

After the Battle
of Sybota (between
Corcyra and Corinth).

432 BC

THE DEBATE AT SPARTA AND
DECLARATION OF WAR

66 Both the Athenians and the Peloponnesians had already grounds of complaint against each other. The grievance of Corinth was that the Athenians were besieging her own colony of Potidaea, with Corinthians and other Peloponnesians in the place: Athens, on the other hand, had her own grievances against the Pelopon-

nesians; they had supported the revolt of a city which was in alliance with her and which paid her tribute, and they had openly joined the Potidaeans in fighting against her. In spite of this, the truce was still in force and war had not yet broken out. What had been done so far had been done on the private initiative of Corinth.

67 Now, however, Corinth brought matters into the open. Potidaea was under blockade, some of her own citizens were inside, and she feared that the place might be lost. She therefore immediately urged the allies to send delegates to Sparta.¹³ There her own delegates violently attacked the Athenians for having broken the truce and committed acts of aggression against the Peloponnesus. The people of Aegina were on her side. Out of fear of Athens they had not sent a formal delegation, but behind the scenes they played a considerable part in fomenting war, saying that they had not been given the independence promised to them by the treaty. The Spartans also issued an invitation to their own allies and to anyone else who claimed to have suffered from Athenian aggression. They then held their usual assembly, and gave an opportunity there for delegates to express their views. Many came forward with various complaints. In particular the delegates from Megara, after mentioning a number of other grievances, pointed out that, contrary to the terms of the treaty, they were excluded from all the ports in the Athenian empire and from the market of Athens itself. The Corinthians were the last to come forward and speak, having allowed the previous speakers to do their part in hardening Spartan opinion against Athens. The Corinthian speech was as follows:

Aegina
Megara
Corcyra
Athens

68 Spartans, what makes you somewhat reluctant to listen to us others, if we have ideas to put forward, is the great trust and confidence which you have in your own constitution and in your own way of life. This is a quality which certainly makes you moderate in your judgements; it is also, perhaps, responsible for a kind of ignorance which you show when you are dealing with foreign affairs. Many times before now we have told you what we were likely to suffer from Athens, and on each occasion, instead of taking to heart what we were telling you, you chose instead to suspect our motives and to consider that we were speaking only about our own grievances. The result has been that you did not call together

¹³ On the procedure, see Appendix I.

Corinthian speech

this meeting of our allies before the damage was done; you waited until now, when we are actually suffering from it. And of all these allies, we have perhaps the best right to speak now, since we have the most serious complaints to make. We have to complain of Athens for her insolent aggression and of Sparta for her neglect of our advice.

'If there were anything doubtful or obscure about this aggression on the whole of Hellas, our task would have been to try to put the facts before you and show you something that you did not know. As it is, long speeches are unnecessary; you can see yourselves how Athens has deprived some states of their freedom and is scheming to do the same thing for others, especially among our own allies, and that she herself has for a long time been preparing for the eventuality of war. Why otherwise should she have forcibly taken over from us the control of Corcyra? Why is she besieging Potidaea? Potidaea is the best possible base for any campaign in Thrace, and Corcyra might have contributed a very large fleet to the Peloponnesian League.

'And it is you who are responsible for all this. It was you who in the first place allowed the Athenians to fortify their city and build the Long Walls after the Persian War. Since then and up to the present day you have withheld freedom not only from those who have been enslaved by Athens but even from your own allies. When one is deprived of one's liberty one is right in blaming not so much the man who puts the fetters on as the one who had the power to prevent him, but did not use it - especially when such a one rejoices in the glorious reputation of having been the liberator of Hellas.

'Even at this stage it has not been easy to arrange this meeting, and even at this meeting there are no definite proposals. Why are we still considering whether aggression has taken place instead of how we can resist it? Men who are capable of real action first make their plans and then go forward without hesitation while their enemies have still not made up their minds. As for the Athenians, we know their methods and how they gradually encroach upon their neighbours. Now they are proceeding slowly because they think that your insensitiveness to the situation enables them to go on their way unnoticed; you will find that they will develop their

Corinthian speech

full strength once they realize that you do see what is happening and are still doing nothing to prevent it.

