

## Letters . . .

### Americans and Somalis

**To the Editor**—In “New Contingencies, Old Roles” (*JFQ*, Autumn 1993) Professor Huntington states that “It is morally unjustifiable and politically indefensible that members of the Armed Forces should be killed to prevent Somalis from killing one another.” While true, that is exactly what was happening as Somali warlords killed opposition members through the weapon of starvation. And, although “the United States has no interest in which clan dominates Somalia” our Nation *does* have a vested interest in the success of U.N. coalition-type operations, which is why we are really there. Furthermore, recent events suggest that future large-scale conflicts in which the United States participates will be coalition rather than unilateral actions.

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### Ahoy Maxwell!

**To the Editor**—Ignorance and arrogance are the words that come to mind to describe Col Meilinger’s letter (*JFQ*, Autumn 1993) questioning aspects of service redundancy in your inaugural issue. Timing is everything, and the Autumn issue of *JFQ* arrived here just as Dr. Joe Strange was describing the complexities of the Normandy invasion to students at the Command and Staff College. Meilinger’s comment that “I seriously doubt it took a great deal of training to teach soldiers how to climb down rope ladders and hit the beach” received a well deserved thrashing from students and faculty. Those who took the greatest umbrage were my Air Force and Army students. Heaven help us if this is the standard fare served up at the School of Advanced Airpower Studies.

Col Nick Pratt, USMC  
Director, Marine Corps Command  
and Staff College

**To the Editor**—Thanks to Col Meilinger for pointing out in his letter (*JFQ*, Autumn 1993) that all it really takes to pull off amphibious operations is training troops to get into landing craft and ride ashore. I’ve worried about insignificant things such as planning embarkation on amphibious ships to sequence combat power ashore, preassault reconnaissance and hydrographic surveys to ensure that landing beaches can support the scheme of maneuver and logis-

tical build up, deception operations, air and naval gunfire support, mine sweeping, and preparing the myriad of documents needed to make sure that men, equipment, and supplies reach the beach when required. I’m happy to learn that all I have to do to synchronize complex amphibious operations is to “teach soldiers to climb down rope ladders and hit the beach.”

Maj Robert P. Wagner, USMC  
Student, Marine Corps Command  
and Staff College

**To the Editor**—I read the letter to the editor by Colonel Meilinger in the last issue with disbelief. After displaying blatant service bias and parochialism, he took pot shots at examples of redundancy which diverted attention away from the real flaw in Dr. Rosen’s argument (“Service Redundancy: Waste or Hidden Capability?,” *JFQ*, Summer 1993). Rosen mistakenly promotes redundancy by suggesting that *creative competition* is healthy amongst the services and then appeals to good and bad inter-service rivalry to make his case.

This is exactly the kind of debilitating thinking we ought to be eradicating, not advocating, in the pages of *Joint Force Quarterly*. What the services and CINCs need to concentrate on is *creative collaboration*. We can’t afford to advocate any (nonsporting) competition or rivalry—creative or otherwise—between those who should be cooperating and coordinating all their efforts to defend the Nation’s interests. In the long haul, jointness cannot be built on a shaky foundation of creative competition. Mutual trust, confidence, and collaboration are the constructive building blocks of jointness.

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### Information Warriors

**To the Editor**—I disagree with some points made by Libicki and Hazlett in “Do We Need an Information Corps?” (*JFQ*, Autumn 1993). The future of C<sup>4</sup>I for warfare—especially C<sup>2</sup> warfare—lies in its *integration* into concepts and capabilities, not in separating it from joint command and control. Their premise is that force will be subordinate to a conflict between opposing information systems. Whether this becomes true someday, the argument seems to be that information warriors must be in command. Information management is too essential for joint command and control to be separate, and future warfare will strengthen, not weaken, this relationship. The authors imply that an Information Corps would have to supplant current command

and control systems. I foresee a different first step leading to an evolution, not a revolution creating a separate corps or service.

Joint force commanders must be the primary information warriors. Senior leaders must accurately dictate the prevailing and most urgent information needs and manage information assets as capably as they do time and forces. Is technology becoming so complex that leaders burdened with operational decisions can no longer direct how information resources and flow are managed? If so, the solution still is not to turn this responsibility over to information specialists (warriors?) disassociated from decisions affecting risks to forces. The race to improve information technology must be kept in balance with the means to manage technologies in our hierarchy of headquarters. A new breed of military leaders could emerge from the process, but they will always command in the traditional sense. The only approach is to train commanders to be information warriors, each directing staff specialists to manage, protect, and use information to fight the battle. Responsibility for command still belongs where it has always been, with those who have the foresight and skill to manage both information and forces, not with a leader in command of only one field or the other.

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### I Like Ike

**To the Editor**—Congratulations on selecting a picture of *USS Eisenhower* shown transiting the Suez Canal for the cover of the inaugural issue of *Joint Force Quarterly* (Summer 1993). This carrier honors one of our Nation’s few masterful warrior-politicians and is a difficult symbol of jointness to surpass. In 1958 another carrier, *USS Essex*, sailed through the canal as the outcome of collaboration between President Dwight Eisenhower and Admiral Arleigh Burke to carry out a land-sea-air plan that set a precedent for today’s spirit of jointness.

D.L. Coulter

**JFQ**

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