THE SO-CALLED DEFENSIVE POLICY OF PERICLES

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The thesis that Pericles followed a defensive policy during the Peloponnesian War is primarily based on the ideas expressed in the phrases μὴ διαμάχεσθαι and ἀρχὴν τε μὴ ἐπικτάσθαι.¹ Further evidence for such a policy is usually found in Thucydides’ use of ἡσυχάζοντας in his general statement on Pericles’ strategy: ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἡσυχάζοντάς τε καὶ τὸ ναυτικὸν θερετρώντας καὶ ἀρχὴν μὴ ἐπικτασμόνοις ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ μηδὲ τῇ πόλει κινδυνεύοντας ἐφ’ ἡμείς ἀπείτασθαι.² However, faced by the fact that the Peloponnesian coast was attacked by the Athenians, scholars have made various efforts to reconcile these aggressive measures with the theory of a defensive policy. The attacks on the Peloponnesian coast have been interpreted as doing nothing more than giving the Athenians moral compensation for losses suffered in Attica,³ and on the other hand as measures supporting the defensive strategy.⁴ It has also been suggested that these attacks formed part of a dual strategy, which was defensive by land and offensive by sea.⁵ Because of the undeniable evidence of an aggressive policy, it has been argued that Pericles embarked on an aggressive strategy, but revised it under stress of circumstances to a defensive warfare.⁶ Thus, the strategy of Pericles is considered basically to be defensive, with scholars modifying this in various ways.

² Thuc. II.65.7.
³ G.B. Grundy, op. cit., 331.
⁴ H.D. Westlake, ‘Seaborne Raids in Periclean Strategy’, CQ 39 (1945), 84: the devastation of enemy territory was designed ‘to cause so much economic distress that political consequences would ensue and the Peloponnesian League would have no heart to continue the war’. J.H. Finley, op. cit., 141: while Pericles’ plan was purely defensive, the ravaging of the Peloponnesian coast was to exhaust the enemy.
On examining the military operations during the first two and a half years of the war, i.e. while Pericles was general,7 some interesting facts can be gleaned from the History of Thucydides. Since Pericles was either himself a leader of such operations, or as strategos directed affairs in Athens, it is reasonable to assume that these military operations reflected a policy which had at least his support, if it was not entirely inspired by him. The fact that a strategos did at times execute the instructions of the people without being in agreement with the decision adopted by the people,8 is hardly likely to apply in the case of Pericles. The influence and the far-reaching powers of Pericles are clearly stated in Thucydides’ description: καὶ οὐκ ἦν τοι μᾶλλον ὣς αὐτὸς ἐκτός ἡ ἀνδρός ἦν, and ἐγίνετο τε λόγῳ μὲν δημοκρατία, ἐγραφ' ὡς ὡς τοῦ πρῶτου ἀνδρός ἄρη.9 Pericles himself was meant by πρῶτος. His loss of office at the end of the campaigning season in 430 B.C. was for such a brief period that in effect it made little or no change in the policy of Athens.10

Thucydides describes the variety of Athenian military operations during the first year of the war within ten chapters, as though by way of a brief summary.11 The military movements of the second and third years of the war are again mentioned briefly, with the exception of Pericles’ speech encouraging the Athenians to persist in the war, the siege of Plataea, and the Athenian involvement in Acarnania which are recounted at greater length.12 However, within the brief survey of the Archidamian War during Pericles’ lifetime13 there are sufficient indications of aggressive warfare to raise doubts as to the validity of a so-called defensive policy.

Since sea-borne operations against the Peloponnese form an important part of the annual military operations of the Athenians, the full implication of such warfare must be examined. The effect of attacks on the sea-board is clear from the words of the Corinthians at the second conference of the Peloponnesian allies in 432 B.C. The Corinthians urging all to unite and vote for war say: τοῦς δὲ τὴν μεσόγειαν μᾶλλον καὶ μὴ ἐν πόρῳ καταρκημένους εἶδεν καὶ χρὴ δι' τοὺς κάτω ἡ μὴ ἁμόνοια, χαλκεωτέραν ἔξουσι τὴν κατακομβήν τῶν ὁριμῶν καὶ πάλιν ἀντιληπτον ἀν ἡ ἥλιος τῇ ἡπείρῳ δίδωσι.14 Moreover, the devastation of part of the Peloponnesian allies was a very different thing from the destruction of all Attica, as the Peloponnesians would be

7. Thuc. II. 65.5–6.
8. E.g. Nicias’ appointment as general in the Sicilian expedition (Thuc. VI. 8.2–4).
11. Thuc. II. 23–32.
12. Thuc. II. 55–92.
13. Chronologically the account of Pericles’ death and his ‘obituary’ (II. 65.6 ff.) are out of place. Pericles died in the autumn of 429 B.C. (cf. Gomme, com. on II.65.6), and hence the events reported in Thuc. II. 65 to II. 92 must also be considered.
14. Thuc. I.120.2.
compelled to seek land elsewhere by force of arms, whereas the Athenians had much land both in the islands and on the mainland.\footnote{15} So important was their produce to the Peloponnesians that they could collect their allies only once a year, and that in the summer before harvesting, to invade Attica.\footnote{16} This invasion, lasting as long as their provisions lasted,\footnote{17} was never longer than forty days.\footnote{18} On returning, the Peloponnesians, described as men who tilled their own soil,\footnote{19} dispersed to attend to their farmlands and produce.\footnote{20} In these circumstances, the numerous raids involving merely the ravaging of lands would certainly have aimed at causing distress through the resultant shortage of food supplies or land for food production. However, there were graver consequences, since several passages in Thucydides indicate that the ravaging of land was expected to force the surrender of communities. For example, Brasidas in concluding his proposals for the surrender of the inhabitants of Acanthus said: \textit{μάρτυρος μὲν θεοῦ καὶ ήρως τούς ἐγχωρίους ποιήσωμαι ως ἐπ’ ἀγαθῷ ήκαν οὐ πεθα, γήν δὲ τὴν ομετέραν δὴν περάσσομαι βιά εσθαλ.}\footnote{21} Thus the ravaging of land formed an integral part of aggressive warfare.

