the letter; [74] 2. that some other persons with whom he discussed it may have been equally mistaken, but that the words *eadem opinione fui qua reliqui omnes* [75] probably represent a gross exaggeration of the facts; 3. that the letter actually meant that the consuls must take part in the impending evacuation of Italy; 4. that the consuls themselves understood this perfectly at once.

That acceptance of these four points leads to some rather striking conclusions is less universally realized. There can be no doubt whatever that Cicero had been acquainted with Laelius' message before he received the letter to Lentulus quoted in *Att.* 8.6.2. If

[70] There is then no reason to assume, as most scholars do, that *Att.* 8.12A must have been written on Feb. 17, since otherwise it could not have reached the consuls in time. For it is clear that it cannot have reached them "in time" anyway. The striking difference in the directions given in this letter and in the letter quoted in *Att.* 8.6.2 makes it very unlikely that the interval between the two letters was only half a day. The date of *Att.* 8.12A was therefore probably Feb. 18 or 19.

[71] See infra, p. 168.

[72] *Att.* 8.11D.3.

[73] See, for instance, Schmidt, *op. cit.* (note 54), 141f. Duff, *op. cit.* (note 34), 156 remarks that Cicero's remark about his own movements in the same letter is untrue, but does not question the veracity of Cicero's statement concerning the impression made by Pompey's letter.

[74] This seems to be proved by the fact that in the letter to Atticus (*Att.* 8.6) in which he included a copy of Pompey's letter Cicero expresses his anxiety concerning the outcome of the struggle and adds: hoc tamen spero Magnum fore in adventu magnum terrorem, which proves that he expected Pompey to attack. On the following day he was again doubtful (*Att.* 8.7) whether Pompey would come to Domitius' rescue, but still says that "everybody is convinced that he will."

[75] *Att.* 8.11D.3.

Laelius' message contained definite orders for the immediate evacuation of Italy [76] how could Cicero be genuinely convinced that these orders were revoked by a letter which did not say much more than that Lentulus should come to Apulia,[77] from which even according to the earlier plan, the evacuation of the larger part of the troops was to be effected. However great Cicero's inclination towards wishful thinking may have been there are some limits to self-deception in a man of his intelligence. One may even go farther than that. We have seen that Cicero is anything but sincere when telling Pompey that he had never had an inkling of his plans.[78] But it is difficult to believe that he should have gone so far in disingeniousness as to write to his closest friend the passages quoted in note 74, if through his knowledge of Laelius' message he was sure that his expressed surmises of Pompey's plans could not be correct. In addition, there is one sentence in Pompey's letter to Lentulus which ill agrees with the plan for evacuating Italy: the order to leave a garrison of sufficient size in Capua.[79] Why should he leave a garrison if Italy was to be evacuated immediately? In the letter in which he at last states clearly that Italy is to be evacuated he naturally advises to take all garrisons to the East.[80]

Laelius' message, on the other hand, must have somehow agreed with what Pompey says about it in his later letter to the consuls.[81] He could not very well have had the impudence to tell the consuls that he had sent them a message totally different from the one which he actually sent. The evidence then concerning the contents of the message seems plainly contradictory. We may, however, remember that what Laelius transmitted was not a letter but an oral message.[82] Why did Pompey not send a letter, as he did in

[76] See supra, p. 156.

[77] It is true that the letter from Domitius, which Pompey enclosed in his letter to Lentulus and by which Domitius asked for support, could and would lead to the conclusion that such support would be given if, but only if, the order to evacuate Italy, supposedly given through Laelius, had not been final and definite. If, on the other hand, this order had been definite, it is still very strange that Pompey should express himself as he did, instead of saying: my previous order, of course, stands, and we must try to extricate ourselves as speedily as possible, and Domitius must do so also, if he can.

[78] See supra, p. 152.

[79] Praesidii Capuae, quantum constitueris satis esse, relinquas (*Att.* 8.6.2).

[80] *Att.* 8.12A.3–4.

[81] *Att.* 8.12A.2.

[82] It can be hardly by chance that both Pompey and Cicero when referring to Laelius' message always speak of ***mandata***, while in regard to all other messages they always speak of ***litterae***.

all other cases, if his purpose was merely to give the consuls an order concerning the movements of their troops? One usually sends an envoy instead of a letter if there is to be something resembling a negotiation, or, in other words, if the contents and the form of the message depend to some extent on the attitude of those who receive it. From Pompey's last letter to the consuls [83] it is perfectly clear that it must have been Laelius' task to persuade the consuls that it was necessary to make preparations for the eventuality of an evacuation of Italy and that this was more important than anything else. But Cicero's reaction to Pompey's letter to Lentulus shows equally clearly that the message cannot have been as definite as Pompey later made it appear. Probably—though in this respect we can only conjecture—Laelius was to tell the consuls that, even if it should seem possible to attempt resistance in Apulia, it was of paramount importance that a sufficient number of troops should be assembled there at the earliest possible time and that all preparations for a successful evacuation must be made immediately in case the attempt at resistance should fail.

In regard to the questions asked in the beginning of our inquiry we have so far reached the following results: the first message by which Pompey made it absolutely clear that Italy was to be abandoned was the letter to the consuls *Att.* 8.12A. This letter was preceded by a period in which Pompey indubitably was already fully determined to follow this plan but kept his associates in the dark as to his ultimate intentions. His letters in this period, while very clear and definite in the special military directions given, are obscure and deliberately evasive as far as the grand strategy of the war is concerned. At first they suggest strongly that an attempt will or may be made to defend Italy. Then stronger and stronger hints are given that Italy will be abandoned without struggle. But only when the situation had developed in such a way that the hopelessness of resistance must have become clear to everybody did Pompey come out openly and definitely with his plan. His correspondents, on the other hand, obviously wished Italy to be defended, and they show various degrees of reluctance to understand the necessity of evacuating the peninsula. There had been similar tendencies on both sides in the period between Jan. 16 and 23.[84] But we have still to answer the question whether

[83] *Att.* 8.12A.3.

