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## Julius Caesar and His Security Strategy in Ancient Rome

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### Abstract

Many Classical authors such as Plutarch, Seutonius, Lucan, and even Julius Caesar himself have discussed Caesar's conquests of his political opponents/enemies in the Roman senate and other lands. Modern authors such as Dodge, Goldsworthy, Gruen, and others have concentrated on Caesar's personality, his victories and many others. Others have, in analysing this great leader, described him as a strategist, colossus, a military commander, gentle, assertive, cunning and authoritative, among many others. This paper aims to examine his strategy with regard to his securing his position as consul, his defeat of his political enemies in the Roman Senate, and other peoples. This paper argues that Julius Caesar's philosophy of dealing devastating blows on his enemies, not only placed him on a pedestal of victory, it also placed Rome on a platform bereft of incursions from neighbouring peoples, especially the Gauls who were formidable enough to have sacked Rome in 390BC. The paper concludes with the argument that Julius Caesar would have died earlier than 44 BC if he had not adopted necessary measures to destroy his opponents, bringing honours upon himself and the Roman State.

### Introduction

Gaius Julius Caesar, a formidable warrior known for his various conquests, the defence and the expansion of Rome's frontiers, was a Roman statesman, General and author. He conquered Gaul (modern France and Belgium), while defending the Roman Empire. His achievements, his popularity and even his defiance of the Senate planted fear into friends and foes alike. Furthermore, Julius Caesar himself understood that to survive, he needed, among others, to adopt the ideology of both

the defensive and offensive realisms and deal a crushing blow on who or whatever constituted an enemy to his aspirations and that of the Roman State. This paper examines strategies adopted by Caesar to reduce his enemies to rubble in order to consolidate his rule and control over the Roman State and her environs. In so doing, the study adopts a historical method even as it considers the origins and development of attempting an inquiry of Julius Caesar and his security strategy, while considering and critiquing

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primary as well as secondary sources, analysing the facts of the story and arriving at reasonable conclusions. The study makes a significant contribution to knowledge as it showcases tactics, military or otherwise, that can be adopted while attempting to quell dangerous forces of the state.

**Gaius Julius Caesar**

Born circa 12th or 13th July 100 B.C. in Rome to Gaius Julius Caesar, the governor of the province of Asia,<sup>1</sup> Suetonius, while insinuating that Caesar hereditary can be traced to immortals, informs us that Julius Caesar was the son of the legendary Trojan prince Aeneas who was the son of the goddess Venus.<sup>2</sup> Suetonius<sup>3</sup> also tells us that Caesar was a man of tall stature and fair in complexion. He had shapely limbs, was carefully trimmed, shaved and had superfluous hair plucked out. He had a pair of keen black eyes. He was also bald, which of course bothered him somewhat as this his baldness was often the gibes of his detractors. Consequently, he combed forward his scanty locks from the crown of his head. He wore the laurel wreath at all times. He was of sound health, but in his older age, was subject to sudden fainting fits and nightmares. During his campaigns he was attacked twice by the failing sickness. His dressing was said to be remarkable. He wore a senator's tunic even with fringed sleeves that reached the wrist, and he had a loose girdle over it; this they say, was the occasion of Sulla's mot, when he often warned the nobles to keep an eye on the ill-girt boy.

Julius Caesar was related or linked to Gaius Marius and his faction because Gaius Marius married his aunt Julia. Marius was a very

powerful and influential leader in the Roman Republic and his main rival was Sulla.<sup>4</sup> This was a huge challenge to Caesar because he became targets for both promotion and demotion, depending on who was in ascendant position; his uncle Marius, or his uncle's rival Lucius Cornelius Sulla. This was why that as Sulla became the most powerful leader in the Roman Republic, Caesar lost his inheritance, his wife's dowry and his priesthood<sup>5</sup> and also because he disobeyed Sulla in refusing to divorce his wife Cornelia who was also Cinna's daughter.<sup>6</sup> Cinna was co-magistrate with Marius. His mother's family and the Vestal virgins had to intervene to save him from Sulla's wrath.