Athenian strategy involved more than the ravaging of lands and the hopes of conquest by such action. There are cities that were actually taken during the first two and a half years of the war, and it is noteworthy that not all these cities were in the Peloponnesian. Thronium, on the Locrian coast, was captured and hostages were taken.\footnote{22} Solium in Acarnania was taken and handed over to the Palaereans of Acarnania, while Astacus in the same region was added to the Athenian Confederacy after Evarchus who was tyrant there had been driven out.\footnote{23} The Athenians sailed against the island, Cephallenia, and gained it over.\footnote{24} Prasiae, a small town on the coast of Laconia, was taken and plundered.\footnote{25}

In the second year of the war Pericles equipped an expedition of 4000 hoplites – a strong force of heavily armed men – and 300 cavalry against Epidaurus. Specially constructed transport ships were used for the first time

\begin{footnotes}
\item[15] Thuc. I.143.4.
\item[16] Thuc. II.19.1, II.47.2, II.71.1 (an alternative to invading Attica), III.1 & 3, and very significantly an invasion called at harvesting time meets with difficulty (Thuc. III.15.1-2).
\item[18] Thuc. II.57.2.
\item[19] αὐτουργοι as Pericles referred to them (Thuc. I.141.3 and 5).
\item[20] Thuc. IV.8.1-2, The reference to the Peloponnesians as αὐτουργοι and γεωργοὶ (I.141.3 & 5, 142.7), and the need for περιήγγελλον κατὰ τὴν Πελοπόννησον suggest that the Peloponnesians dispersed on returning from a campaign in order to attend to their lands. Thuc. III.15.2 shows them busy on their lands when not campaigning.
\item[21] Thuc. IV.87.2. See further: II.66.2; II.71.1; III.88.4; III.91.2-3; and III.26.3.
\item[22] Thuc. II.26.2.
\item[23] Thuc. II.30.1.
\item[24] Thuc. II.30.2. The Athenians had approached Cephallenia unsuccessfully before the war to join their alliance (Thuc. II.7.3 and II.9.4).
\item[25] Thuc. II.56.6.
\end{footnotes}
on this occasion. While they in fact only ravaged Epidaurus, this was no mere raiding party. This force included cavalry and the hoplites were four times as many as those aboard the 100 ships sent to ravage the Peloponnese in the previous year. This strong land force of hoplites and cavalry attacked Epidaurus which they expected to take. The Athenian expectation of taking Epidaurus was no vain hope, since the attack was made with a particularly large force and there may have been hopes of support from a dissident party within the city. Epidaurus was ‘the strongest city in the Argolic peninsula after Argos itself; generally at enmity with Argos, and so friendly to Sparta’. This attack on Epidaurus, if successful, could have afforded the Athenians a great military advantage by providing access to Argos, which was neutral but not well disposed to Sparta. Argos had been an ally of Athens as late as 451 B.C. when she concluded a truce with Sparta. Soon after the peace in 421 B.C. it was the Argives who took the initiative in forming a coalition against the Spartan alliance. In 420 B.C. the Argive alliance included the Athenians in a long-term agreement which was more precisely defined in 416 B.C.

It is significant that those places ravaged and those actually attacked in the Peloponnese, viz. Methone (in Messenia), Phœia (in Elis), and Prasiae (in Laconia), were all situated in territory with population groups potentially hostile to Sparta. The other cities, Troezen, Halieis and Hermione, were ravaged in conjunction with the attempt on Epidaurus, a key to Argos. If we keep in mind that the ravaging of territory was a means of forcing surrender and remember that the capture of one important city in a region could facilitate the capture of the rest of the region, it seems likely that the campaigns against these particular cities aimed at nothing less than the conquest of those states within the Peloponnese which were the most likely to embrace the Athenian cause against Sparta.

Epiteichismos too would have aided the achievement of this objective, besides offering other advantages. Oinoe was an example of a fortified

26. Thuc. II.56.2.
27. Thuc. II.23.2.
28. Thuc. II.64.4 and Plutarch Per. 35.3.
30. A. W. Gomme, com. on II.56.4.
31. Thuc. II.9.2.
32. Thuc. V. 28-31; V. 47.8 and V. 82.5. See too H. Bengtson, Die Staatsverträge des Altertums II (1962), nos. 193 and 196.
33. For Messenia and Laconia compare Thuc. IV.41.2-4, 80.1-5, and V.14.3, and keep in mind that the intense hatred against the Spartiates described in Xen. Hell. III.iii.5-7 implies a development over many years prior to Cinadon’s plot. Elis had a perioeci population (Thuc. II.25.3), and herself resented Lacedaemonian support of her dissatisfied Lepreates subjects (Thuc. V. 31.1-5).
34. See note 21, and Thuc. II.86.8.
35. See Thuc. II.18.1-2 concerning its geographical position.
stronghold garrisoned by Athenians in wartime for defensive purposes. The epiteichismos of Atalante in 431 B.C., established to defend against invasion, not only prevented plundering of Euboea, but served at the same time to hem in the enemy. Pericles, speaking of the measures for war which the Spartans contemplated, exhorted the Athenians not to fear their επιτείχισμα, which was a very real danger. Pericles, in his speech on Athenian strategy, must have had an offensive in mind when suggesting epiteichismos by the Athenians as a counter-measure to the expected epiteichismos in the Spartan offensive. Since epiteichismos in the Spartan strategy was an aspect of their offensive, one would expect that the very same strategy on the part of the Athenians would be of the same nature. That this is so, is implied by the very context in which Athenian epiteichismos is proposed. It is reported as follows: φρούριον δ' εἰ ποιήσονται, τῆς μὲν γῆς βλάπτοιεν ἄν τι μέρος καταδρομαίς καὶ αὐτομολαίας, οὐ μέντοι ἱκανόν γε ἐστιν ἐπιτείχιζαν τὴν κόλώνην ἡμᾶς πλεύσαντας ἐς τὴν ἐκείνον κτλ.