[84] See supra, p. 153.

in the interval between Jan. 24 and Feb. 13 Pompey had actually hoped or intended to fight Caesar in Italy, as one of his letters to Cicero, if we can trust the latter, indicated.[85]

Before we attempt to answer this question we have to consider the military implications of Pompey's attitude at the time of Caesar's advance on Corfinium and of the siege of this town. As pointed out above,[86] the judgment of most historians on Domitius is very harsh: at first he thought he knew better than Pompey and made ready to resist Caesar against his express orders; then his confidence gave way to equally exaggerated fear and he prepared to flee in the darkness of the night in order to save his own person while abandoning his soldiers to their fate. This picture is derived from Caesar's report.[87] Caesar had no reason to spare the reputation of a man who, having been set free after his capture by his generous conqueror, immediately returned to Caesar's enemies to fight him again. Yet even Caesar admits that in the first phase of the battle for Corfinium Domitius acted with much more energy than Thermus, Lentulus Spinther, Hirrus, and the others whom he had encountered in Picenum: he not only took all the measures necessary for the defense of the city but also tried to win the adherence of his soldiers by great personal sacrifices. That he was successful in the latter attempt is proved by the fact that when the rumor of his 'desertion' spread among the troops many of them at first refused to believe it and were still eager to fight.[88]

We now know [89] a point which is much more important for a just evaluation of Domitius: he had not been informed of Pompey's definite decision to abandon Italy. He may have thought that he knew better than the generalissimo. But if he did, he thought that he knew better how to fight in Italy, taking for granted that to do this was still the general plan. There can be hardly any doubt that, on this supposition, he was right. Luceria, where he was to join Pompey's army, was situated on a steep hill, rising above the Apulian plain to the east and the low foothills at some distance to the west. It had served as a stronghold and an important point

[85] *Att.* 7.16.2.

[86] See supra, p. 148; cf. also Münzer in his article on Domitius in *RE* 5.1340, where he calls Domitius "the perfidious general" and says that he thought of nothing but his personal safety.

[87] Caes. *Civ.* 1.17–20.

[88] *Ibid.* 1.20.3: Ab his primo Marsi dissentire incipiunt, etc.

[89] See supra, p. 154f.

of support in the war against the Samnites in 294 [90] and in the Second Punic War.[91] But as a single fortress in the plain it was of military importance only as long as it was one of many strongholds and as long as other armies were in the field. It certainly could not block Caesar's advance into the rest of Southern Italy. To lock up the main army in its walls after Rome had been given up and with nothing but poorly trained troops anywhere else in Italy would have been plainly suicidal. Actually it is obvious that Pompey never contemplated resistance at Luceria. But he had never told Domitius so. Corfinium, on the other hand, was situated in the midst of the mountains, surrounded by other strongholds blocking some of the roads to the south and the south-west. Domitius was fully aware that he could not block the road along the coast,[92] but pointed out correctly that it would be more dangerous for Caesar if he left a considerable army in his rear in this mountainous region, while facing an army farther south, than if he passed by Luceria with its vast plain extending east of the town. That Caesar shared Domitius' opinion in this respect is proved by the fact that he made no attempt to pass Corfinium by and spent seven days in reducing it.

As to the troops available, we know that, after the arrival from Picenum of those troops which had escaped Caesar, Domitius had a little more than three legions, not all of which were unreliable and untrained recruits.[93] There was Pompey with at least two full veteran legions at Luceria, and Domitius could reasonably expect further troops recently recruited in Apulia to be stationed in the same region.[94] Caesar, on the other hand, had somewhat more than five legions from Gaul [95] and whatever troops he had been able to

[90] Livy 10.35–36.

[91] Livy 22.9; 23.35&37; 27.10; 24.3&10; Polybius 3.88.5; etc.

[92] See *Att.* 8.12c.1.

[93] See Caes. *Civ.* 1.17ff.; cf. also supra, p. 162 and infra, note 115.

[94] The two veteran legions at Pompey's disposal in Apulia were, of course, the two legions which he had taken over from Caesar early in the year 50, on the supposition that they would be needed for a war against the Parthians, which, however, never took place. It is rather interesting that Pompey never mentions recruiting in Apulia or any increase of his troops through recruiting, while four legions (see infra, note 115) had been brought together in Picenum and the regions around Corfinium and three more legions seem to have been collected by the consuls in the western part of Southern Italy.

[95] These were the 13th legion (*Civ.* 1.7.7), with which he crossed the Rubicon, the 12th, which joined him on the way to Asculum (*Civ.* 1.15.2), the 8th, which reached him during the siege of Corfinium, and the 22 newly levied cohorts from Gaul and

collect in Picenum by recruiting and by taking into his service deserters from the enemy. The latter troops cannot yet have been of very much service at the time of the conquest of Corfinium. Considering these circumstances it is perhaps possible to find some justification for those two actions of Domitius for which he has been most severely blamed. His reference to Caesar's presence at Castrum Truentinum as an excuse for his decision to stay at Corfinium would have been incredibly silly if he had had full knowledge of Pompey's plans. That he lacked this knowledge makes his reference to Truentum appear in a different light. His troops were partly poorly trained and discouraged by the defeat in Picenum. Yet the troops that had come from Picenum were those who had not surrendered to Caesar. Others from the surrounding regions were partly trained in earlier wars and eager to fight.[96] It was then not unreasonable to hope that, by keeping experienced and unexperienced men together in a fortified place, he might gradually mold them into a serviceable army, if he could only hold out until succour arrived from Pompey, who would bring better trained troops. Everybody, on the other hand, knows that nothing is more difficult, if not impossible, than to keep an army composed partly or wholly of green soldiers together during a retreat, especially if the enemy follows at close quarters, and that tactical retreats can be executed successfully only with very well-disciplined troops. On the supposition that a stand was to be made in the eastern part of Italy Domitius might therefore very well expect that his troops would fight much better where they were than after a hasty retreat to Luceria in the very sight of the enemy. Likewise Domitius is justly blamed for scattering his troops in Alba and Sulmo instead of keeping them together in Corfinium, but only on the supposition that he had to rely on his own troops. If he had reason to believe that sufficient troops would arrive from the south in time, it was much better to distribute them in different places than to lock them up in one small town with probably insufficient provisions for such a large number of soldiers. It was then also imperative to make an attempt to hold these places until the arrival of the expected succour.