Caesar joined the army and won many laurels for himself. He returned to Rome where his leadership skills saw his ruthless persecution of former governors infamous for extortion and corruption. Caesar won many accolades and titles for himself, and so in 63 B.C. he became the *Pontifex Maximus*.<sup>7</sup>\* He was praetor<sup>9</sup> in 62 B.C. and was later appointed governor of the province of Spain with proconsular powers.<sup>10</sup> He established a friendly relationship with Marcus Licinius Crassus, a man of great opulence who assisted him and paid his debts while acting as guarantor for others. He was hailed as imperator in Spain after annihilating two local tribes. He reformed the law with regard to debts and ended his tenure with great pomp, pageantry and respect.<sup>11</sup>

**Caesar's Reforms**

The Roman Republic was constantly engaged in a series of *warfare* between 133 and 27. It was as a result of the two orders; the *optimates*

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(party of the best men) and *thepopulares* (party of the people). The *optimates* who were conservative and defenders of the old days preferred that power and wealth remained in the hands of the Senate. The *populares* who were champions of peasants who were also Roman citizens, demanded for redistribution of land among Roman citizens. Tiberius Gracchus (168-133 BC) elected Tribune<sup>12</sup> in 133, and his brother Gaius Gracchus (159-121 B.C.), were champions of this cause. They were both assassinated by the Senate who refused to allow their bills to see the light of day. Yet the wealth that came to Rome as a result of the battles fought by Roman soldiers, many of whom were peasants, were concentrated in the hands of members of the senate. The Senate had become selfish, desperate for wealth and even mean. Also, the senatorial system had become increasingly weak such that invasions from Germanic tribes to the north of the Danube River could not be dispelled by the armies of the senate. The armies were poorly organised, unwilling to fight, and corrupt. Gaius Marius (157-86) saved Rome having raised a professional army on his own. Sulla (138-78) overthrew Marius in 88 BC and eventually became dictator for life after he defeated his enemies. Marius' reforms benefitted the poor, but Sulla's benefitted the Senate more than other administrative bodies. This was the political and socio-economic conditions of Rome prior to the entrance of Julius Caesar on the stage. And so when he came he established several reforms.

Caesar established a new constitution.<sup>13</sup> He suppressed all armed resistance in the provinces and brought order to the empire. He established a strong central government

in Rome and also wanted to knit together the entire empire into a single, cohesive unit.<sup>14</sup> After his triumph, Caesar set out to pass an ambitious legislative agenda.<sup>15</sup> He passed a sumptuary law that restricted the purchase of certain luxuries. He also passed a law that rewarded families that had many children in order to increase the population of Italy. He outlawed some professional guilds because most of them were subversive political camps. He passed a debt law that aided in cancelling about a fourth of all debts owed.<sup>16</sup> He built the Forum of Caesar, with its Temple of Venus Genetrix and many other public works.<sup>17</sup> Caesar also tightly regulated the purchase of state-subsidised grain and reduced the number of recipients to a fixed number (from 320,000 to 150,000), all of whom were entered into a special register.<sup>18</sup> From 47 to 44 BC he made plans for the distribution of land to about 15,000 of his veterans.<sup>19</sup> He also reformed the calendar.<sup>20</sup>

He established a police force and ordered the rebuilding of Carthage and Corinth. He also extended Latin rights throughout the Roman world, and then abolished the tax system and reverted to the earlier version that allowed cities to collect tribute however they wanted, rather than needing Roman intermediaries. If his assassination had failed, he would have completed the construction of an unprecedented temple to Mars, a huge theater, and a library on the scale of the Library of Alexandria.<sup>21</sup> Also, he would have made Ostia an important port and would have dug a canal through the Isthmus of Corinth. He would have annihilated the Dacians and the Parthians, and avenged the loss at Carrhae.

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### Caesar the Dictator

In 49 BC, Caesar opened the treasury using force and undermining the seal placed by a tribune on it, thereby violating the sanctity of a tribune.<sup>22</sup> Again in 48 BC, Caesar had permanent tribunician powers,<sup>23</sup> therefore making him sacrosanct and granting him the power to veto the Senate.<sup>24</sup> Some tribunes tried to stop him but they were stripped of their offices.<sup>25</sup> In 46 BC, Caesar was appointed dictator for ten years.<sup>26</sup> In 46 BC, Caesar took the title of "Prefect of the Morals", but its powers were the same as the censors.<sup>27</sup> Thus, he could hold censorial powers, while technically not subjecting himself to the same checks that the ordinary censors were subjected to, and he used these powers to fill the senate with his own partisans. He also set the precedent, which his imperial successors followed, of requiring the senate to bestow various titles and honors upon him. He was, for example, given the title of "Father of the Fatherland" and "Imperator."<sup>28</sup> In October 45 BC, Caesar resigned his position as sole consul, and facilitated the election of two successors for the remainder of the year which theoretically restored the ordinary consulship, since the constitution did not recognise a single consul without a colleague.<sup>29</sup>