Admittedly epiteichismos against the Peloponnesians was not achieved in the time of Pericles, but this does not eliminate the fact that it was a considered strategy. No doubt, if a suitable place had been secured to implement this strategy in the Peloponnese, it would have been accomplished. Even though the Spartans only effected an epiteichismos in Athenian territory in 413 B.C., it has never been doubted that epiteichismos was very much a factor in their strategy since 431 B.C.

36. Thuc. II.32. Compare the raids on the coast of Locris, the capture of Thronium, and the taking of hostages etc. which formed an offensive counterpart to the safeguarding of Euboea.
38. Thuc. I.122.1. Epiteichismos is specially proposed as a measure which would be effective against the Athenians.
39. A.W. Gomme, Com. Vol. I, 458, in pointing out a difficulty in the reading of ὅψον ἡσίον ἡμᾶς ἄντεπειτείχισμαν agrees with Classen in saying that ἐπιτείχιζαν describes, especially in this context, an offensive not a defensive action. Note: ἀντεπείτειχιζας must refer to a counter-attack’ (p. 459).
40. Thuc. I.142.4. This passage is concluded with the words: ἡσερ ἱερόγλυφων, τῶν ναυσιν ἄμυνεσθαι. It should be noted that ἄμυνεσθαι is not only used with the idea of defensive action, but frequently has the collateral notion of requital or revenge. See L. & S. which cites Thuc. I. 96.1 and I. 142 as examples of ἄμυνεσθαι being used with the meaning ‘retaliate’.
41. The reason for epiteichismos not being effected by the Athenians may very well have been the same as that which Adcock suggested prevented the Spartans from making an epiteichismos. ‘The true explanation why the Spartans did not make an ἐπιτείχισμα during the Archidamian War is . . . rather to be seen in the difficulty of the operation, the need for a great margin of military superiority in the field’. F.E. Adcock, ‘Επιτείχισμα in the Archidamian War’, CR 61 (1947), 7.
42. Thuc. VII.27.3.
What the consequences of an epiteichismos against Athens would have been, Pericles himself stated: τὴς μὲν γὰρ βλάπτοιεν ἄν τι μέρος καταδρόμως καὶ αὐτόμολαις. It is only logical to expect similar results from an Athenian counter-epiteichismos in the Peloponnese. It would, however, be more disastrous for the Peloponnesians who held entire populations in subservience, and to whom the ravaging of produce would have posed a greater problem than to the Athenians who had greater resources elsewhere. In fact, when an epiteichismos was established at Pylos many years later, the helots did desert, and such was the situation that the Spartans dreaded some serious calamity. An epiteichismos with results such as those mentioned in Thuc. I. 142.4, and recounted in IV. 41.3, can hardly be termed defensive. The resultant predatory warfare and desertion of helots could be expected to lead to the disaffection of dissident subjects in the Peloponnese, and possibly even to the conquest of cities.

The Athenian war effort extended further than the Peloponnese itself. In 433 B.C. when the war with Sparta was imminent and the Corcyraeans sought an alliance with the Athenians, they held out an allurement to the Athenians for such an alliance by saying: τῆς τε γὰρ Ἰταλίας καὶ Σικελίας καλὸς παράπλος κείται [Corcyra], ἀλλὰ μήτε ἐκέθεν ναυτικὸν ἔδωκα Πελοποννησίως ἐπεμβείτω τὸ τε ἐνθέντα πρὸς τἀκεῖ παραπέμψαν, καὶ ἐς τὸλλα ἄμφωρωτατόν ἄστιν. The value of Corcyra in aggressive warfare is implied in the words: 'Corcyra is conveniently situated for the coast voyage to Italy and Sicily, and can protect a fleet on its way to Sicily'. This could not have referred to defensive aims in any way as these were involved when they said: 'it stands in the way of any fleet coming from there to the Peloponnese'. If by any chance the importance of an alliance with Corcyra, which offered these advantages, was not fully appreciated at the time when Corcyra offered its alliance, it must have been realised at the outbreak of the war. For Corcyra immediately gained the utmost strategic value when the Peloponnesians involved Italy and Sicily in the war by calling upon their allies in those parts (a) to provide the ships they had, (b) to build others in number proportionate to the size of their cities in order to aid the Lacedaemonians, (c) to provide financial aid, and (d) to adopt certain measures to limit the facilities provided to Athenian ships. If the figure given for the number of ships which the Peloponnesians intended to have in their fleet

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43. Thuc. I.142.4.
44. K. M. T. Chrimes, Ancient Sparta (1949), chapt. 8.
45. Thuc. IV. 41.3.
46. Thuc. I. 36.2. For other advantages of a friendly base on the west coast of Greece see A. W. Gomme, com. on Thuc. I. 103.4, and his Essays in Greek History and Literature (1937), chapt. 10.
47. Thuc. II. 7.2.
is correct, Athens might only have had an advantage in seamanship, not in the size of her fleet, when the Peloponnesians achieved their objective.