If these were the suppositions on which Domitius took his decisions it is quite understandable that Pompey's answer to his

300 horsemen sent by the king of Noreia, which reached him at about the same time (*Civ.* 1.18.5).

[96] See *Civ.* 1.20.3; cf. also *ibid.* 1.14.3.

letters threw him into utter confusion. It is true that during the following days he did not act with the skill and coolness required by the emergency. But the very harsh judgment passed on him by most modern historians is hardly justified. In the situation in which he found himself he could do one of two things. He could make an attempt to withdraw with part of his troops to Pompey, leaving another part at Corfinium in order to cover his retreat. According to Dio this is what he actually did.[97] Or he could try to reach Pompey personally in order to persuade him to change his decision. This may well have been his intention if he tried to escape from the city with a small escort as Caesar suggests.[98] At any rate, his later actions show that, whatever his faults in other respects may have been, he was not lacking in zeal for the Republic.

What interests us in this vindication of Domitius' conduct is the light which it throws on Pompey's attitude in that period. It is perfectly true that it would have been foolish to resist Caesar at Corfinium with all available troops and so risk a complete defeat which might have resulted in the capture or death of the principal leaders of the anti-Caesarian party. But the same is true, in a much higher degree, of resistance at any other place in Southern Italy. Since Pompey was the one to whom everybody looked for the direction of the grand strategy of the war it was he who was mainly responsible for Domitius' error if he left the latter in the dark concerning his plans. This responsibility is not diminished by the fact that Pompey had ordered Domitius to join him at Luceria long before Caesar had made his withdrawal from Corfinium impossible.[99] For by giving this order with the full knowledge that Domitius was not legally his subordinate and yet without indicating his reasons for giving it he took the risk that Domitius would do what he actually did and what led to the loss of his whole army.

[97] D.C. (41.10.2ff.) says that Domitius obeyed (ἐπειθάρχησε) Pompey's command to give up Corfinium and come to Luceria, though he had a strong army, on which he set great hopes, and παρεσκευάζετο ὅπως δι' ἀσφαλείας τινὸς ἐκχωρήσῃ. This seems to indicate clearly that in Dio's opinion Domitius tried to escape with his troops.

[98] Even Caesar (see supra, note 87) does not say that Domitius "thought only of his own safety." On the contrary Domitius' exhortation to his soldiers to hold out until support from Pompey arrived and his careful preparations seem to indicate that he had something else in mind. Otherwise he would have tried to escape without further ado like most of the other commanders whom Caesar encountered in his advance.

[99] See infra, p. 166f.

It is clear that Pompey cannot have taken this risk without having what seemed to him very compelling reasons.

Before we attempt to answer the question of what these reasons were we must complete our analysis of Pompey's attitude and plans in the period between Jan. 23 and Feb. 13.[100] The outstanding events of this period were: 1. the arrival of L. Caesar and L. Roscius at Teanum Sidicinum on Jan. 23 with peace proposals from Caesar; 2. the acceptance of these proposals, with the one additional condition that Caesar should withdraw into Gallia Cisalpina, by Pompey and the consuls and, two days later, by the Senate at Capua; 3. Caesar's advance into Picenum which showed clearly that he was determined to pursue the war regardless of the negotiations that had been going on.[101]

On Feb. 10 Pompey received information through Fabius that Domitius, when Fabius left him, had prepared to leave Corfinium early on Feb. 9. Since Domitius changed his decision after the departure of Fabius but before the date originally set for the evacuation of Corfinium Fabius cannot have left Domitius later than the morning of Feb. 8. Domitius' earlier decision to abandon Corfinium must have been taken on the order or suggestion of Pompey.[102] This order then was received by Domitius not later than Feb. 7, but very probably earlier, and hence cannot have been dispatched by Pompey later than Feb. 5.[103] Caesar began his advance from Ancona to Auximum on Jan. 27 or 28 and from there to Asculum on Jan. 29 or Feb. 1. He arrived at Asculum on Feb. 3 or 4.[104] It follows that Pompey may have had news of the capture of Auximum but cannot have known of the capture of Asculum or Firmum [105] when he gave the order to evacuate Corfinium. In other words, he gave this order almost immediately after having received the news that Caesar was on the march again

[100] See supra, p. 153f.

[101] For details see my article in *TAPhA* 72 (1941), 125ff.

[102] He could have hardly deserted his post without the approval of Pompey, and that he did not wish to do so is proved by his later change of decision. In addition, Pompey's own words (*Att.* 8.12B.2: id quod non destiti superioribus litteris a te petere) prove that the order had been given by Pompey long before.

[103] That the messengers from Domitius to Pompey and vice versa took from two to three days to cover the distance between them is proved by several instances (cf. *Att.* 8.12C.1; 12D.1; etc.).

[104] For the dates, cf. the article quoted in note 101, p. 138ff.