Caesar used his censorial powers to appoint many new senators thereby raising the membership of the Senate to 900.<sup>30</sup> He had become so powerful that the Senate had become subservient to him.<sup>31</sup> Caesar passed a law that restricted governors to term limit.<sup>32</sup> This was beneficial to Caesar because it did restrict attempts to challenge him.<sup>33</sup>

In February 44 BC, Caesar was appointed dictator for life. In 44 BC, he passed a law

that permitted him alone to appoint all magistrates. Consequently, the magistrates were responsible to the dictator alone.<sup>34</sup> However, Caesar was assassinated on the Ides of March of 44 BC by a group of about 60 men. Mark Anthony attempted to warn Caesar of the plot but did not succeed for he fled when he heard the commotion from the senate chamber.<sup>35</sup> Plutarch<sup>36</sup> and Seutomus<sup>37</sup> vividly describe the assassination of Caesar by these men including Brutus, the supposed friend of Caesar who with the other men stabbed Caesar 23 times.<sup>38</sup> Caesar's body was cremated and he was given a befitting burial.

### Caesar's Problems with the Opposition

Caesar had acquired many enemies due to his political stance, especially against the senate, his victories, the increase of his support base, and his growing power and influence. He had become the sole potentate in the Republic, and this irked the opposition. These individuals, who may have been either right or wrong in their assertions of Caesar's stance and operations were themselves not exactly Utopian in their political trajectory. Corruption seemed to have become the order of the day, and the *status quo* had been maintained by a corrupt aristocracy and this had led to a weak central government. Yet Caesar was committed to dealing with these men whom he considered enemies, even of the Republic. And while he dealt with them, he arrogated powers to himself, reckoning it was the best preference at salvaging a corrupt system and of course, members of the senate refused to sit idle while Caesar divested them of their powers, opportunities and privileges. Therefore, what were witnessed were conflicts

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between Julius Caesar and various persons of the Senate of the Roman Republic. These, Caesar vowed to annihilate. He achieved this to a great extent by adopting various strategies, one of which was the establishment of the triumvirate which gave him a strong support base. He succeeded while the triumvirate endured. When it collapsed, he resorted to other means. At this juncture, it is pertinent that the conflict between Caesar and his enemies be discussed.

**Conflict with Bibulus**

Caesar and his allies especially the triumvirate, drew the angst and jealousy of his opponents. These were men who described themselves as *boni* (the good men or the *optimates*). They believed that Caesar was power hungry and wanted to arrogate the powers of the senate to himself, and so they decided to oppose Caesar through and through. Bibulus was one of such enemies. He served as Curule Aedile<sup>39</sup> with Caesar in 65 BC after members of his group, including Cato, bribed to see him through to the position.<sup>40</sup> Bibulus' other attempt was vetoing Caesar's bill to purchase land for Pompey's veterans. However, he railed as Caesar's supporters, even Pompey and Crassus, palpably supported the bill. He made moves to stop Caesar from achieving his goal, but he lost out completely. He returned home and continued to obstruct Caesar from achieving his goal of pronouncing legislative proclamations of bad omens.<sup>41</sup> It is important to note here that Caesar was on the offensive through and through when he began and continued to divest the Senate of her powers and arrogated those powers to himself. The strategy of building a coalition

gave Caesar victory over Bibulus. Pompey and Crassus were worthy team members and so success became his. Indeed, a threefold cord is not easily broken.<sup>42</sup>

**Conflict with Marcus Porcius Cato Uticensis**

Marcus Porcius Cato Uticensis, the father-in-law of Bibulus, was another enemy of Caesar. Cato was born in 95 BC in Rome and died in 46 BC, after committing suicide. Cato employed his acumen in opposing Caesar and his allies Pompey and Crassus. First, he withstood Pompey and ensured that the Senate forced Pompey to choose between election into the office of Consul and the celebration of his triumph.<sup>43</sup> Pompey chose the triumph. Cato applied the same principle to Caesar. The latter chose the election which he won to become Consul. As Consul, Cato opposed every law Caesar promulgated, especially the agrarian laws that concerned the settlement of Pompey's veterans on lands. Caesar dealt with Cato by having him arrested however, other senators intervened and Cato was released. Cato consistently harangued Caesar at any opportunity. He even accused Caesar of reading notes from the conspirators at the discussion of the Catiline conspirators. Cato was proven wrong as the letter was from a lover, who was also Cato's married sister. Cato also carried out failed attempts to prevent Caesar's five-year appointment as governor of Illyria and Cisalpine Gaul.