There were other factors too, but again they were directly related to the war effort against the Peloponnesians. In view of the importance of Sicily as a corn-supplying region, the prevention of soldiers and ships from reaching the Peloponnesian and the sending of forces to the Athenian allies in Sicily and Italy were not the only considerations. Thuc. I. 36.2 also implied the prevention of food supplies reaching the Peloponnesian, and the procurement of such supplies for Athens. In these circumstances an alliance with Corcyra was of extreme importance as part of the offensive and defensive against the Peloponnesian.

Just like Corcyra, Cephallenia too, being on the sea-route from Athens and from the Corinthian gulf to Italy, was of supreme strategic value. Furthermore, with Cephallenia and Zacynthus as bases it was possible for the Athenians to sail around the Peloponnesian. Hence Athens, having Zacynthus as an ally, and having been unsuccessful in gaining the alliance of Cephallenia, found it necessary to sail against this strategically situated island in order to win it over to the Athenian alliance. The raids on Solium, Asaucus, Pheria, and Methone (all on the west coast of Greece) may have been motivated in part by this interest of Athens to acquire bases along the west coast.

The alliances of the Athenians with Leontinoi and Rhegium, dating from about 448 B.C., were renewed in 433/32 B.C. Possibly the alliance with Egesta, made in 458/57 B.C., was still in force. The alliance of Athens with Leontinoi and Rhegium, together with the friendship of Corcyra, Cephallenia, Zacynthus and Acarnania sufficed to prevent the western allies of the Peloponnesian from sailing with a fleet from Sicily to participate in any marked degree in the Archidamian War. Thucydides does not mention the sailing of a fleet from Sicily or Italy during the first ten years of the war. Syracuse was perhaps involved indirectly by supplying corn to the Peloponnesian.

48. A.W. Gomme, com. on Thuc. II. 7.2 for the problem regarding the number of ships.
50. Thuc. II. 80.1.
51. Thuc. II. 9.4.
52. Thuc. II. 7.3 and II. 9.4.
53. Thuc. II. 30.2.
56. Explicitly so by summer 427 B.C. (Thuc. III. 86.2).
57. Thuc. III. 86.4.
All this activity of the Athenians along the western coast of Greece and reaching as far as Italy and Sicily, must be seen as the practical application of the principle underlying the Athenian policy when securing the friendship of Corcyra, Cephalenia, Acarnania and Zacynthus, viz. πέρις τήν Πελο-
πόνησον καταπολεμήσοντες – to surround the Peloponnesian war.58

There is also on record an alliance which the Athenians made for the sole purpose of conquest. Thucydides gives the motive of the Athenians in seeking an alliance with Sitalces, the king of Thrace, in these words: τὸν 
Σιτάλκην οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι ἔμμαχον ἐποιήσαντο, βουλόμενοι σφίστα τὰ ἐπὶ 
Θρήκτης χωρία καὶ Περδίκκαν ἐμφέλειν αὐτῶν.59 To Athens conquest was the only way of terminating the war in these parts.

Various measures were taken to ensure the safety of Euboea which had received Athenian flocks and beasts of burden, and was an important source of corn supply.60 Euboea was also strategically important to Athens particularly in warfare in the northward regions of Greece.61 In the summer of 431 B.C. a fleet of 30 ships was sent to cruise off Locris with a view to the safety of Euboea which was exposed to the hostile Locrian coast. This could be described as a defensive measure. However, descents were made on the Locrion coast, various places were ravaged, Thronium was captured and hostages taken, while at Alope the Locrians were defeated.62 These were aggressive measures. At the end of the same summer the island of Atalante, off the Locrion coast, was occupied, fortified and made a guard station to prevent plundering by bands from Opus and other places in Locris.63 Diodorus Siculus' account suggests both a defensive and an offensive side to the Athenian strategy around Euboea: Ἀθηναίοι στρατηγὸν προχειρισά-
μενοι Κλεότομον ἔξαπεστιλαν μετὰ νεκρῶν τριάκοντα, προτάξαντες τὴν 
τε Εὔβοιαν παρασύλλαττες καὶ Λοκρῶν πολεμάν.64

Athenian aid to her ally Acarnania against the designs of the Ambraciots and the Chaonians to subjugate the whole of Acarnania and to detach it from the Athenian alliance;65 her defence of Naupactus;66 and support of

58. Thuc. II. 7.3. A. W. Gomme, com. ad loc. translates βεβαιός πέρις τὴν Πελοπό-
νησον καταπολεμήσοντες: ‘we shall then be waging war against the Peloponnesian, 
from every direction, with a secure base’.
59. Thuc. II. 29.4.
61. Compare the panic created by the defection of Euboea in 411 B.C. (Thuc. VIII. 
96.1-4).
63. Thuc. II. 32.
64. Diod. Sic. XII. 44.1.
65. Thuc. II. 80.1 indicates the disastrous consequences for Athens which the loss of 
Acarnania would entail.
66. Naupactus was very closely linked with the operations in Acarnania and the west 
coast of Greece, see for example Thuc. II. 80-92.
Rhegium and Leontinoi,\textsuperscript{67} are likewise examples of Athens ensuring the well-being of strategically useful allies.