'You Spartans are the only people in Hellas who wait calmly on events, relying for your defence not on action but on making people think that you will act. You alone do nothing in the early stages to prevent an enemy's expansion; you wait until your enemy has doubled his strength. Certainly you used to have the reputation of being safe and sure enough: now one wonders whether this reputation was deserved. The Persians, as we know ourselves, came from the ends of the earth and got as far as the Peloponnes before you were able to put a proper force into the field to meet them. The Athenians, unlike the Persians, live close to you, yet still you do not appear to notice them; instead of going out to meet them, you prefer to stand still and wait till you are attacked, thus hazarding everything by fighting with opponents who have grown far stronger than they were originally.

'In fact you know that the chief reason for the failure of the Persian invasion was the mistaken policy of the Persians themselves; and you know, too, that there have been many occasions when, if we managed to stand up to Athenian aggression, it was more because of Athenian mistakes than because of any help we got from you. Indeed, we can think of instances already where those who have relied on you and remained unprepared have been ruined by the confidence they placed in you.

'We should not like any of you to think that we are speaking in an unfriendly spirit. We are only remonstrating with you, as is natural when one's friends are making mistakes. Real accusations must be kept for one's enemies who have actually done one harm.

'Then also we think we have as much right as anyone else to point out faults in our neighbours, especially when we consider the enormous difference between you and the Athenians. To our minds, you are quite unaware of this difference; you have never yet tried to imagine what sort of people these Athenians are against whom you will have to fight - how much, indeed how completely different from you. An Athenian is always an innovator, quick to form a resolution and quick at carrying it out. You, on the other hand, are good at keeping things as they are; you never originate an idea, and your action tends to stop short of its aim. Then again,

Corinthian speech

1-3-40

Albers

60-61

74-75

Athenian daring will outrun its own resources; they will take risks against their better judgement, and still, in the midst of danger, remain confident. But your nature is always to do less than you could have done, to mistrust your own judgement, however sound it may be, and to assume that dangers will last for ever. Think of this, too: while you are hanging back, they never hesitate; while you stay at home, they are always abroad; for they think that the farther they go the more they will get, while you think that any movement may endanger what you have already. If they win a victory, they follow it up at once, and if they suffer a defeat, they scarcely fall back at all. As for their bodies, they regard them as expendable for their city's sake, as though they were not their own; but each man cultivates his own intelligence, again with a view to doing something notable for his city. If they aim at something and do not get it, they think that they have been deprived of what belonged to them already; whereas, if their enterprise is successful, they regard that success as nothing compared to what they will do next. Suppose they fail in some undertaking; they make good the loss immediately by setting their hopes in some other direction. Of them alone it may be said that they possess a thing almost as soon as they have begun to desire it, so quickly with them does action follow upon decision. And so they go on working away in hardship and danger all the days of their lives, seldom enjoying their possessions because they are always adding to them. Their view of a holiday is to do what needs doing; they prefer hardship and activity to peace and quiet. In a word, they are by nature incapable of either living a quiet life themselves or of allowing anyone else to do so.

That is the character of the city which is opposed to you. Yet you still hang back; you will not see that the likeliest way of securing peace is this: only to use one's power in the cause of justice, but to make it perfectly plain that one is resolved not to tolerate aggression. On the contrary, your idea of proper behaviour is, firstly, to avoid harming others, and then to avoid being harmed yourselves, even if it is a matter of defending your own interests. Even if you had on your frontiers a power holding the same principles as you do, it is hard to see how such a policy could have been a success. But at the present time, as we have just pointed out to you, your

whole way of life is out of date when compared with theirs. And it is just as true in politics as it is in any art or craft: new methods must drive out old ones. When a city can live in peace and quiet, no doubt the old-established ways are best: but when one is constantly being faced by new problems, one has also to be capable of approaching them in an original way. Thus Athens, because of the very variety of her experience, is a far more modern state than you are.

Your inactivity has done harm enough. Now let there be an end of it. Give your allies, and especially Potidaea, the help you promised, and invade Attica at once. Do not let your friends and kinsmen fall into the hands of the bitter enemies. Do not force the rest of us in despair to join a different alliance. If we did so, no one could rightly blame us - neither the gods who witnessed our oaths nor any man capable of appreciating our situation. The people who break a treaty of alliance are the ones who fail to give the help they swore to give, not those who have to look elsewhere because they have been left in the lurch. But if you will only make up your minds to act, we will stand by you. It would be an unnatural thing for us to make a change, nor could we find other allies with whom we have such close bonds. You have heard what we have to say. Think carefully over your decision. From your fathers was handed down to you the leadership of the Peloponnese. Maintain its greatness.