When the triumvirate crashed in 54, Cato and the *optimates* faction of the Senate tried to force Caesar out of Gaul, because he had illegally crossed into Germania. Cato then became an ally of Pompey, who by now had

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become Caesar's enemy. It is true that Cato was a no-nonsense personality but his hobnobbing with Pompey as well as members of the *optimates* who were also corrupt, raises the question of Cato's integrity. One can argue that he decided to form an alliance with Pompey because both had the similar goal of bringing Caesar down. Caesar took the battle to the senators who fled the city to raise arms under the leadership of Pompey. Eventually, Cato committed suicide, rather than concede defeat to Caesar. Caesar slugged it out with his enemies, defeating Pompey's army at the battle of Pharsalia in 48 B.C, as well as the army of Metellus Scipio at the Battle of Thapsus in 46 B.C. Against Cato, Cesar was on the offensive and when the time was ripe, he adopted the Gedarene style even as he went against Cato headlong.

**Conflict with the Gauls**

The Gauls had been a cantankerous people as well as problematic to the Romans right from inception. Sinnigen and Boak<sup>44</sup> related the experience of the Romans at the hands of the Gauls in 390 BC when the Romans suffered defeat at their hands. They had been a threat to the Romans for several centuries. Describing them as blue-eyed men, Sinnigen and Boak stated that they were brave to the point of recklessness and the ferocity of their first assault inspired terror in the ranks of veteran armies.<sup>45</sup> Sinnigen and Boak related further that although they were formidable warriors, they were also undisciplined. Although they were artistic and skillful in their industry of metal working, their characteristic vice was the love of strife and they were also passionate about war and oratory. The Romans had always

dreaded them. Although they fought severally with the Gauls, they would rather avoid war with them. However, during his time Caesar confronted and defeated the Gauls with two of his legions.<sup>46</sup> It was at a time when the Romans feared that some Gaulic tribes were preparing to migrate south, closer to Italy, and that they had warlike intent. Thereafter, the Gaulic north-east tribes began to arm themselves. Caesar viewed and interpreted it as provocative and engaged the tribes in battle. He defeated them piecemeal. In 55 BC, Caesar repelled an incursion into Gaul by two Germanic tribes, built a bridge across the Rhine which he eventually dismantled. In that same year, he subdued two other tribes.<sup>47</sup>

In 52 BC, another revolt led by Vercingetorix, an astute commander of a Gaulic tribe, erupted. Caesar had conceded defeat to Vercingetorix previously in some battles, but his superior skills and elaborate siege-works at the battle of Alesia brought Vercingetorix to his knees.<sup>48</sup> In 51 BC, after several battles, Caesar totally subjugated Gaul. Plutarch<sup>49</sup> tells us that the Romans through Julius Caesar, conquered 300 tribes and destroyed 800 cities. Caesar was on the defensive when he adopted the offensive strategy. When he attacked the Gauls, he was only attempting to defend the Roman Empire.

**Conflict with Pompey**

Pompey had become consumed with jealousy for Caesar. His jealousy is not unconnected to Caesar's success and popularity especially among the soldiers who were benefitting greatly from Caesar's magnanimity. In 50 BC, the Senate, led by Pompey, ordered Caesar to disband his army and return to Rome because

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his term as governor had elapsed.<sup>50</sup> It is safe for one to assume that Caesar believed he would be prosecuted by the Senate were he to enter Rome without the immunity enjoyed by a magistrate. So Caesar was careful and refused to comply. Pompey accused Caesar of insubordination and treason. Having had enough, in January 49 BC, Caesar crossed the Rubicon (the frontier boundary of Italy) with only one legion, while quoting the Athenian playwright Menander, in Greek, "the die is cast,"<sup>51</sup> and thereafter ignited a civil war.