[105] Caesar (*Civ.* 1.16) tells of the conquest of Firmum after the conquest of Asculum, but both places may have been taken by different detachments at the same time (see the article quoted in note 101, p. 139).

and before being informed of the more serious setbacks suffered by the republican armies in Picenum. In the light of the results of our previous inquiry there can be hardly any doubt that withdrawal from Corfinium was ordered in preparation for the evacuation of Italy, though Pompey did not admit this at the time. Pompey's letter to Cicero, on the other hand, in which he boasts that soon he will have a reliable army and then will advance into Picenum, was written at the time of the negotiations, when Caesar had halted his advance for a short time and when it was doubtful whether there would be a military conflict. If Pompey, as his later attitude seems to indicate,[106] for some reason or other was afraid to reveal his decision to evacuate Italy to his associates before the necessity for doing so had become apparent to everybody, these reasons must have been strongest at the time when there was a possibility that they would not have to fight at all. It is therefore difficult to take Pompey's letter to Cicero at its face value.

There is, of course, one factor which might have caused a change in Pompey's plans during the short interval between Jan. 26 and Feb. 4, namely, the discovery of the unreliability of the two veteran legions stationed in Apulia[107] which had formerly served under Caesar.[108] But this factor can hardly be considered decisive. It is strange enough that Pompey should not have made sure of the loyalty of his troops before the outbreak of the war which had been impending at least since December.[109] If he had not done so it is still more curious that he did not hurry to his troops immediately after the war broke out. Instead he tarried between Rome and Campania for a whole week after the evacuation of Rome so as to arouse the anger even of Cicero[110]; and when, after having taken leave of the consuls and the Senate, he could no longer be held up by councils of state he still proceeded in a very leisurely fashion.[111] He made no effort to concentrate his troops.[112] There is no men-

[106] See supra, p. 161.

[107] In those letters in which Pompey excuses himself for not coming to Domitius' support he always refers to the unreliability of these two legions (*Att.* 8.12c.2; 8.12d.1; 8.12a.2).

[108] One of these legions had originally belonged to Pompey and had been lent to Caesar in 53, when he expected a rebellion in Gaul.

[109] See infra, p. 173.

[110] *Att.* 7.10: in oppidis coartatus et stupens.

[111] See *Att.* 7.13b.3. When on Jan. 26 he wrote the encouraging letter which Cicero quotes in *Att.* 7.16.2 he seems still not to have made contact with his troops.

[112] *Att.* 8.12c.2 and *Att.* 8.12a.2.

tion of recruiting in his whole district.[113] The newly recruited troops taken to the East on March 4 from the whole of Southern Italy were less numerous[114] than the new drafts that had been gathered in Picenum and the adjoining regions to the South before the beginning of the siege of Corfinium on Feb. 15.[115] It is perhaps also noteworthy that when the two veteran legions were actually put to the test in the battle at Pharsalus,[116] according to Caesar's own account, they did not betray Pompey, but fought on valiantly after having been attacked simultaneously in the front and rear, and began to flee only when Pompey had set the example.[117] There is no indication either that Pompey had the slightest distrust of these troops at that time since he entrusted them with the most important position.

All these facts indicate clearly that Pompey at no time had any intention of resisting Caesar in Italy. On the contrary, by the slowness of his movements[118] in the first phase of the war, by exaggerating the unreliability of the legions in Apulia, and by keeping his associates in the dark as to his real plans, he seems to have done everything to make it impossible for his equals in command to impose on him a plan of resistance. He seems to have done so even at the risk of diminishing greatly the size of the army which

[113] Caesar (*Civ.* 3.4.1) says that Pompey had taken five legions with him from Italy. Three of these legions had been under the command of the consuls and sailed before Pompey, the other two sailed with him a few days later (Caes. *Civ.* 1.25 and Plu. *Pomp.* 62.2). This proves that Pompey brought only the two veteran legions with him to Brundisium.

[114] Three legions (see the preceding note).

[115] 5 cohorts under Thermus at Iguvium (Caes. *Civ.* 1.12.1); 3 cohorts under Atius Varus at Auximum (*ibid.* 1.12); 10 cohorts under Lentulus at Asculum (*ibid.* 1.15.1); 6 cohorts under Hirrus (*ibid.* 1.15.5); 20 cohorts under Domitius at Corfinium (*ibid.* 1.15.7): the discrepancy between the figures given by Caesar and in Pompey's letters seems most satisfactorily explained by H. Meusel in his commentary on Caesar's *de bello civ.* (Berlin, Weidmann, 1906), p. 34. In all then there were about four legions. All these legions had been recruited from the regions in which they were stationed. For of Domitius' troops Caesar says so expressly, of the others he implies that it was so, since he says that they went home after having deserted their officers, and since they could not have gone to regions occupied by Pompey and the Senate. Whether Vibullius, who had been sent by Pompey *confirmandorum hominum causa* (*Civ.* 1.15.4) and took over the remnants of Lentulus' army, had any troops of his own, is not quite certain. If he did he must have had less than 7 cohorts, and it would be extremely strange that Pompey should have sent a man with such a negligible force while he himself with his veteran legions stayed in Apulia.

[116] *Civ.* 3.88.

[117] *Ibid.* 3.94.5.

[118] See supra, p. 167.

might have been recruited from Italy for the final struggle against Caesar.

In looking for the reasons for Pompey's ambiguous attitude it is not necessary to renew, in a wider application, the theory propounded by L. Holzapfel,[119] that Pompey left Rome in order to have a stronger hold on the Senate, though this was an actual consequence of the evacuation of Rome and Italy.[120] The strategic reasons, as we have seen, were quite sufficient as far as this decision is concerned. In regard to the duplicity, on the other hand, and the evasion of the real issue, which we find in all his letters up to the middle of February, it seems clear that the reason for his attitude must be found in the experiences which he had in the meeting of the Senate of Jan. 16 and immediately afterwards.[121] No doubt he immediately tried to make it clear to his associates that Italy had to be evacuated.[122] But this aroused at once a storm of indignation, almost of abuse, and not from the lukewarm who did not know which side to choose in the impending conflict, but from the staunchest supporters of the Republic, like Favonius [123] and Cato. What is more, he was not entrusted with the supreme command as he had obviously expected.[124] His first reaction was violent anger which expressed itself in savage threats against those who would not follow him wherever they would have to retire in defense of the Republic. But the impression made on him by the stormy session was obviously so strong that for a whole month he did not dare again openly to stress the necessity for the speedy execution of his plan. Instead he resorted to the policy of evasion which proved so costly in military strength, but he could not refrain from letting his anger break out again and again in violent threats,[125] which are in strange contrast with the urgent but very polite letters that he wrote at the same time to some of the men whose actions must have angered him most.

