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July 14, 2005

Anthony J. Principi, Chairman
Defense Base Closure and Readiness Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

For your information I am sending along a copy of the letter I sent on March 24 to Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld strongly endorsing the importance of the Naval Postgraduate School in providing educational resources and research essential to national security. NPS is quite unique in its ability to provide the skill levels required of an increasingly technology-intensive national and homeland defense effort.

I believe I speak for many of the leaders of American higher education in stressing that the unique features of the Naval Postgraduate School would be very difficult to replicate in our colleges and universities. It is my belief that if the United States did not already have such an asset, it would likely be compelled to create just such an institution to effectively complete in a global, knowledge-intensive marketplace ("a flat world") for the human capital necessary for national security.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James J. Duderstadt', written over a horizontal line.

James J. Duderstadt
President Emeritus
University Professor of
Science and Engineering



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March 24, 2005

Donald H. Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Program
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

This letter is intended as a strong endorsement of the importance of the Naval Postgraduate School in providing educational resources and research essential to national security. While I understand the need to evaluate all elements of the United States armed forces with an aim to better align resources with the nation's defense and homeland security needs, I am convinced that NPS is a particularly valuable asset in this portfolio.

For the past decade, I have had the opportunity to work with the NPS administration and faculty to assess the quality of their programs and develop new mechanisms capable of meeting the changing needs of the armed forces in the face of rapid technological change. Just as the high-performance workplace characterizing today's industry demands ongoing education for managers and executives, it is essential that our military officers have a sophisticated understanding of the technology that increasingly dominates their activities. The NPS provides high quality instructional programs comparable to the nation's best graduate schools. It has tailored its efforts to meet the particular needs of the U.S. armed forces, carefully aligning its instructional and research programs with current national defense and homeland security priorities. My review of comparative financial data suggests that the actual academic costs of NPS programs are quite reasonable, more comparable to the best of the public university graduate engineering programs (e.g., U. Michigan, Purdue, U. California) than the more expensive private universities (e.g., MIT, Stanford, Caltech).

The NPS programs play a unique role in building "communities of practice" within the officer corps at an important stage of military careers. It pulls together a very unique community of officers, international students, and faculty engaged in the environment of a research university focused on national security. Leaders of both higher education and industry are increasingly convinced that such mid-career educational opportunities provide the most effective approach to professional education. Furthermore, through the combination of graduate education and research, NPS helps the U.S. armed forces track the rapid evolution of advanced educational needs, programs, and technology, providing an "over the horizon" perspective on the evolution of the global, knowledge-driven society that now characterizes our times.

Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld
March 24, 2005
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NPS has been quite agile in transforming itself to focus on today's challenges, including, in particular, the global war on terror. Its Center for Civil-Military Relations has strengthened civilian-military relations and is helping other nations cope with a changing threat environment. Its Leadership Development and Education for Sustained Peace program has prepared units deploying to stability operations in regions such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kosovo. It has recently developed a unique master degree curriculum in homeland defense. NPS has also been at the forefront in developing and applying Internet-based technology for distributed learning to the U.S. armed forces throughout the world, establishing the continual learning environment so essential to track technological change.

There is one additional—and I believe compelling—reason for my strong support of NPS as an important element of the nation's defense infrastructure. As advanced education becomes a more pervasive need of the high-performance workplace, and as college graduates seek careers requiring lifelong learning, employers are under ever-greater pressure to provide graduate educational opportunities. The fact that there are currently over 1,600 "corporate universities" is evidence that most large companies find that building inhouse capability is not only essential for recruiting employees but frequently more cost-effective than relying primarily upon outsourcing education programs from traditional colleges and universities. Hence I believe that the educational opportunities offered by NPS are increasingly essential to recruiting the talent required for this nation's defense and security.

In conclusion, it is my belief that the Naval Postgraduate School should be viewed as a very critical resource for both the Navy and the broader United States armed forces, not only in achieving the skill levels that will be required of an increasingly technology-intensive national and homeland defense effort, but also a vital factor in recruiting and retaining the very best talent from our colleges and universities. If the United States did not already have such an asset, it would likely be compelled to create just such an institution to effectively compete in a global, knowledge-intensive marketplace for the human capital necessary for national security.

It is my hope that such considerations will be kept in mind as Department of Defense makes the very difficult decisions on resource allocations in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James J. Duderstadt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

James J. Duderstadt
President Emeritus and University
Professor of Science and Engineering