This was the speech of the Corinthians. There happened to be already in Sparta some Athenian representatives who had come there on other business. When they heard the speeches that had been made, they decided that they, too, ought to claim a hearing. Not that they had any intention of defending themselves against any of the charges that had been made against Athens by the various cities, but they wished to make a general statement and to point out that this was an affair which needed further consideration and ought not to be decided upon at once. They wanted also to make clear how powerful their city was, to remind the elder members of the assembly of facts that were known to them, and to inform the younger ones of matters in which they were ignorant. In this way they hoped to divert their audience from the idea of war and make them incline towards letting matters rest. They therefore

approached the Spartans and said that, if there was no objection, they, too, would like to make a speech before the assembly. The Spartans invited them to do so, and they came forward and spoke as follows:

73 This delegation of ours did not come here to enter into a controversy with your allies, but to deal with the business on which our city sent us. We observe, however, that extraordinary attacks have been made on us, and so we have come forward to speak. We shall make no reply to the charges which these cities have made against us. Your assembly is not a court of law, competent to listen to pleas either from them or from us. Our aim is to prevent you from coming to the wrong decision on a matter of great importance through paying too much attention to the views of your allies. At the same time we should like to examine the general principles of the argument used against us and to make you see that our gains have been reasonable enough and that our city is one that deserves a certain consideration.

There is no need to talk about what happened long ago: there our evidence would be that of hearsay rather than that of eye-witnesses amongst our audience. But we must refer to the Persian War, to events well known to you all, even though you may be tired of constantly hearing the story. In our actions at that time we ventured everything for the common good; you have your share in what was gained; do not deprive us of all our share of glory and of the good that it may do us. We shall not be speaking in the spirit of one who is asking a favour, but of one who is producing evidence. Our aim is to show you what sort of a city you will have to fight against, if you make the wrong decision.

This is our record. At Marathon we stood out against the Persians and faced them single-handed. In the later invasion, when we were unable to meet the enemy on land, we and all our people took to our ships, and joined in the battle at Salamis. It was this battle that prevented the Persians from sailing against the Peloponnese and destroying the cities one by one; for no system of mutual defence could have been organized in face of the Persian naval superiority. The best proof of this is in the conduct of the Persians themselves. Once they had lost the battle at sea they realized that their force was crippled and they immediately withdrew most of

Athenian speech

*Wid
Ovid
to
from
you
X*

*Wid
Wid
Wid
Wid*

74 their army. That, then was the result, and it proved that the fate of Hellas depended on her navy. Now, we contributed to this result in three important ways: we produced most of the ships, we provided the most intelligent of the generals, and we displayed the most unflinching courage. Out of the 400 ships, nearly two-thirds were ours: the commander was Themistocles, who was mainly responsible for the battle being fought in the straits, and this, obviously, was what saved us. You yourselves in fact, because of this, treated him with more distinction than you have ever treated any visitor from abroad. And the courage, the daring that we showed were without parallel. With no help coming to us by land, with all the states up to our frontier already enslaved, we chose to abandon our city and to sacrifice our property; then, so far from deserting the rest of our allies in the common cause or making ourselves useless to them by dispersing our forces, we took to our ships and chose the path of danger, with no grudges against you for not having come to our help earlier. So it is that we can claim to have given more than we received. There were still people living in the cities which you left behind you, and you were fighting to preserve them; when you sent out your forces you feared for yourselves much more than for us (at all events, you never put in an appearance until we had lost everything). Behind us, on the other hand, was a city that had ceased to exist; yet we still went forward and ventured our lives for this city that seemed so impossible to recover. Thus we joined you and helped to save not only ourselves but you also. But if we, like others, had been frightened about our land and had made terms with the Persians before you arrived, or if, later, we had regarded ourselves as irretrievably ruined and had lacked the courage to take to our ships, then there would no longer have been any point in your fighting the enemy at sea, since you would not have had enough ships. Instead things would have gone easily and quietly just as the Persians wished.

75 Surely, Spartans, the courage, the resolution, and the ability which we showed then ought not to be repaid by such immoderate hostility from the Hellenes - especially so far as our empire is concerned. We did not gain this empire by force. It came to us at a time when you were unwilling to fight on to the end against the Persians. At this time our allies came to us of their own accord and

Athenian

*Wid
Ovid
to
from
you
X*

*Wid
Wid
Wid
Wid*

begged us to lead them. It was the actual course of events which first compelled us to increase our power to its present extent: fear of Persia was our chief motive, though afterwards we thought, too, of our own honour and our own interest. Finally there came a time when we were surrounded by enemies, when we had already crushed some revolts, when you had lost the friendly feelings that you used to have for us and had turned against us and begun to arouse our suspicion: at this point it was clearly no longer safe for us to risk letting our empire go, especially as any allies that left us would go over to you. And when tremendous dangers are involved no one can be blamed for looking to his own interest.