With all this it is not quite easy to see exactly what he feared. If he was afraid that the consuls or Domitius would desert him [126]

[119] Kl 4 (1904) 352ff.; cf. also Holmes, *op. cit.* (see note 10), p. 6.

[120] Cf. Caes. *Civ.* 3.4 and Holmes, *op. cit.* 432ff.

[121] See supra, p. 150 and p. 153.

[122] App. *BC*, 2.37; Dio C. 41.7.3; *Att.* 9.9.2 and 9.10.2.

[123] Plu. *Pomp.* 61.1.

[124] See supra, p. 149.

[125] Cf. *Att.* 8.11.4.

[126] Concerning Domitius' desertion see supra, p. 165. It is also noteworthy that Cato, in spite of his attacks on Pompey, voted at once that he be made commander-in-chief with supreme power for the conduct of the war (Plu. *Pomp.* 61.1).

or that they would make a desperate military move against his express decision, it seems that he was mistaken. Both the consuls, even Lentulus, whom Caesar several times tried to win over to his cause by the most liberal offers,[127] and Domitius, adhered to Pompey to the last. The early arrival of the consuls in Apulia [128] shows that they were quite willing to follow him to the East when they saw that the decision was final, and they never undertook anything that was at variance with his decision. The evidence concerning Domitius is perhaps less definite but his attitude at Corfinium together with the explanation which he gave of his actions [129] leave hardly any doubt that he would have followed Pompey's orders if he had known of his inflexible decision concerning the grand strategy of the war. The violent reaction of the Senate when suddenly confronted with Pompey's hints at the necessity of evacuating Italy obviously had caused him to underestimate the willingness of the leading personalities to follow his plan after the first shock was over. If, instead of resorting to a policy of evasion and duplicity, he had steadfastly and openly adhered to his first decision the whole war might have taken a different course.

At this point it is perhaps appropriate to compare the conclusions reached so far with the opinions of the leading historians quoted in the introduction.[130] E. Meyer was undoubtedly correct when he contended that from the very beginning of the conflict Pompey knew exactly what the strategic situation required and tried to act accordingly. Yet Cicero's impression and Mommsen's opinion that in Pompey's attitude of the first month of the war there was a good deal of confusion and hesitation was not altogether erroneous. They erred only in attributing this confusion to military reasons rather than to the political perplexity in which he found himself on account of the unexpected violence of the first reaction of the Senate. Nevertheless it is hardly just to say that Pompey was betrayed by his perfidious allies.[131] The most important leaders adhered to him to the last. Even Cicero joined him after long hesitation, caused by timidity rather than perfidy; and if some commanders, like Domitius, made moves which turned out to be harmful to the conduct of the war, they did so not because they

[127] *Att.* 8.9.4; 8.11.5; 9.6.1; *Fam.* 10.32.3; *Vell.* 2.51.3.

[128] See supra, p. 158f.

[129] *Att.* 8.12c.1; cf. also supra, note 45.

[130] See supra, p. 146.

[131] So R. Syme (see supra, p. 147 and note 11).

had to gain by it but at great personal sacrifice.[132] E. Meyer's and Holmes's claim that it was the stupidity of Pompey's allies which gave the first phase of the war such a disastrous turn may seem more justified. But we must not forget that it was Pompey's own boasting, his display of unlimited confidence and pretence of easy superiority [133] which made the necessity of evacuating Italy come as such a blow to his associates and made them unable to understand the situation fully before it was too late. Nor should we forget that, after the outbreak of hostilities, it was again Pompey's duplicity and his lack of steadfastness in openly adhering to his plan in the face of the first opposition which made his associates take the false steps which led to the loss of so many valuable troops.

We are then still left with the question whether Cicero was right when he later accused Pompey of having planned the evacuation of Italy long before the outbreak of the war and of having intended to use the reconquest of Italy after the fashion of Sulla for his own aggrandizement. As pointed out above, the evidence for answering this question must necessarily be indirect. In addition, it will obviously be impossible within the framework of this study to examine Pompey's policy—at least as far back as 52 B.C.—in every detail in the light of the results obtained so far. But these results do perhaps make it possible to set up a number of criteria for the evaluation of Pompey's attitude before the war and to point out those of his actions which are especially important for the solution of our main problem. If Caesar's invasion of Italy came to Pompey as a complete surprise it may still seem possible that he did not before the actual outbreak of the war conceive the plan which he later tried to carry through. But if it can be proved that he must have reckoned with an armed struggle at that time it is hardly credible that the man who, as we have seen, had his plan all ready at the very moment when the conflict started should never have thought of this plan before.

If, on the other hand, we can prove that Pompey must have contemplated this plan at an earlier time, this does not, of course, at once present us with a perfect solution of the problem posed in Cicero's later letters. For even if Pompey at some earlier time did make definite plans for the contingency of an armed conflict, this does not in itself prove that he deliberately tried to bring about

[132] *Civ.* 1.17.4.

[133] See also infra, p. 173f.

this conflict as a means for his own aggrandizement. But there are some factors in the general situation which may enable us to arrive at more definite conclusions. There is, first of all, the fact that if Pompey planned the evacuation of Italy before the outbreak of the war he must have dissembled this plan very carefully. He may then have done so because he thought it necessary for the preservation of the Republic to resist Caesar, and yet was afraid that he would not find the necessary support for such resistance if it became known what risks a policy of intransigence implied. But this interpretation of his attitude would be possible only if he began to foresee an armed conflict only a very short time before its actual outbreak. For otherwise we must assume that he would have done everything in his power to make resistance possible at a smaller sacrifice—unless he had special political reasons for acting otherwise.

