With Perdiccas’ death and his own condemnation by the Macedonian army in Egypt, Eumenes found his position in Asia Minor anything but secure. When he learned of these events, he informed his men. Those wishing to leave were given permission (Just. 14. 1. 1–2). Eumenes, however, maintained that Perdiccas had been murdered and the kings seized by those disloyal to Alexander’s family and memory; in short, he and the remaining Perdiccans were the true loyalists to the Argead house (cf. Plut. Eum. 8. 5, 12). Such a belief was essential if he were to retain the loyalty of his Macedonian troops. Here, as in Babylon, Eumenes convinced the soldiers of the validity of his claim. In the winter following Perdiccas’ death, when his opponents sent notices into his camp offering a reward of 100 talents and other honors to whomever would carry out the sentence enacted by the army in Egypt, the “Macedonians became incensed and made a decree that a thousand of the leading soldiers should serve him continually as a bodyguard” (Plut. Eum. 8. 11; Just. 14. 1. 9–10). Eumenes rewarded his loyal Macedonians by distributing to them “purple caps and military cloaks,” gifts usually bestowed by kings on their favorites (Plut. Eum. 8. 12; cf. Just. 14. 1. 6–11). To the surviving Perdiccans, the kings were captured, their legitimate regent dead. Obviously, in the minds of his soldiers, Eumenes, as the former regent’s second-in-command, became the chief representative of legitimate authority.

1 While Bengtson’s assertion (1937: 1174–5) that loyalty to the royal house was the only criterion the Macedonian soldiers used in choosing their leaders is demonstrably false, it was certainly an important one.
2 According to Justin (14. 1. 11) Eumenes came forward and claimed responsibility for the letters. This aspect of the incident is unlikely. If it were correct, why would Eumenes’ men still believe there was a need for a bodyguard?
3 Rosen (1967: 72–3) believes that Plutarch and Justin have placed in this context details which properly belong to a similar incident which occurred two years later. He argues that the creation of the bodyguard to protect Eumenes and Eumenes’ bestowal of “royal gifts” on these troops should be associated with Antigonus’ later attempt to subvert Eumenes’ troops in Cilicia (Diod. 18. 62. 3–4). At that later time, Eumenes had been appointed by the kings “supreme general” in Asia. For Rosen, the “royal gifts” would more likely be given by the “supreme general,” than by an individual under sentence of death from the Macedonian army in Egypt (ibid. 73). The context, however, makes it clear that Eumenes was not royal
Eumenes scrupulously maintained at least the fiction of loyalty to the royal house and his position as the lawful power in Asia. In Aeolis, near Mount Ida, he took the horses he needed for his cavalry from the royal herd, but gave the overseers a receipt for the number taken (Plut. Eum. 8. 5). Eumenes, however, was careful not to rely exclusively on his legitimist claims; he was well aware that while his Macedonians retained some residual loyalty to their heritage, they were also after a decade's service in Asia professional soldiers. These troops, like the Greek mercenaries with whom they served, were loyal to those who paid them well and regularly (Anson 1990: 230–47). During the Macedonian army's long service in Asia under Alexander it had evolved from a national force loyal to homeland, its officers, and especially to the king, into a corporate body to whose allegiances was added the fidelity to self-interest so common among mercenaries. The military camp had become their home; it contained their families and all their worldly goods (Parke 1933: 207; Chapter 8). Even during Alexander's lifetime these troops had shown some of these characteristics. After Darius' death in 330, as Alexander moved east, he increasingly made use of mass meetings both to instill enthusiasm in his troops and to test his authority.4 Mercenaries from the Greek world tended to resolve issues involving their interests by assembly. This was certainly true of those who accompanied Cyrus on the Anabasis recorded by Xenophon.5 It was also the case with the “mercenaries” who accompanied Alexander into Asia. In the revolt of the “Greeks” occupying the settlements in Bactria and Sogdiana in 326/325, there were a number of assemblies in which various leaders attempted to justify their actions to their troops, and in which the troops made decisions (Curt. 9. 7. 5, 8, 10). In 323, many of the “Greeks” remaining in the “upper satrapies” met, decided on a return to Greece, and elected a leader (Diod. 18. 7. 2). For Alexander, prior to the Persian king's death in 330, the tradition of royal autocracy had been sufficient to ensure obedience, but later the troops had become increasingly restless (Diod. 17. 74. 3–4; Curt. 6. 2. 15–4. 1).6

The premise for Alexander's campaign was changing. In the late spring of 330, Alexander burned the Persian palace of Xerxes in Persepolis. Earlier he had

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4 The latter aspect is emphasized by Errington 1978: 86–91.
6 Other than addresses to inspire his troops prior to battle, Alexander is not recorded by the sources as addressing his soldiers in a mass meeting prior to 330. Before that date, Alexander exclusively made decisions on his own, or after consultation with his commanders.