76 'Certainly you Spartans, in your leadership of the Peloponnese, have arranged the affairs of the various states so as to suit yourselves. And if, in the years of which we were speaking, you had gone on taking an active part in the war and had become unpopular, as we did, in the course of exercising your leadership, we have little doubt that you would have been just as hard upon your allies as we were, and that you would have been forced either to govern strongly or to endanger your own security.

'So it is with us. We have done nothing extraordinary, nothing contrary to human nature in accepting an empire when it was offered to us and then in refusing to give it up. Three very powerful motives prevent us from doing so - security, honour, and self-interest. And we were not the first to act in this way. Far from it. It has always been a rule that the weak should be subject to the strong; and besides, we consider that we are worthy of our power. Up till the present moment you, too, used to think that we were; but now, after calculating your own interest, you are beginning to talk in terms of right and wrong. Considerations of this kind have never yet turned people aside from the opportunities of aggrandizement offered by superior strength. Those who really deserve praise are the people who, while human enough to enjoy power, nevertheless pay more attention to justice than they are compelled to do by their situation. Certainly we think that if anyone else was in our position it would soon be evident whether we act with moderation or not. Yet, unreasonably enough, our very consideration for others has brought us more blame than praise. For example, in law-suits with our allies arising out of con-

Athenians

tracts we have put ourselves at a disadvantage, and when we arrange to have such cases tried by impartial courts in Athens, people merely say that we are overfond of going to law. No one bothers to inquire why this reproach is not made against other imperial Powers, who treat their subjects much more harshly than we do: the fact being, of course, that where force can be used there is no need to bring in the law. Our subjects, on the other hand, are used to being treated as equals; consequently, when they are disappointed in what they think right and suffer even the smallest disadvantage because of a judgement in our courts or because of the power that our empire gives us, they cease to feel grateful to us for all the advantages which we have left to them: indeed, they feel more bitterly over this slight disparity than they would feel if we, from the first, had set the law aside and had openly enriched ourselves at their expense. Under those conditions they would certainly not have disputed the fact that the weak must give in to the strong. People, in fact, seem to feel more strongly about their legal wrongs than about the wrongs inflicted on them by violence. In the first case they think they are being outdone by an equal, in the second case that they are being compelled by a superior. Certainly they put up with much worse sufferings than these when they were under the Persians, but now they think that our government is oppressive. That is natural enough, perhaps, since subject peoples always find the present time most hard to bear. But on one point we are quite certain: if you were to destroy us and to take over our empire, you would soon lose all the goodwill which you have gained because of others being afraid of us - that is, if you are going to stick to those principles of behaviour which you showed before, in the short time when you led Hellas against the Persians. Your own regulated ways of life do not mix well with the ways of others. Also it is a fact that when one of you goes abroad he follows neither his own rules nor those of the rest of Hellas.

78 'Take time, then, over your decision, which is an important one. Do not allow considerations of other people's opinions and other people's complaints to involve you in difficulties which you will feel yourselves. Think, too, of the great part that is played by the unpredictable in war: think of it now, before you are actually committed to war. The longer a war lasts, the more things tend to

Athenians

depend on accidents. Neither you nor we can see into them; we have to abide their outcome in the dark. And when people are entering upon a war they do things the wrong way round. Action comes first, and it is only when they have already suffered that they begin to think. We, however, are still far removed from such a mistaken attitude; so, to the best of our belief, are you. And so we urge you, now, while we are both still free to make sensible decisions, do not break the peace, do not go back upon your oaths; instead let us settle our differences by arbitration, as is laid down in the treaty. If you will not do so, we shall have as our witnesses the gods who heard our oaths. You will have begun the war, and we shall attempt to meet you in any and every field of action that you may choose.