This consideration leads to a further criterion for the solution of our problem. The evidence that Cicero's later suspicions were not unfounded becomes very strong if the following points can be proved: 1. that Pompey must have reckoned with an armed conflict a very considerable time before it actually broke out, 2. that he nevertheless made no attempt to avoid an evacuation of Italy, whether by effecting a compromise with Caesar and satisfying his demands, or by favoring action against Caesar at a time when the latter could not have fought the republican force, or by strengthening the military power available to the Senate in Italy in time to make a successful defense of the peninsula possible, 3. that he actually tried to prevent all such measures and so deliberately made the evacuation of Italy inevitable in case of an armed conflict. It would prove at least that Pompey played with the plan which Cicero attributes to him and considered it as one of the ways in which he might attain still greater prominence. It will, on the other hand, hardly be possible to prove more than this. For it seems not to have been in Pompey's character to pursue a political plan with unfailing determination and with perfect coördination of all his moves over a long period. While in military undertakings requiring some political skill, as, for instance, the war against the pirates, he was perfectly able—at least in his younger years—to carry through a plan requiring a good deal of long-range vision, his purely political actions throughout his life show a certain tendency to play with several plans at the same time and to let things drift for a while whenever events did not turn out to his satisfaction.

But even if it is impossible to prove more than that Pompey played with his plan as early as 51 B.C., and that this plan became definite late in 50 B.C., this comes a good deal nearer to Cicero's second explanation of Pompey's attitude than most modern historians have realized.

In examining the evidence for the early existence of Pompey's plan we have to distinguish two periods: the period immediately preceding the outbreak of the war, that is, the last months of the year 50, and the period from Pompey's third consulate to the spring of this year. For in the intervening months Pompey was gravely ill,[134] so that even if our knowledge of this period were more complete than it actually is, the few actions of political importance which he did take cannot be considered in the same light as those taken when he was in full possession of his health.

Concerning the later of these two periods the evidence is rather definite. When Cicero came back from his governorship in Cilicia in December 50 he met Pompey twice, once between Naples and Cumae on Dec. 10 [135] for a conversation of two hours, and a second time on the road from Lavernium to Formiae on Dec. 26 for a very long discussion of all political issues.[136] On both occasions Cicero received the impression that Pompey not only considered an armed conflict with Caesar imminent but even desired it and was so far from seeking a peaceful solution that he was actually afraid a peaceful settlement might be brought about.[137] This proves that the invasion of Italy by Caesar on Jan. 11 cannot have come as a complete surprise to Pompey, and that as a military man and the prospective commander-in-chief in such a conflict he must have spent some thought on the strategic possibilities at that time.

Other aspects of Cicero's reports of these conversations, if taken together with Pompey's actions and utterances, as reported by Dio and Appian, are still more revealing. In his conversation with Cicero on Dec. 26 Pompey expressed the expectation that Caesar would give up his aspirations to a second consulate in 48 and would content himself with retaining his provinces for another year if he saw that his opponents were making energetic preparations for any emergency. He also spoke very confidently of his own military

[134] *Att.* 6.3.4; Plu. *Pomp.* 57.

[135] *Att.* 7.4.2.

[136] *Att.* 7.8.4ff.

[137] Pompey's proposal that Cicero be sent to Sicily because he was still in possession of his *imperium* (*Att.* 7.7.4) was also clearly made with a view to the expected conflict.

strength and that of the Republic and seemed much less afraid of a armed conflict than of a compromise.[138] But when, a few days before this conversation with Cicero, the consul Marcellus, together with the consuls designate of the following year, had handed him a sword and entrusted him with the defense of the Republic he had answered in a rather non-committal way that he would accept the trust "if no better solution could be found," [139] that is, he tried to conceal his desire for a decision by force and to create the impression that he viewed this possibility with utter reluctance. At the same time he seems to have set out to take command of the two legions taken over from Caesar, which were still stationed in Campania.[140] He transferred them to Larinum, Teanum, and Luceria in Apulia.[141] At this time at the very latest, when he was in closest contact with these legions he should have seen to it that they were made ready for immediate action and should have assured himself of their reliability in the event of an armed conflict with Caesar. If, therefore, in his letters of the middle of February [142] he suddenly writes that they are not ready and that he finds them utterly unreliable [143] we inevitably reach the conclusion that Pompey either in December failed to take the most elementary precautions or in February did not speak the truth when he wrote about the condition and attitude of these legions. Our previous analysis shows that the latter explanation is much more probable.[144]

This conclusion is confirmed by the evidence concerning Pompey's activity or rather lack of serious activity in recruiting troops

[138] *Att.* 7.8.4–5.

[139] Plu. *Pomp.* 59; cf. App. *BC* 2.31 and D.C. 40.46.4.

[140] See C. Bardt, "Die Uebergabe des Schwertes an Pompejus" in *H* 45 (1910) 337–346.

[141] E. Meyer, *op. cit.* (see note 9), 277, note 2, may be right when he says that the removal of the two legions from Campania to Apulia does not in itself prove that Pompey at that time had the intention of evacuating Italy, since the road to Rome could be blocked to Caesar just as well, if not better, from Apulia as from Campania or Latium. He concedes, however, that Apulia was chosen because from this place the troops could more easily be transferred to the East if this should become necessary. Much more significant than the transfer of the troops, however, is the leisurely attitude with which Pompey set about fulfilling this task, although he was perfectly aware of the imminence of the conflict.

[142] See supra, p. 167 and note 107.

[143] The legions could hardly have come under the influence of Caesar's agents in the interval between their transfer to Apulia and Pompey's arrival at Luceria in the last days of January 49. At least it would have been Pompey's duty to prevent any such possibility.

