

The first triumvirate was a political alliance between three powerful men in Rome. Gaius Julius Caesar, Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus and Marcus Licinius. It was formed in 59 and it was formed to further their own ends in the face of opposition. The triumvirate was successful because each man bought something useful to the alliance, Caesar bought the Political power and the people power, Pompey bought the military and Crassus being the richest man in Rome at the time obviously bought the money, it was thought that they were jelous of each others successes though.

The triumvirate was formed to protect themselves and to further their own ends in the face of opposition from the Optimates including Cicero and Clodius. Even though the three had never really been on good terms, Caesars appeal for the three to work together was accepted, although at the time only Caesar saw the potential as it was thought the other two only saw a short term alliance. Each of them needed something and together they could accomplish it, Pompey needed land for his veteran soldiers, Crassuse needed rebate for the equestrian tax-formers and Casesar needed the political power and needed Pompeys military because he wanted to have a triumph and wanted to be Consul because if he did not have any he would be tried for his previous criminal acts. With these three together with the prestige, wealth and power of the plebeians, the support of equites and armed force they could be unstoppable.

The First Triumvirate lasted for so long because for a long time it was kept a secret. They also had everything they needed, popularity, money, military political status, everything they need to rule the empire, everything they needed to rule Rome and get what they needed, for examples Caesar getting his Consulship and his Triumph and in return Caesar did everything in his power, legal or illegal, to pass the legislation Pompey and Crassus wanted. They were also motivated by the dramatic repercussions that would occur if the alliance were to fail, Caesar would be tried for his criminal offences during his time. Pompey would have less military and have no land for his veterans, these are some of the reasons why the triumvirate was so succesful and lasted for so long.

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As Cicero sadly noted, Pompey had been diminished by age, uncertainty, his fear of Caesar and the strain of being the chosen tool of optimates. The coming conflict seemed unavoidable. These law changes was a direct statement to Caesar that there alliance was all but over. It also started a war of words as Pompey stated he could 'defeat Caesar and raise armies merely by stamping his foot on the soil of Italy' which in turn turned to the civil war in 49. So I believe when Pompey became Sole-Consul and changed the laws against Caesar, this was the end of their power, it turned them against each other and was the start of violence, war and the death of the Roman Republic.