79 The Athenians spoke as I have described. Now the Spartans had heard the complaints made by their allies against Athens and also the Athenian reply. They therefore requested all outsiders to leave and discussed the situation among themselves. Most people's views tended to the same conclusion - namely, that Athens was already acting aggressively and that war should be declared without delay. However, the Spartan King Archidamus, a man who had a reputation for both intelligence and moderation, came forward and made the following speech:

80 'Spartans, in the course of my life I have taken part in many wars, and I see among you people of the same age as I am. They and I have had experience, and so are not likely to share in what may be a general enthusiasm for war, nor to think that war is a good thing or a safe thing. And you will find, if you look carefully into the matter, that this present war which you are now discussing is not likely to be anything on a small scale. When we are engaged with Peloponnesians and neighbours, the forces on both sides are of the same type, and we can strike rapidly where we wish to strike. With Athens it is different. Here we shall be engaged with people who live far off, people also who have the widest experience of the sea and who are extremely well equipped in all other directions, very wealthy both as individuals and as a state, with ships and cavalry and hoplites, with a population bigger than that of any other place in Hellas, and then, too, with numbers of allies who pay tribute to them. How, then, can we irresponsibly start a

Archidamus

war with such a people? What have we to rely upon if we rush into it unprepared? Our navy? It is inferior to theirs, and if we are to give proper attention to it and build it up to their strength, that will take time. Or are we relying on our wealth? Here we are at an even greater disadvantage: we have no public funds, and it is no easy matter to secure contributions from private sources. Perhaps there is ground for confidence in the superiority which we have in heavy infantry and in actual numbers, assets which will enable us to invade and devastate their land. Athens, however, controls plenty of land outside Attica and can import what she wants by sea. And if we try to make her allies revolt from her, we shall have to support them with a fleet, since most of them are on the islands. What sort of war, then, are we going to fight? If we can neither defeat them at sea nor take away from them the resources on which their navy depends, we shall do ourselves more harm than good. We shall then find that we can no longer even make an honourable peace, especially if it is thought that it was we who began the quarrel. For we must not bolster ourselves up with the false hope that if we devastate their land, the war will soon be over. I fear that it is more likely that we shall be leaving it to our children after us. So convinced am I that the Athenians have too much pride to become the slaves of their own land, or to shrink back from warfare as though they were inexperienced in it.

82 'Not that I am suggesting that we should calmly allow them to injure our allies and should turn a blind eye to their machinations. What I do suggest is that we should not take up arms at the present moment; instead we should send to them and put our grievances before them; we should not threaten war too openly, though at the same time we should make it clear that we are not going to let them have their own way. In the meantime we should be making our own preparations by winning over new allies both among Hellenes and among foreigners - from any quarter, in fact, where we can increase our naval and financial resources. No one can blame us for securing our own safety by taking foreigners as well as Greeks into our alliance when we are, as is the fact, having our position undermined by the Athenians. At the same time we must put our own affairs in order. If they pay attention to our diplomatic

Archidamus

protests, so much the better. If they do not, then, after two or three years have passed, we shall be in a much sounder position and can attack them, if we decide to do so. And perhaps when they see that our actual strength is keeping pace with the language that we use, they will be more inclined to give way, since their land will still be untouched and, in making up their minds, they will be thinking of advantages which they still possess and which have not yet been destroyed. For you must think of their land as though it was a hostage in your possession, and all the more valuable the better it is looked after. You should spare it up to the last possible moment, and avoid driving them to a state of desperation in which you will find them much harder to deal with. If now in our present state of unpreparedness we lay their land waste, hurried into this course by the complaints of our allies, I warn you to take care that our action does not bring to the Peloponnese still more shame and still greater difficulties. As for complaints, whether they come from cities or from private individuals, they are capable of arrangement; but when war is declared by our whole confederacy for the sake of the interests of some of us, and when it is impossible to foresee the course that the war will take, then an honourable settlement is not an easy thing at all.

83 'Let no one call it cowardice if we, in all our numbers, hesitate before attacking a single city. They have just as many allies as we have, and their allies pay tribute. And war is not so much a matter of armaments as of the money which makes armaments effective: particularly is this true in a war fought between a land power and a sea power. So let us first of all see to our finances and, until we have done so, avoid being swept away by speeches from our allies. It is we who shall bear most of the responsibility for what happens later, whether it is good or bad; we should therefore be allowed the time to look into some of these possibilities at our leisure.