Pompey and many senators took to flight to the south. When Caesar caught up with Pompey with the intention of engaging him in battle, Pompey refused to fight Caesar in spite of the fact that he outnumbered Caesar. Pompey must have reckoned that Caesar's readiness and determination stood superior and would count for something against the multitude of his soldiers who were probably not psychologically and physically prepared to engage Caesar in battle. And so Pompey fled again. Caesar pursued him hoping to capture him before his legions could escape.<sup>52</sup> However, Pompey escaped. Caesar left Italy under the control of Mark Anthony and headed to Spain. Caesar defeated Pompey's remnants after a 27-day march. Caesar again besieged Pompey in Greece in July 48 BC at the Battle of Pharsalus where Caesar was almost killed by Pompey. Later that year, Caesar decisively defeated Pompey at the Battle of Munda.<sup>53</sup> Caesar, adopted the offensive strategy against Pompey even though he did so because he was on the defensive. Pompey also entered alliances with those who wanted to bring Caesar down.

### Strategies Adopted by Caesar in Defeating His Enemies

Caesar adopted three major strategies in dealing with his enemies, securing his position in ancient Rome and placing Rome on a pedestal of victory and success over other nations/peoples. The first was the attempt at building a coalition or an alliance which, although could not be sustained, achieved a great deal for him. The second was the defensive/offensive strategy. In this case, he took the battles to the domains of his enemies. This is witnessed severally, when he crossed the Rubicon with the statement the "die is cast," and when he took the battle to Utica where Cato of Utica committed suicide because he dreaded a disgraceful defeat by Julius Caesar. The third was the Gadarene style. Here Caesar is seen combating his enemies headlong without undue procrastination. As the study takes an in-depth view at the strategies adopted by Caesar, it also continues to examine the trajectory of Caesar's life.

### Building a Coalition

Douglass<sup>54</sup> explains that a coalition is an alliance that is formed on a temporary basis for the purpose of engaging in joint activity or achieving a common goal. Establishing a coalition enables members of similar values, interest and goals to combine resources and become more powerful as a group than as individuals.<sup>55</sup> Caesar had the presence of intellect to establish the triumvirate for the purpose of strengthening his position in the Roman Senate and ascending higher offices. This coalition aided his moves and actions until

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it disintegrated. When Bibulus who was Curule Aedile with him in 69 B.C. attempted to veto Caesar's bill to acquire land for Pompey's veterans, the coalition worked against Bibulus. Caesar's protagonists including Crassus and Pompey blatantly endorsed the bill. Bibulus further tried to denounce the bill by declaring omens, the same supporters of Caesar withstood him. They broke the fasces of Bibulus, wounded two high magistrates and deposited fecal matter on Bibulus. This was the purpose of the coalition. The first triumvirate as it was called aided Caesar in dealing with his enemies as he climbed to the apex of his career.

### **Defensive and Offensive Strategies**

Caesar adopted other strategies such as the defensive and offensive strategies to drive his vision and aspirations. Although he adopted both, he relied heavily on the offensive realism strategy as it produced the indispensable effect. Defensive realism also known as neorealism, is an element of structural realism. It was also carved out of the realist school of reasoning in International Relations theory. John J Mearsheimer,<sup>56</sup> a neorealist scholar, outlines Realism's five base theoretical assumptions which neorealism works from. The assumptions are:

- (1) The international system is anarchic.
- (2) States inherently possess some offensive military capability, which gives them the ability to hurt and possibly destroy each other.
- (3) States can never be certain about the intentions of other states.
- (4) The basic motive driving states is survival.

- (5) States think strategically about how to survive in the international system.

The five assumptions are not different from the tenets of offensive realism. It merely suggests that states who want to be on the defensive only seek power adequate to defend themselves, thus creating a peaceful atmosphere for states' existence and survival. In other words, it suggests that states that adopt this strategy are not aggressive in maintaining their structure and eventually, their security in the international community. The fact of the matter is that at the time of Caesar, maintaining the status quo was an invitation to incursions from other peoples. It tended to suggest that the state operating a defensive neorealism structure was a weak state and would, sooner or later, concede her strategic position to a nation operating the offensive realism ideology. Kenneth Waltz<sup>57</sup> buttresses this point of argument when he says that "the first concern of states (i.e. states who adopt the defensive realism strategy) is not to maximise power but to maintain their position in the system." However, one can contend that Caesar had to adopt this method, probably once, when he experienced conflicts with Pompey. In this instance, he desired to restore the coalition and relationship with Pompey by offering his niece to Pompey as wife after Pompey lost his wife in child birth. Pompey's late wife was Caesar's daughter. However, Pompey rebuffed Caesar and went ahead to marry the daughter of Cinna, Caesar's enemy. But he was on the offensive against Ptolemy XIE who thought that by beheading Pompey he was doing Caesar a favour. Caesar wept for the manner in which a Roman Consul died



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humiliated *by* a boy king who lacked the skill and expertise of an elitist Roman Consul such as Pompey.