Even states which were not definite allies, but merely pro-Athenian in sentiment and of potential value, were rendered assistance. So for example, the Athenians sent 20 ships in 429 B.C. to aid Phormio, but they first had to answer a request for aid from a proxenos of Athens at Gortys before continuing to Naupactus.\textsuperscript{68} Although Thucydides gives no indication for the reason of this interest in Crete, besides the fact that it was aid to a proxenos of Athens, we may presume that concern for Athenian trade with the Levant, which might be interrupted by privateers based on Crete, was not entirely unrelated.\textsuperscript{69}

Pericles did not hesitate to deal severely with an unreliable subject state of the Athenian Empire. In the case of Aegina he removed the entire population and colonised it with Athenian settlers. Thucydides gives the reason for this action: \textquoteleft Αθηναῖοι ... ἐπικαλέσαντες οὖν ἥκιστα τοῦ πολέμου σφίσαν αὐτοὺς εἷναι καὶ τὴν Ἀἴγιναν ἀσφαλέστερον ἐρᾶνεν τῇ Πελοποννήσῳ ἐπικειμένην αὐτῶν πέμπατας ἐποίκους ἔχον.\textsuperscript{70} In view of the proximity of Aegina to the Peloponnese, the removal of its hostile population was to ensure that the Peloponnesians did not gain the cooperation of the Aeginetans and use Aegina as a base against Athens.\textsuperscript{71} The measure could also have been part of the Athenian policy to have reliable allies to surround the Peloponnese with war. The possibility of an offensive purpose in this action is suggested by the fact that the greatest attack on Epidaurus was made the following year, i.e. soon after the danger of a dissident Aegina between Athens and Epidaurus had been removed.

To speak of an exclusively defensive war seems, therefore, a contradiction of the evidence. Nearer the truth are those who see in the policy of Pericles a dual strategy – defensive on land, but offensive at sea.\textsuperscript{72} As this would involve a war of sea forces against land forces, the supporters of such a dual strategy are compelled to conclude with Busolt\textsuperscript{73} that this was no 'Niederwerfungsstrategie', but an 'Ermattungsstrategie'. Such a strategy would have achieved nothing but the preservation of the Athenian possessions and

\textsuperscript{67} Thuc. III. 86.3–4.
\textsuperscript{68} Thuc. II. 85.5.
\textsuperscript{69} Thus Gomme, com. on Thuc. II.85.5.
\textsuperscript{70} Thuc. II. 27.1.
\textsuperscript{71} It was not very long before that Aegina had been defeated, her navy having been a considerable threat to Athenian supremacy at sea. If she recovered her former naval strength she may very well have supplied Sparta with the much needed sea power.
\textsuperscript{72} As for example, G. Busolt, F.E. Adcock, and H. Bengtson – my note 5.
\textsuperscript{73} Op cit., 893–5.
a cessation of war, with Athens and Sparta still sharing the leadership of the Greek world as after the Thirty Years' Peace agreement of 446/5 B.C. However, after 446/5 B.C. this shared supremacy was so unstable that it resulted in the conditions which existed just prior to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War in 431 B.C. While the Athenian alliance with Corcyra against Corinth, the fight for Potidaea, the Megarian decree, and the Athenian infringement of the autonomy of Aegina, were the immediate causes of the war, the basic cause was the Lacedaemonian fear of the growing power of Athens. On the other hand, the Athenians, as in the war on the mainland before the peace of 446/5 B.C., desired to keep the influence and power of the Lacedaemonians in check.

Pericles in refusing any concession before the war, and in strongly opposing those who already in the summer of 430 B.C. sought terms of peace with Sparta, revealed that the struggle for power had to be resolved decisively. The two powers had failed to exist side by side under the agreement of 446/5 B.C. Athens' supremacy had to be maintained at all costs or else her empire would break up. A Pericles who was convinced of the greatness of Athens and of the importance of remaining absolutely supreme in order to maintain the empire; who by co-operative measures and by war had sought to extend and consolidate the empire, and under pressure of circumstances had made a Thirty Years' Peace to rally his forces; who had seen in the slightest concession to Sparta nothing but slavery; who had urged the Athenians to war as the only solution to the struggle for power between Athens and Sparta; who had strongly opposed a move for peace even when the Athenians were suffering greatly soon after the war began; who had adopted a strategy to surround the Peloponnese with war - this man would hardly have induced the Athenians to suffer great personal loss by allowing the enemy to ravage their property time and again, if the only reward was to let Athens survive the war intact and, with Sparta's strength not really diminished, re-establish the circumstances of shared supremacy which existed and proved a failure prior to the war.

74. 'Im besten Falle wäre mit dieser Strategie nicht mehr zu erreichen gewesen als die Ermüdung des Gegners und ein fauler Friede, der den bisherigen Besitzstand bestätigte und keine Gewähr dafür bot, daß Sparta nicht zu gelegener Zeit den Krieg wieder begann', G. Busolt, op. cit., 893-4.
77. Plutarch, Per. 21.1.
78. Thuc. I. 140.4–5; I. 141.1; II. 61.1 and 63.1.
79. Thuc. I. 140.4–5; I. 141.1.
80. Thuc. II. 59.1 – II. 64.6.
81. Compare the equally determined attitude of the Peloponnesians expressed in the Corinthian speech (Thuc. I. 124.2–3).
82. Thuc. II. 63.1–3.
Thus from an argument of probability a defensive strategy, even if it should involve an offensive by sea, seems very unlikely. The events of the war seem to bear out this conclusion. Apart from the Athenian offensive employing the fleet to carry forces to assailable points of strategic importance, there are indications that the land forces too were not pursuing a defensive strategy only, but that the scope of their operations was widespread.

