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CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

WASHINGTON, DC 20318-9999

27 August 2023

General (Ret.) Norton Schwartz  
Chairman, National Defense University  
Board of Visitors  
300 5th Avenue, SW  
Fort Lesley J. McNair  
Washington, DC 20318-9999

Dear General Schwartz:

Thank you for your letter regarding the 24 May 2023 meeting of the National Defense University (NDU) Board of Visitors (BOV) at the Joint Forces Staff College. These are excellent observations and recommendations, which will help us improve the University.

I will ensure your most recent letter is in the turnover materials for my replacement. I will also encourage my replacement to put support behind NDU's Program Objective Memorandum issue paper, as well as seeking support from the Office of the Secretary of Defense to increase NDU's budget topline to fund civilian pay. We will continue to closely follow the condition of NDU's facility and technology infrastructure and provide advocacy for it. Furthermore, the Joint Staff Directorate for Joint Force Development, J-7 will work with NDU to understand their sensitive compartment information facility and other classified space requirements and develop possible remedies.

I concur that NDU would benefit if Department of State and other government agency retirees were allowed to serve without experiencing an annuitant financial penalty. I will ask my staff to look for a counterpart in the Office of Personnel Management to obtain an institutional advocate for this change.

I appreciate your concerns with succession planning at NDU; I understand how concurrent senior leader transitions can be difficult to manage. The Joint Staff will continue to work with NDU to minimize these types of transitions whenever possible.

Finally, it has been an honor to work with you since the Board was reconstituted. The Board has provided valuable insight and advice for ensuring the "Chairman's University" remains a world-class Professional Military Education institution. I wish you and all Board Members the best.

Sincerely,

  
MARK A. MILLEY  
General, U.S. Army

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