A seemingly incomprehensible set of events is occurring as I write this column: the People’s Republic of China is asserting its desire to extend an air defense zone in the Pacific, the Syrian crisis continues unabated, violence in nations transitioning from one form of government to another is the norm from Iraq to Egypt to Libya, Iran seems to be yielding to international pressure to control its nuclear ambitions, Venezuela seems poised for an economic collapse, bombings and other violence in Pakistan continue, and the Russian Federation has annexed Crimea triggering a possible response from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). This particular situation seems to have been taken from a script of an early post–Cold War NATO exercise.

What if anything can we expect a joint force—wearied from more than a decade of warfighting in Iraq and Afghanistan—to do? As the costs of the joint force continue to rise, voices from all parts of the political spectrum are asking this very question. Of course, the global security environment is rarely without challenges, but without doubt current situations are hardly going to give us a sense of growing global security. Often those who seek trends in events are looking to see if such a series is expected or is a discontinuity that signals a break with the past.

Against this backdrop, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel rolled out the Department of Defense (DOD) budget with significant and ongoing reductions to the department and the Nation’s joint force even as the Obama administration works to comply with congressional budgetary limits. Risks will continue to be calculated. Diplomatic efforts will be used in concert with military planning to avert confrontations. As interested parties in the outcome of this environment, we should be asking the right questions about the future of U.S. military strength. One of the more important questions I ask my students at the beginning of the courses I teach is fundamental: What do the American people want their military to do as it meets its constitutional commitments? Implicit in that question lies a more practical one, which the current administration (and every other administration) is working or will work to answer: What will be the shape, size, and capabilities of the U.S. military in coming years as it works to assist in dealing with the world? Hopefully this edition and all future editions of Joint Force Quarterly will both give voice to those who have ideas that will be useful and inform the debate as it evolves. The JFQ mission continues and we look forward to your contribution to our mutual mission success.

This edition’s Forum focuses on a range of ideas related to cyber concepts that continue to be the hottest area
among our submissions. Returning to these pages to expand on his widely read article on 10 propositions on cyberspace, Brett Williams presents a compact guide for the joint force commander, as well as anyone who might serve on these joint staffs, on how to deal with cyberspace operations. Addressing one of the more vexing problems in the cyberspace arena, John Shanahan suggests military commanders need to develop consistent standards for dealing with those who damage systems from the inside. A trio of authors from the U.S. Air Force Academy—Ervin Rokke, Thomas Drohan, and Terry Pierce—has developed a new way to take full advantage of combined arms warfare in light of 21st-century cyber developments. Highlighting another growing sector of cyber-related activities of interest to the joint force, Veronica Chin, Lee Furches, and Barian Woodward look to the private sector to bring about a national answer to security needs in cyberspace.

As promised, this edition has a new section, JPME Today, which is dedicated to highlighting authors and issues that hopefully will engage readers with the Chairman’s emphasis on joint education as a key ingredient to the future joint force. As I mentioned in JFQ72, our intent is to place the journal in direct support of authors and ideas from the joint professional military education community as well as voices from outside the classrooms to help the best thinking flow into and out of the minds of our faculties and students. Like our other sections, we hope this encourages voices in support of ongoing efforts and those with ideas to enhance the continuing education efforts both here at the National Defense University (NDU) and across the Services.

In our first article in JPME Today, addressing specific challenges from the Chairman and the future defense environment, NDU President Gregg Martin and Provost John Yaeger discuss how the Chairman’s University is undergoing a significant set of changes in joint professional military education delivery to better meet the needs of 21st-century strategic leaders. From one of the top competitors in the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Strategic Essay Competition, Strategic Research Paper category, and 2013 Air War College graduate John Gay provides a significant contribution to the debate on whether biofuels could enhance our national energy security. Army War College faculty members William Braun and Charles Allen recommend a serious look at military shaping capabilities to prepare the joint force for any contingency across the spectrum of future conflict. In a team effort from the Joint Forces Staff College, John Bilas, Scott Hoffman, John Kolasheski, Kevin Toner, and Douglas Winton recommend important changes to joint targeting within a campaign to be more inclusive of nonlethal activities and interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational capabilities.

Our Commentary section presents important points of view on three diverse topics. Revisiting one of the most notable if not controversial theorists of the late 20th century, Michael Pietrucha offers a new look at John Warden’s “Five Ring” theory in light of changes in airpower and the effects of globalization since Operation Desert Storm when the theory was first used in warfighting. Adding an important international voice to the ongoing discussion of developments in the Asia-Pacific region, retired Vice Admiral Fumio Ota, formerly of the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force and a graduate of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, provides rare insights from his personal and frequent contacts with senior Chinese military leaders in recent years. As the U.S. defense budget gets more fiscally constrained, so too will joint force operations. Highlighting the importance of one function that joint operations support, William Fraser, the commander of U.S. Transportation Command, and Marshall Ramsey describe a key element in any joint operation at the high end of the conflict spectrum: the capabilities and value of Air Force and missile defense units add to the joint force. Suggesting that U.S. Government responses to past disasters indicate a need for nongovernmental responses to humanitarian crises, Charles McDermott outlines methods where civilian capabilities would be a better fit for these contingencies, especially in Africa. Identifying a gap in current joint training, Wilson VornDick describes a well-considered program for filling this requirement for junior logistics officers.

Another international voice brings us a thoughtful World War II article in our Recall section. As some Americans are not familiar with combined and joint operations prior to our entry in the war after Pearl Harbor, Harald Høibak solidly fills in this gap with a revisit to those fearful days for the Allies at Dieppe in 1942. Three outstanding book reviews along with an important joint doctrine essay on cross-domain synergy by William Odom and Christopher Hayes round out the issue.

Let us know what you think about these ideas, and I encourage you to join in the discussion about the world ahead for the joint force. Our mutual success depends on the great thinking and writing of our contributors as you continue to be read and appreciated worldwide by a growing audience of more than 60,000 readers in print and online. Your leadership is depending on you to help them guide the joint force no matter what the environment. JFQ

William T. Eliason
Editor in Chief