



# **Military Brass vs. Civilian Academics at the National War College: A Clash of Cultures**

*Howard J. Wiarda*

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The National War College at Fort McNair in Washington, D.C., is the apex of the American system of military Professional Military Education (PME) Schools. The War College has trained such leading foreign policy specialists as former National Security Director Brent Scowcroft, former Secretary of State Colin Powell, and current National Security Director James Jones. Yet, despite its prestige, not all is right at the College. There is a festering conflict between the military brass who run the school and the civilian academics who teach there. The curriculum is outdated, the courses are old-fashioned, and the college failed completely to prepare a new generation of military leaders for guerilla terrorism, a-symmetrical warfare of the kind we are now facing in Iraq and Afghanistan, and democracy-promotion and national building. In *Military Brass vs. Civilian Academics at the National War College: A Clash of Cultures*, Howard J. Wiarda uses his first-hand experience to examine the conflict between the two cultures, military and civilian, that coexist uneasily at the College. He also explores the issues—tenure, academic freedom, research, teaching—that divide them. While this study focuses on the National War College, what Wiarda has to say about the tensions and 'clash of culture' applies to all PME schools.

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