Thucydides reports in book II.31.1 that at the end of the summer of the first year of the war ‘the entire Athenian force, including the metics, invaded the territory of Megara, under the command of Pericles the son of Xanthippus ... This was the largest army which the Athenians ever had in one place ... they repeated the invasion, sometimes with cavalry, sometimes with the whole Athenian army, every year during the war until Nisaea was taken’.84 The Athenians numbered 10,000 hoplites, 3000 metics and a large number of light-armed troops.85 This was an armed force even greater than that sent to conquer Sicily in 415 B.C. when the hoplites numbered in all 5,100, the archers 480, the slingers 700, the light-armed 120, and the horsemen 30.86 In view of the large numbers involved in this and later invasions of Megara, and the fact that the large invading force ravaged the greater part of the Megarid – the initial step of any invading army in trying to force surrender – these invasions seem to indicate greater aims than mere raiding.87 After all, the powerful Peloponnesian army which was determined to defeat the Athenians with their strategy, which was of an undoubted offensive nature, only managed to ravage Attica year after year during the Archidamian War. The Athenian invasions at the end of the first year of the war and in subsequent years strongly suggest an offensive by land. The fact that no conquest was made before Nisaea was taken may only mean that until then the ultimate objective had met with failure. No general would put such a large force in the field merely ‘to work off their anger’, as Burn has suggested,88 and a lesser army would have sufficed if it were merely to forage.

Apart from the offensive on land against the Peloponnese, the Athenians with their hoplite force maintained a land offensive against the Peloponnesians and their allies elsewhere. At the time when the Athenians first invaded the Megarid, 3000 Athenian hoplites were engaged in besieging Potidaea.89

84. Thuc. IV. 66.1 refers to an invasion twice a year. Nisaea was taken in 424 B.C. (Thuc. IV, 69.4).
85. Thuc. II. 31.2. The 10,000 hoplites included a 1000 which went with the fleet (See A.W. Gomme, com. ad loc.).
86. Thuc. VI. 43.
87. Plutarch Per. 30.3, referring to a decree that a general should swear enmity against Megara and twice a year invade Megara, may indicate persistence to achieve ultimate conquest rather than routine invasions to harass the enemy (See A.W. Gomme, com. on Thuc. II, 31.3 and I. 139.2 on this decree of Charinos). The effects of these invasions are demonstrated in the events related in Thuc. IV, 66.1 ff.
88. A.R. Burn, Pericles and Athens (1948), 213.
89. Thuc. II. 31.2, and see Gomme, com. ad loc.
The siege was continued with reinforcements arriving from time to time by sea (the only route open to the Athenians) until strategically important Potidaea was taken.

The Athenians, as already observed, had made an alliance with Sitalces in order to conquer Chalcidice and Perdiccas of Macedonia. The Athenians were bound to assist Sitalces by providing ships and as many soldiers as they could. In the summer of 431 B.C. the Athenians, together with their allies, fought against the Chalcideans. During the following summer Hagnon and Cleopompus sailed against the Thracian Chalcideans and Potidæa with 4000 Athenian hoplites, but owing to losses through the plague only made an unsuccessful attempt on Potidæa. In the summer of 429 B.C., soon after Potidæa had fallen to the Athenians, they sent an expedition of 2000 hoplites and 200 horsemen against the Chalcideans of Thrace and against the Bottiaeans. This expedition came near to taking Spartolus. In the winter of the same year Sitalces, in order to fulfil his promises to the Athenians, marched against Perdiccas of Macedonia and the Thracian Chalcideans. Admittedly, the Athenians did not entirely fulfil their obligations on this occasion when they failed to provide ships, but an Athenian commander, Hagnon, did accompany Sitalces. Such was the Athenian role in this war of conquest with Sitalces that it led to the widespread belief that they intended to lead their Odrysian allies against the rest of Hellas.

Thucydides, who characteristically selects his material and concentrates on the war against the Peloponnese itself, to a large extent neglects military operations elsewhere. We have seen, for example, that he gives but scant notice of Athenian action in the warfare in Chalcidice and Macedonia. Likewise, we only know from very brief notices that Athenian soldiers were defeated in Lycia while on a march inland, and that some Athenians were actively assisting in the defence of Plataea. However, Thucydides does in a general way refer to the widespread involvement of Athenian land forces when he lets Pericles say: 'Our enemies have never yet felt our combined strength; the care of a navy divides our attention and on land we are obliged to send our citizens everywhere'.

It also seems that Pericles exploited weaknesses within the Peloponnesian alliance in order to gain results which are more in keeping with an offensive than a defensive strategy. Within the Peloponnesian alliance Corinth was...
not only the other power centre besides Sparta, but also the most formidable opponent of Athens. More than any other state Corinth urged the Peloponnesians to war. While Troezen, Epidaurus, Hermione and Cephallenia had formed part of the Corinthian fleet in the dispute between Corinth and Corcyra in 435 B.C., they were not among the Corinthian allies who provided ships for the fleet which sailed against Corcyra in 433 B.C. In 431 B.C. these states, although members of the Peloponnesian alliance, did not help at sea. This seems to suggest less than whole-hearted support of the Peloponnesian cause, and it is therefore all the more notable that in the Peloponnesian War Cephallenia, Troezen, Hermione and Epidaurus were among the first places to be attacked by the Athenians.

Megara, which was among Corinth's faithful allies in 435 and 433 B.C. against Corcyra and provided ships for the Peloponnesian alliance in 431 B.C., was subjected to large scale Athenian attacks. There were several reasons for such action. The alliance of Athens with Megara, or the Athenian occupation of her territory, would make a Peloponnesian invasion of Attica extremely difficult, if not impossible, while possession of Pegae as port would render Athenian operations in the Corinthian Gulf, and even against Corinth itself, extremely effective. However, a more immediate consideration may have been the fact that Megara's history had shown that in certain circumstances she could be expected to change her allegiance. It was not long before, in the First Peloponnesian War, that Megara had left the Peloponnesian League to join Athens because of a dispute with Corinth. In 447 B.C. Megara revolted from Athens to become her enemy once more, while Nisaea and Pegae were restored by the terms of the Thirty Years' Peace with Sparta.