[144] See supra, p. 168.

for the coming emergency. One might suggest that Pompey did not have time to concern himself sufficiently with the two veteran legions because he was too busy recruiting new troops—though this would be an insufficient excuse since these two legions were the only fully trained and organised units available for the impending conflict.[145] Apart from this it may be true, as Plutarch reports, that Pompey's recruiting officers did not meet with much enthusiasm in Campania.[146] But all this cannot fully explain the fact that by the middle of January recruiting in those regions had hardly got under under way and that at the end of February the whole of Southern Italy had still contributed fewer troops to the war than the north-eastern territories had recruited a full month earlier.[147] Cicero's letters of December, in addition, give the impression that at that time Pompey took things rather leisurely, just as he did later in the period from Jan. 17 to Feb. 17. Finally, Caelius's letter to Cicero [148] of between Aug. 5 and Aug. 10 [149] shows that as much as four months earlier the impression at Rome had been that a break was inevitable and that Pompey had no desire to avoid it, though at that time the outbreak of an armed conflict was not expected quite as early as it actually occurred, and Caelius was very far from sharing Pompey's confidence in his ability to defeat Caesar. All this leads to the conclusion that during the four months immediately preceding the Civil War Pompey's policy had been essentially the same as in January/February 49; that is, to fight it out with Caesar by force of arms unless the latter could be made to accept a position of indisputable inferiority to Pompey, and yet, by keeping the forces opposed to Caesar comparatively weak, to manoeuvre the Senate into a position in which the Republic would have to look upon Pompey as its only savior from otherwise inevitable and utter ruin.[150]

[145] The fact that some of the troops which Domitius had at Corfinium consisted of soldiers who had had previous military training and experience in actual fighting (see supra, p. 164) did not, of course, make his garrison as a whole a body suited for immediate conflict.

[146] Plu. *Pomp.* 59.

[147] See supra and note 109.

[148] *Fam.* 8.14.

[149] See F. W. Sanford, "The Narrative in Bell. Gall. VIII, 50–55" (*Univ. of Nebraska Class. Papers*, 1911).

[150] For a more detailed analysis of the political manoeuvres by which the Senate was finally compelled to make war on Caesar and to look upon Pompey as the only savior of the Republic, see my article "Political Psychology and Political Technique in the Period of the Civil War of 49 B.C.," which will be published in an early issue of the *Political Science Quarterly*.

Pompey's policy from his third consulate to the spring of the year 50 is much more complicated and requires special attention which cannot be given here. But it is apparent that the reasons for his attitude in the period discussed so far must be sought farther back. In certain respects, furthermore, his policy in the earlier period shows a striking similarity to his later attitude, especially in the seeming inconsistency with which he made repeated attempts to deprive Caesar of privileges which had been granted to him previously with his own approval or connivance,[151] and yet deliberately made it impossible for the leaders of the optimate party to crush Caesar at a time when such an attempt would probably have been much less dangerous than it was in January 49.[152] Though we cannot discuss all this in detail it is perhaps possible to show how the course taken by Pompey towards the end of the year 50 was conditioned by his general position in the earlier period.

E. Meyer has given a most brilliant analysis of the nature of Pompey's position and of the foundations on which it rested.[153] He has shown that Pompey did not at any time, like Caesar in his later years, wish to establish a monarchy by overthrowing the existing form of government by force. He wished, however, to hold a position outside and above the regular *cursus honorum*, and hence in some way above the constitution, but freely offered to him because he was the only man who was able to make the machinery of the state, which was now out of order, work properly. This extraordinary position, as far as he had been able to attain it before the Civil War, rested on two main foundations: 1. the existence of a continuous state of emergency, which compelled the Senate again and again to have recourse to his skill and authority and to entrust him with extraordinary tasks and power, and 2. the coalition with other statesmen and politicians for mutual support, in such a way, however, that his political allies were at all times in a position clearly secondary to his own.[154]

[151] An outstanding example is Pompey's attempt in 52 to rescind by a clause in the *lex de iure magistratuum* the privilege, granted to Caesar by the plebiscite of the ten tribunes, of sueing for the consulship in absentia, and Pompey's later declaration—which had no legal validity whatever—that the clause did not apply to Caesar (cf. Dio C. 40.56 and Suet. *Jul.* 28).

[152] *Att.* 8.3.3: Marco Marcello consuli finienti provincias Gallias Kalendarum Martiarum die restitit (sc. Pompeius); cf. Dio C. 40.56; Livy *Perioch.* 108.

[153] See supra, note 9.

[154] The coalition of Pompey and Caesar during Caesar's consulate in 59 and the renewal of this coalition in 56, in consequence of which Pompey became consul in 55

Both these foundations of his position were necessarily precarious in several respects. It is true that the old constitutional and aristocratic system of the Republic no longer functioned properly and that some new agency had to be found for the proper administration of the vast empire. But this state of things had not yet lasted long enough to dispel all hope that the old constitution could be made to function again. Pompey's success in restoring peace and order, therefore, resulted paradoxically each time in a weakening of his position, so that, in pursuit of his ambitions, he himself had to do everything to promote a new emergency in order to regain his influence and power. This process with its continuous ups and downs had been going on in one way or another ever since the suppression of the rebellion of Lepidus and Brutus in 77 and continued down to the interval between his third consulate and the outbreak of the Civil War. It is not necessary to point out that this state of things was ruinous to the state and must finally have ceased to be satisfactory even to Pompey himself.

The second foundation of Pompey's power, his coalitions with other statesmen, must, in the long run, have become no less precarious since it always involved the danger that one of his allies might rise to power equal or even superior to his own. This danger grew suddenly to alarming dimensions with the prospect that Caesar might obtain a second consulship without having previously surrendered the large and brilliant armies which he had created and the rich empire which he had conquered and recently entirely pacified.