On other numerous occasions, while he battled his enemies, he put into operation the offensive realism theory in order to sustain his security, his success and the security and success of the Roman Republic. Caesar went on the offensive against his enemies and the enemies of the Roman state. He was on the offensive against Bibulus, Cato and the other senators; such that when they heard that he had crossed the Rubicon, they took to flight and formed an alliance in order to defeat Caesar, but he annihilated them one after the other.

The offensive realism whose tenets are similar to those of the defensive realism was propounded by Mearsheimer. The tenets are:

- (1) Great powers are the main actors in world politics and the international system is anarchical.
- (2) All states possess some offensive military capability.
- (3) States can never be certain of the intentions of other states.
- (4) States have survival as their primary goal.
- (5) States are rational actors, capable of coming up with sound strategies that maximise their prospects for survival.<sup>58</sup>

The difference between both tenets is the reaction of each state to the tenets with regard to how states view and interpret the tenets. The states which choose and decide to be on the offensive explain that since the international system is anarchic, i.e. there is

no central power to control states' actions against others; and since all states possess some offensive military skill; and that states are left to survive on their own, therefore, the state cannot afford to maintain a status quo system, rather it advocates wisdom to be alert and on the offensive. To be able to do this, the states must acquire or arrogate more powers to herself. By so doing, the state can assure herself of her security against other nations, especially up-coming super powers. The consequence of this is that there is always suspicion in the air and it causes tension among states and there is a high probability that war would ensue.<sup>59</sup> It nevertheless works since the political and economic system is replete with distrust. The truth of the matter is that once a state becomes hegemon, her offensive stance is stepped down, at least until a potential power begins to loom in the horizon of international politics. However, this should not be the case. A nation operating this ideology should always be on the offensive even in a subtle manner. Caesar did not consider this; little wonder then that he ignored the various warnings he received. If he had remained on the offensive, he probably would have lived to a ripe full age. However, his successor Augustus, proved his mettle in this area.

Julius Caesar went on the offensive due to the fact that he needed to be the hegemon in the politics of the Roman states. Underpinning this idea is that Caesar viewed other states as intending to attack and eventually bring down the Roman state. This certainly was not agreeable with the nature and person of Gams Julius Caesar, who was an elitist Roman Consul and one who had grown to become positively passionate about

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the condition of the Roman states, her citizen as well as her allies.

Caesar took the offensive against the Gauls in several military campaigns, and this is evidenced in the various battles he fought against Gallic tribes which endured from 58 to 50 EC, until they had no option but to concede defeat to this great General of the 1st century B.C. Consequently, it led to the expansion of the Roman Republic which made Rome the hegemon over the whole of Gaul. Caesar defeated the Helvetii alongside their client towns such as the Tulingi, Latobrigi, Rauraci, Boii. He also defeated the Suebi and the Belgae. The last battle against the Gauls where he defeated Vercingetorix, was the battle of Alesia in 52 B.C.

In all of the battles Caesar fought against the Gauls, he was totally on the offensive; beginning from where he hampered the migration of the Helvetii for whatever reasons he claimed the Helvetii had, to attacking the Suebi, the Belgae and laying siege against Alesia with the sole purpose of bringing Alesia to her knees. Caesar achieved all these feats with his highly motivated legions whom, it is said, Caesar had personal relations with. Caesar could also achieve these feats because he had conceived and decided in his mind that the best way to place Rome on a pedestal of victory and success was to go on the offensive against would-be or up-coming powers. He succeeded, although to the chagrin of his enemies, but to the delight of the Roman citizens, his veterans and of course, the Roman Republic.

**Adopting the Gadarene Style**

Caesar adopted this method of dealing with his enemies headlong without undue

procrasiination. As soon as he set his heart to it, he accomplished the ordeal. The first example of such display by Caesar was during his voyage across the Aegean Sea, when he was captured and held prisoner by pirates. Plutarch<sup>60</sup> tells us that while maintaining an attitude of superiority, he promised the pirates that he would hunt them and have them crucified after his freedom. The pirates scorned him thinking he was being comical.<sup>61</sup> Having been ransomed, Julius Caesar carried out his threats. He raised a fleet and went after the pirates, captured them, and as an act of leniency had their throats slit before having them crucified.