In central Greece, Thebes was the only state which had been consistent in her opposition to Athens. Sparta had formed an alliance with Thebes in 457 B.C. to create a counterweight to Athenian power in central Greece. While Thucydides states that all Boeotia became subject to Athens after the Athenian victory at Oenophyta, Diodorus Siculus records that Thebes was excluded. Thebes again proved a faithful ally to Sparta in her action against the Plataeans in the Peloponnesian War. The loyalties of the remaining states in central Greece were less constant. Among the Peloponnesian allies outside the Peloponnese at the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War the Phocians, Locrians, and Boeotians are listed. After the battle at Oeno-
phyta in 457 B.C. Boeotia and Phocis were under Athenian control, while hostages were exacted from the Opuntian Locrians. Though we know very little about the Athenian alliance with the Delphic Amphictiony, this alliance possibly dates from 457 B.C. In 453/2 B.C. the Boeotians and Phocians assisted Athens as allies in a campaign to restore the exiled Thessalian king. During the truce of five years between Athens and the Peloponnesian League, Sparta freed Delphi from Phocian rule and the Athenians under Pericles' command intervened to restore it to Phocii. Athens lost her position of power in central Greece when she was compelled to withdraw from Boeotia after the defeat at Coronea. Plataea, already an ally of Athens as early as 519 B.C., was assisted by Athens throughout her struggle against Theban and Spartan aggression during the early years of the war. Thus, the Athenian offensive against Thronium, Alope and the Locrian coast was in a region where there was a reasonable chance that the allegiance to the Peloponnesian cause might waver once again under Athenian pressure.

With three of the main spheres of the Athenian offensive, viz. in central Greece, Megara, and Argolis, being in regions where there was a history of changing loyalties, Pericles could expect to reap the greatest benefits from victories gained in these parts; just as he had good reason to expect far-reaching results from conquests made in potentially hostile Messenia, Laconia and Elis.

The question now arises whether Pericles' warnings to the Athenians not to join battle with the Peloponnesians and not to extend the ἄρχη indicate a general defensive policy which the nature of the warfare in the first three years of the war appears to contradict. In Thuc. I.143.4–5 Pericles put forward the Athenian counter-offensive in the event of the Peloponnesians invading Attica, i.e. the environs of Athens. The relevant passage has this preliminary: ἤν τε ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν ἡμῶν πεζῷ ἱσοῦν, ἡμεῖς ἐπὶ τὴν ἐξελών πλευσούμεθα. The consequences of the devastation of even a part of the Peloponnesian territory are then discussed. The answer to a Peloponnesian attack was an attack on the Peloponnesian territory at the same time by the only route which lay open to the Athenians - the sea - and this to achieve at least the same immediate result which was envisaged by the Peloponnesian invasion - the devastation of land. At the same time the Athenians were exhorted not to endanger the city of Athens by meeting the enemy in battle to prevent the

108. Thuc. I. 108.3.
110. Thuc. I. 111.1.
112. Thuc. I. 113.3.
113. Herod. VI. 108.4 and Thuc. III. 55.1.
114. Thuc. II. 26.1–2.
115. Thuc. I. 143.5, II. 13.2, II. 55.2, II. 65.7 and I. 144.1.
loss of their property. The reason for Pericles’ doubts about success in such an encounter was simply the fact that the army defending Athens was far outnumbered by the Peloponnesian forces. In these circumstances an encounter with the enemy, while they were mustered outside the walls of Athens for a short space of time, would only have entailed defeat. Pericles was fully aware of the dire consequences of such an event. The only result which the Athenians could hope to achieve, if successful, was the withdrawal of the enemy from Attica. When this result could be achieved in any case, without suffering the loss of precious men, merely by staying within the city walls, it would have been foolish for the Athenians to meet the enemy while at a numerical disadvantage. Furthermore, it would have been folly to risk men to save crops and possessions which could be obtained elsewhere.

The critical point of the warning against an encounter with the Peloponnesians is that the Athenians should not become involved in a pitched battle outside the walls of Athens during the brief period when the Peloponnesian forces were there en masse. can only refer to the particular requirements of the strategy around Athens itself, but because it occurs in a general statement of Periclean policy, it has been misunderstood to refer to his strategy in general. It cannot refer to a strategy which was defensive in general, as this very action around Athens itself had a dynamic and aggressive counterpart, viz. the Athenian attack on the Peloponnesian forces by transporting considerable armed forces by sea to a point of attack where the enemy was vulnerable. The offensive aspect of the Athenian strategy at the time of the Spartan invasion of Attica also receives mention in the account of Diodorus Siculus: Periklēs στρατηγὸς ὁ snd to ἡ τὸν ὅλην ἡγεμονίαν ἔχων παρεκάλει τοὺς νέους ἡσυχίαν ἔχειν, ἐπαγγελλόμενος ἀνείν κινδύνων ἐκβαλεῖν τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους ἐκ τῆς Ἀττικῆς. Πληρώσας οὖν ἐκατόν τρίησες καὶ δύναμιν ἔξω τῆς ᾠν ἐνθέμενον ... ἔξεπεμψε στῇς Πελοπόννησος. Both ἐκβαλεῖν and ἔξεπεμψεν εἰς στὴς Πελοπόννησος suggest active opposition, not passive resistance or inactivity.

