

SPEAKERS' GUIDELINES: PROPOSITION 2 - 1

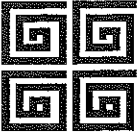
Proposition 2: Abolish Slavery

Slavery in Hellas should be abolished. It is a practice which blights the glory, the achievements, and the unity of our people.

(These suggestions below are only an outline. Research further for more ideas and details.)

Arguments for the proposition:

- We cannot really claim to be a democracy when perhaps as high as 40% to 50% of our people are slaves.
- Think of the wasted potential. If we made the slaves into citizen, we would have thousands of wise voters and participants in our democracy. There would be more responsible citizens to fight in our armies, serve on juries, and, yes, even lead the Boule or Assembly. They would become valuable assets if we gave them the incentive.
- Slaves are treated at best like tame animals, at worst like wild beasts. They are often beaten, whipped, humiliated, and tortured as if they were inferior and not human.
- Slaves have no freedoms enjoyed by native-born Greeks, just because they originated somewhere else. If they choose to become Greek, let them. Hellenic life will be enriched for it.
- Slavery is a stigma, a blemish, a wart, a cancer on Greek life. It blunts all the great successes in poetry, art, sculpture, history, science, mathematics, and philosophy.



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Arguments against the proposition:

- Slavery is an integral part of Greek life. It is a tradition. Slaves cultivate the farms, work in the factories, unload the ships, run the shops in the agora, row in the ship galleys. Moreover, they take pride in what they do. Most are contented to be such assets to Greek life.
- Slaves and the toil they do frees the wellborn and the educated and talented to achieve things. If these privileged would have to work, when would they find time to create the masterpieces in poetry, philosophy, art, architecture, history, and drama?
- Slaves in Hellas are treated well. Rarely does a master beat his property or humiliate the “free” slaves of the polis. Many have responsible positions in society as pedagogues and household servants. Anyway, about all it means to be a slave is that you don't get to vote. Let the educated and wellborn do the thinking. The reality is we need slaves to do our work, and the slaves need us to do their thinking.
- Most slaves are well-treated barbarians and foreigners captured in war. The gods have decreed that Greeks were made to be the masters and barbarians were meant to be the slaves.
- Slaves are permitted to participate in the state religion.
- Slaves are allowed a surprising amount of freedom and liberty. What other early empire on earth would do this?