84 'As for being slow and cautious - which is the usual criticism made against us - there is nothing to be ashamed of in that. If you take something on before you are ready for it, hurry at the beginning will mean delay at the end. Besides, the city in which we live has always been free and always famous. "Slow" and "cautious" can equally well be "wise" and "sensible". Certainly it is because we possess these qualities that we are the only people who do not

Archidamus

become arrogant when we are successful, and who in times of stress are less likely to give in than others. We are not carried away by the pleasure of hearing ourselves praised when people are urging us towards dangers that seem to us unnecessary; and we are no more likely to give in shamefacedly to other people's views when they try to spur us on by their accusations. Because of our well-ordered life we are both brave in war and wise in council. Brave, because self-control is based upon a sense of honour, and honour is based on courage. And we are wise because we are not so highly educated as to look down upon our laws and customs, and are too rigorously trained in self-control to be able to disobey them. We are trained to avoid being too clever in matters that are of no use - such as being able to produce an excellent theoretical criticism of one's enemies' dispositions, and then failing in practice to do quite so well against them. Instead we are taught that there is not a great deal of difference between the way we think and the way others think, and that it is impossible to calculate accurately events that are determined by chance. The practical measures that we take are always based on the assumption that our enemies are not unintelligent. And it is right and proper for us to put our hopes in the reliability of our own precautions rather than in the possibility of our opponent making mistakes. There is no need to suppose that human beings differ very much one from another: but it is true that the ones who come out on top are the ones who have been trained in the hardest school.

85 'Let us never give up this discipline which our fathers have handed down to us and which we still preserve and which has always done us good. Let us not be hurried, and in one short day's space come to a decision which will so profoundly affect the lives of men and their fortunes, the fates of cities and their national honour. We ought to take time over such a decision. And we, more than others, can afford to take time, because we are strong. As for the Athenians, I advise sending a mission to them about Potidaea and also about the other cases where our allies claim to have been ill treated. Especially is this the right thing to do since the Athenians themselves are prepared to submit to arbitration, and when one party offers this it is quite illegal to attack him first, as though he was definitely in the wrong. And at the same time

Archidamus

carry on your preparations for war. This decision is the best one you can make for yourselves, and is also the one most likely to inspire fear in your enemies.

After this speech of Archidamus, Sthenelaidas, one of the ephors of that year, came forward to make the final speech, which was as follows:

86 'I do not understand these long speeches which the Athenians make. Though they said a great deal in praise of themselves, they made no attempt to contradict the fact that they are acting aggressively against our allies and against the Peloponnesus. And surely, if it is the fact that they had a good record in the past against the Persians and now have a bad record as regards us, then they deserve to pay double for it, since, though they were once good, they have now turned out bad. We are the same then and now, and if we are sensible, we shall not allow any aggression against our allies and shall not wait before we come to their help. They are no longer waiting before being ill treated. Others may have a lot of money and ships and horses, but we have good allies, and we ought not to betray them to the Athenians. And this is not a matter to be settled by law-suits and by words: it is not because of words that our own interests are suffering. Instead we should come to the help of our allies quickly and with all our might. And let no one try to tell us that when we are being attacked we should sit down and discuss matters; these long discussions are rather for those who are meditating aggression themselves. Therefore, Spartans, cast your votes for the honour of Sparta and for war! Do not allow the Athenians to grow still stronger! Do not entirely betray your allies! Instead let us, with the help of heaven, go forward to meet the aggressor!'

87 After this speech he himself, in his capacity of ephor, put the question to the Spartan assembly. They make their decisions by acclamation, not by voting, and Sthenelaidas said at first that he could not decide on which side the acclamations were the louder. This was because he wanted to make them show their opinions openly and so make them all the more enthusiastic for war. He therefore said: 'Spartans, those of you who think that the treaty has been broken and that the Athenians are aggressors, get up and stand on one side. Those who do not think so, stand on the other side,' and he pointed out to them where they were to stand. They

Archidamus

then rose to their feet and separated into two divisions. The great majority were of the opinion that the treaty had been broken.

They then summoned their allies to the assembly and told them that they had decided that Athens was acting aggressively, but that they wanted to have all their allies with them when they put the vote, so that, if they decided to make war, it should be done on the basis of a unanimous resolution.

Afterwards the allied delegates, having got their own way, returned home. Later the Athenian representatives, when they had finished the business for which they had come, also returned. This decision of the assembly that the treaty had been broken took place in the fourteenth year of the thirty years' truce which was made after the affair of Euboea. The Spartans voted that the treaty had been broken and that war should be declared, not so much because they were influenced by the speeches of their allies as because they were afraid of the further growth of Athenian power, seeing, as they did, that already the greater part of Hellas was under the control of Athens.

Sparta
Declares
War!

Decide
Athens
has
won

John
with
the
Spartans