The strategy of Pericles was a well planned offensive employing a variety of strategems including defensive action when called for. Throughout the

116. Thuc. I. 143.5 ... καὶ νῦν χρὴ ... καὶ Πελοπόννησιος ὑπὸ ἄρτων ὁργισθέντας πολλῷ πλέοσι μὴ διαμάχησθαι κτλ., and Thuc. II. 39.2–3.
117. Thuc. I. 143.5 ... καὶ ἦν σφαλμένη, τὰ τῶν ξυμμάχων, δὲν λογίζομεν, προσαπόλυτα· οὗ γὰρ ἡσυχάσουσι μὴ ἱκανοὶ ἠμῶν δυνάν ἐπι αὐτοὺς στρατεύεις κτλ.
118. The longest stay was 40 days (Thuc. II. 57.2), and the shortest 15 days (Thuc. IV. 6.2).
119. Thuc. I. 143.4 and II. 13.2. A. W. Gomme, comm. on II. 65.7, believes that we should insert τῷ δολατικῷ, as ἡσυχάζοντας is hardly the policy of Pericles. Gomme has sensed the inappropriateness of this term to Pericles’ policy in general, but inserting τῷ δολατικῷ does not solve the problem because the hoplites were actively engaged in warfare elsewhere.
120. Diod. Sic. XII. 42.6–7.
summer and winter, on sea and land, the Athenian forces (at times of considerable size) were engaged in an offensive which was not limited to the Peloponnese and the central Greek mainland, but extended along the west coast of Greece, northwards to Chalcidice and Macedonia, and involved the making of alliances as far afield as Sicily and Italy. All this formed an integral part of the strategy to make war upon the Peloponnese 'from every direction, with a secure base'. Therefore, one should not, because of the particular measures which were adopted in the very special circumstances around Athens, call Pericles' strategy defensive in general.

Pericles' advice not to extend the Athenian ἄρχη does not invalidate this conclusion. The extension of the ἄρχη by the repopulation of Aegina after the original inhabitants had been removed; by the conquest of Astacus, Thronium, Potidaea, and Sollium, and that attempted in Chalcidice; by epiteichismos at Atalante; and by the particular manner in which the Athenian alliance was extended to include Cephallenia, all seem to contradict the advice of Pericles: ἄρχην μὴ ἐπικτάσθαι. Again the contradiction appears because the phrase is interpreted as a reference to Pericles' policy in general, instead of being understood as a reference to particular circumstances. It is significant that on both occasions when this advice is recorded there is added a limitation. In Thuc. I.144.1 we have: ... ἄρχην τε μὴ ἐπικτάσθαι ἀμα πολεμίοιτες καὶ καὶ κυνοῦμενος αὐθαυτέους μὴ προστίθεσθαι, and in Thuc. II. 65.7: ... καὶ ἄρχην μὴ ἐπικτωμένος ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ μὴ τῇ πόλει κυνοῦμενοντας ἐφι περιέσθαι. Pericles' advice is, therefore, essentially a warning against the extension of the Athenian ἄρχη when it involved risks in wartime. Pericles does not prohibit the extension of the Athenian ἄρχη, but cautions against rash extension of territory and responsibilities. Significantly Thucydides does not condemn the later expedition to conquer Sicily, but rather the manner in which it was undertaken. Whenever Pericles did extend the ἄρχη he did so with the minimum dissipation of Athenian strength: territory was given to a friendly people to occupy (Sollium), hostages were taken - a sure method of ensuring the subjection of a conquered town (Thronium), garrisons were set up (Atalante), newly acquired places were added to the Athenian Confederacy (Astacus and Cephallenia), while only Aegina and Potidaea were actually occupied by Athenians. Prasiae, which was close to Sparta and presumably hazardous to occupy, was destroyed.

During the First Peloponnesian War Pericles, being involved in warfare on the Greek mainland, in the Saronic Bay, and in Egypt, was compelled to

121. Thuc. II. 69.1 refers to a winter expedition around the Peloponnese, and Potidaea was taken in the same winter (Thuc. II. 70.1-4).
122. See note 52, above.
123. Thuc. I. 144.1, and similarly II. 65.7.
accept a Thirty Years' Peace and to surrender much of his gains, because he could not maintain an effective offensive on so wide a front. After this bitter lesson Pericles would not have been eager to find himself in a similar position when again engaged in war with Sparta. However, it does not follow that he would go to the opposite extreme of not extending the Athenian ἀρχή at all, but it could suggest, as I believe it did, a cautious policy of extension.

The novel feature of this war, the avoidance of a pitched battle with the invading Peloponnesian army while at the same time attacking the country of the invaders by transporting armed forces by ship, is given great prominence in the pages of Thucydides' history, particularly in the speeches where the action is explained and motivated. This being in particular a history of the war against the Peloponnesians, the wider ramification of the war is dealt with summarily. A closer examination of the evidence given by Thucydides himself, even though it be by way of brief notices, has revealed that Thucydides was aware of a strategy which was in general offensive. This offensive has been obscured by his choice to emphasise an aspect which more than any other shows the greatness of Athens in being able to resist an enemy at the very heart of her empire while waging a war which took her soldiers everywhere.

125. G. Busolt, *op. cit.*, 894: 'Im Kriege mit den Peloponnesiern trachtete er doch nur danach, das Errungene ungeschmälerl zu erhalten und den Nachkommen zu überliefern'.

The reference here is to Thuc. I. 144.4: ὅποι οὐ χρὴ λαίπασθαι, ἄλλα τοὺς τὲ ἐξήλοθος παντὶ τρόπῳ ἀμώνεσθαι καὶ τοῖς ἐπιγιγνομένοις πειράσθαι αὐτὰ μὴ ἐλάσσω παραδοῦναι. This does not exclude handing down to posterity a greater empire!

126. In conclusion I wish to acknowledge my debt to Prof. E. Badian, formerly of Leeds, for useful criticism and comments in preparing this article.

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