Again, having been called back into the army to deal with Rome's enemies, he raised an army of auxiliaries and repelled an incursion into Rome from the East.<sup>62</sup>

Furthermore, he displayed this gadarene method when he divorced his wife Pompeia whom he had married in 67 B.C.<sup>63</sup> She was the granddaughter of Sulla.<sup>64</sup> He divorced her because at the time he had conceived her to be his adversary. How did she become his foe? It was rumored that his wife Pompeia had an opprobrious behavior. Plutarch tells us that although Caesar admitted that he knew nothing of his wife's adultery, he divorced her because, "Caesar's wife ought not even to be under suspicion".<sup>65</sup> Caesar had become a powerful man at this time and executed or did away with those he considered enemies, and since Pompeia fell into the category of Caesar's foes, he divorced her. His actions proved that if one was not with him in totality, one was his enemy. This must have been a hard blow on Pompeia since there was no evidence of this accusation.

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#### Conclusion

Gaius Julius Caesar's rise to power was punctuated with challenges from friends and even foes alike. Caesar's attitude and stance aided in placing him on a pedestal of good success before his untimely demise. If Caesar had not adopted some strategies, he would have died earlier than 44 B.C. The Gracchi brothers, Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus as well as Gaius Marius who were governors prior to the entrant of Caesar would have done better and lived longer if they had adopted Caesar's strategies. Their campaigns were for the masses and these, the Senate, which was the *optimates*, would not tolerate. Caesar took decisive steps in silencing his opponents so that he could succeed in his endeavours. That was the reason he first of all divested the Senate of their powers and arrogated powers to himself and became a dictator. His offensive stance against Rome's enemies, especially the Gauls, put Rome on a higher plane. It is important to note here that Octavian (i.e. Augustus) adopted some of Caesar's strategies, especially the defensive and offensive strategies and modified others. He refused to become a dictator. Sinnigen and Boak (1977: 254) tell us that Octavian "retained the constitution as far as was practicable, while securing power to enable him to uphold and prevent a renewal of civil war." He returned power to the Senate, although he remained the arbiter of the Roman world.

It seems probable that after defeating many of his opponents and those of the Roman Republic, Julius Caesar tended to retreat to *the* defensive status quo due to the fact that he felt and believed his position faced no further threat. It must have been for this reason

that he ignored the warning from an insignificant civilian about the ides of March. He probably would have taken the warning with utmost interest and scrutiny if it had emanated from Brutus, his supposed close ally, or if it had come from a neighbouring nation. The fact remains that Caesar let his guard down at the time when he should have been on the alert due to the magnitude of power that had become his. Further studies may examine Caesar's relationship with members of his legions, while understudying strengths and weaknesses of his administration.

#### Endnotes

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2. Suetonius, *Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, *Julius* 6.
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4. Plutarch, *Marius* 6.
5. Velleius Paterculus, *Roman History* 2:22, translated by Frederick W. Shipley, 1924, Loeb Classical Library.
6. Suetonius, *Julius* 1; Plutarch, *Caesar* 1; Velleius Paterculus, *Roman History* 2:41.
7. Plutarch, *Caesar* 7; Suetonius, *Julius* 13.
8. The Pontifex Maximus was the high priest in the college of priests in ancient Rome. The office was held for life.
9. In the Roman Republic, a praetor was a magistrate charged chiefly with the administration of civil justice. The praetor ranked below a consul.
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12. A Tribune was an elected Roman official whose duty was to protect the interests of the plebeians from arbitrary acts of patrician magistrates.
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14. Abbott, 133.
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22. Abbott, 135.
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41. Cicero, *Letters to Atticus* 2.15-21; Velleius Paterculus, *Roman History* 44.4; Plutarch, *Caesar* 14, *Pompey* 47-48, *Cato the Younger* 32-33; *Cassius Dio, Roman History* 38.1-6.
42. The Holy Bible, King James Version. Ecclesiastes 4:12.
43. A triumph is a solemn procession in which a victorious general entered the city in a chariot drawn by four horses. He was preceded by the captives and spoils taken in war, was followed by his troops, and after passing in state along the Via Sacra, ascended the Capitol to offer sacrifice in the temple of Jupiter retrieved on 17/11/2015 from <http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/SMIGRAVTriumphus.html>.
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