On the basis of these observations, largely derived from E. Meyer's own brilliant analysis, it is perhaps possible to disagree with his interpretation of the last phase of Pompey's policy before the outbreak of the Civil War. It is possible and even probable that in the period between his third consulate and the spring of the year 50 Pompey still considered the possibility of continuing his previous policy, with Caesar taking more and more the place of the "emergency" to be used in order to keep Pompey in the prominent position of guardian of the Republic against this new threat. This is what E. Meyer suggests. But the evidence previously

and obtained the governorship of Spain for five years while Caesar's governorship was extended over a period of another five years, are no exception to this rule. For in 59 Caesar had not yet acquired military laurels, and in the latter part of the ten year period Pompey secured for himself new positions at Rome while Caesar was officially confined to his provinces.

analysed seems to show that Pompey was not driven into the conflict either by his republican allies or—in the last weeks—by Caesar's surprisingly bold and quick action. It suggests, on the contrary, that in the last years before the outbreak of the conflict there presented itself to Pompey's mind the possibility of a new and different policy which he definitely adopted in the fall of the year 50.[155]

There was only one way out of the vicious circle in which Pompey's policy had revolved up to that time: he must save the state from a danger so great that no one would ever in the future challenge the extraordinary position of the savior. This is exactly what Octavian accomplished later. But at the time when Augustus attained supreme power the state had been through so terrible a period of internal strife and disorder that almost everybody welcomed the restoration of peace and order by the strong hand of the Princeps. Pompey had at first to make sure that the danger was sufficiently great and not too easily removed. Elimination of Caesar at a time when such elimination was or seemed comparatively easy would not have served his purpose, but would, on the contrary, have deprived him of both of the chief foundations of his policy at the same time, since Caesar still represented both the main emergency against which the Senate had to invoke the help of Pompey, and, as long as the conflict had not broken out openly, a potential ally.[156] This seems the only explanation of Pompey's actions and utterances which makes the strange ambiguity of his attitude in this whole period fully understandable.

A policy of this kind was of course a dangerous gamble requiring almost superhuman subtlety and skill—more skill in fact than Caesar's policy, which, though extremely bold, was much more

[155] See supra, p. 173.

[156] It is not impossible that the letter from Pompey which was transmitted to Caesar along with a message from the Senate in mid-January 49 and which created a good deal of consternation among the Optimates (Dio C. 41.5.3) was in fact an attempt to continue the same policy even at that late date: i.e., to frighten the Senate into submission to his leadership by keeping open the possibility of an agreement with Caesar, and perhaps even to attempt a real reconciliation with Caesar in case the Senate should desert him entirely. But Caesar had cast the die, and it seems improbable that at that time he still thought seriously of a compromise. Pompey, on the other hand, by deliberately weakening the strength of his party in order to make it utterly dependent on his leadership, had at the same time weakened himself so as to become utterly dependent on the support and good will of his political allies. This is also the background of all the negotiations conducted by L. Caesar and L. Roscius in January 49.

straightforward and involved not nearly so many incalculable factors. It is therefore not surprising that Pompey failed in the final phase of the execution of his plans. It seems that he committed three major errors, all of them the natural outcome of his too complicated policy. He had for a considerable time deliberately minimized the danger threatening from Caesar, so that this danger might be allowed to grow so visible to everybody in its magnitude as to secure a dominating position in the state forever after to the man who removed it at the last moment.[157] But in doing so he finally yielded to the temptation of underestimating Caesar's actual strength. He believed that in view of the quite insufficient forces available for the defense of the peninsula, the optimates would at once realize the necessity of evacuating Italy and waging the war from the East as soon as Italy was invaded. But he failed to see that his own previous attitude had made it extremely difficult for his associates to come to a full realization of the danger and greatly underestimated the psychological shock which this sudden reversal of his previous show of supreme confidence must give them and the confusion which must result. Finally when confronted with this confusion and with the violent reaction of the disappointed optimates he committed his third major error. Instead of steadfastly adhering to his strategic convictions, he began to temporize and, in doing so, probably underestimated the ability and willingness of the most important republican leaders to see the necessity created by the emergency and to act accordingly, when they had recovered from the first shock caused by the sudden change in the whole aspect of the situation. This led both to a loss of military strength in the decisive battle which was to be fought later, and, what is perhaps still more important, a loss of confidence and of trust in his abilities on the part of his associates, which, in its turn, seems to have had an adverse influence on Pompey's own self-reliance.

With all this E. Meyer's contention still holds true that the method for bringing about a gradual change in the internal set-up of the Republic which was envisaged by Pompey would have made

[157] An excellent description of this aspect of Pompey's policy is given by Cicero, *Att.* 7.3. When Cicero wrote this passage he had one of those moments, not infrequent in his life, when he saw with lucid clarity the truth concerning the political constellation, but was still afraid of drawing all the consequences from his own insight, so that he soon returned to a less penetrating, but also less disturbing, interpretation of the situation.

it possible to preserve those parts of the Roman constitution which were still workable. Thus full use could have been made for the administration of the state of that faculty for political leadership which, in spite of all corruption, could still be found in a very high degree in the traditional ruling class, and for which, as the history of Rome in the following centuries showed, no satisfactory substitute could be found for a very long period.[158] It remains also true that Caesar's more violent methods, in spite of his much greater legislative, administrative, and psychological genius, proved very destructive in this respect and provoked a violent reaction which brought still further ruin to the state.

It was Pompey's misfortune that the time was not yet quite ripe for voluntary acceptance even of his comparatively moderate aims and that, growing older, he found himself unable or unwilling to wait quietly for the natural fulfilment of his aspirations. In consequence he became more and more entangled in an all too subtle policy of allowing the state to fall into one emergency after another so that again and again he would be called upon to come to its rescue. In the final attempt to realize his ambitions he proved lacking in the consummate political skill, the unfailing psychological judgment, and the unyielding steadfastness in unexpected adversities which the successful execution of this subtle policy required.

[158] See Syme, *op. cit.* (see note 11) and the article quoted in note 39.