

Chairman speaks during ceremony marking return of U.S. Forces—Iraq colors



U.S. Air Force (Perry Aston)

From the Chairman

Leadership in Historic Times

It is a great privilege to serve as your Chairman for another term. Together we will continue to protect our nation and honor our profession.

Over the past 2 years, we have served together on the leading edge of historic changes. We are transitioning from two conflicts and rekindling the skills necessary to provide options against a broad range of threats. We are transitioning tens of thousands of our veterans and their families back into their civilian communities. We are dealing with the reality of deep and rapid budgetary transitions as well. We're going

to see what we're made of in the months and years ahead.

When *Joint Force Quarterly* published its first issue in the summer of 1993, it featured a military leader who was in the midst of dealing with the transitions of his era. General Colin Powell wrote of his time as Chairman, "Walls have come down, empires have crumbled, new nations have been born."

We recall those days when the Cold War ended. The *Joint Force* had performed brilliantly in Operation *Desert Storm*, but those of us who served in that conflict

realized that Service coordination and interoperability still needed to improve. As just one example, it was in *Desert Storm* that I first operated in a joint environment, and I had been in the Army for 15 years. Today, we know a lot more about each other, and we operate together far more effectively. Truly, the walls have come down. We are more joint today, but not yet joint enough.

We will continue to explore the opportunities for increased jointness because we should and because we will have to if we are to provide the range of options necessary to protect the Nation in uncertain security and fiscal environments.

It is also worth noting that the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1993, Admiral David Jeremiah, described the post-Cold War world as “teeming with nascent crises.” I have described today’s world as more dangerous than at any time in my career because of the increasing number of actors—state and nonstate—that can do us harm. In any case, no matter how we describe the security environment, it will be the enduring quality and dedication of our Servicemembers that will allow us to prevail.

Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen, and Coastguardsmen are serving together today all over the world. General Powell’s maxim that “we train as a team, fight as a team, and win as a team” is even truer today. As we confront competing security priorities and declining resources, we cannot short-change our commitment to jointness either in training or in operations.

Leadership got the Joint Force through its post-Cold War challenges 20 years ago, and it will get us through today’s challenges as well. I have witnessed firsthand the courage, dedication, and determination of our nation’s military leaders at every level—leaders who, even as I write this message, are lacing up their boots and departing the security of forward operating bases in Afghanistan, strapping themselves into jets to fly combat air patrols wherever and whenever needed, steaming through waters within range of increasingly capable adversaries, diving to unimaginable depths of the ocean, or simply serving in places where few would willingly go.

One hundred and fifty years ago, on the first day of the Battle of Gettysburg, General John Buford was asked if he could hold Seminary Ridge against a numerically superior Confederate force until the main



Buying Time by Dale Gallon

General John Buford and dismounted troopers holding A.P. Hill’s Corps on the morning of July 1, 1863



DOD (Helene Stikkel)

General Colin L. Powell, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, interviewed after cease-fire in Operation *Desert Storm*

body of the Union Army could establish itself in defensive positions behind him. He replied simply, “I reckon I can.” He did, of course, and those serving with him may arguably have saved the Union on that fateful day through their courage, valor, and perseverance.

In that spirit, those of us privileged to lead today must act with similar courage, valor, and perseverance. We will be tested.

I have been asked often whether I think we can manage all of the challenges we will continue to face. I reckon we can. I am proud to continue to serve with you. **JFQ**

MARTIN E. DEMPSEY
General, U.S. Army
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

