

# **MASTER OF SCIENCE IN LEADERSHIP AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

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## **THE RESIGNATION OF SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JAMES WEBB: A PERSPECTIVE FROM THE PRESENT**

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This thesis explains the resignation of James Webb as Secretary of the Navy in February 1988. Multiple interviews conducted by the author and several others revealed the combination of politics and personal motivation behind his departure. In an era when defense expenditures were beginning to wane, Webb's insistence on maintaining the United States Navy's force structure in the face of Secretary of Defense Carlucci's unwillingness to do the same, led to his resignation. His opposition to the reduction-in-force structure was rooted in his fundamental belief that it was unwise for the United States, as a maritime nation, to undercut a service upon which it relied so heavily. Examination of Webb's professional life, with an emphasis on his numerous writings, conveyed his protracted association with, and critical thinking on, issues of military and national defense policy. Research into his professional development was central to the investigation. It established a consistency between his position on the Navy force structure issue and related topics about which he wrote and spoke concerning roles, missions, and composition of the American military.

**DoD KEY TECHNOLOGY AREA:** Other (Political - Military Leadership)

**KEYWORDS:** Force Structure, Secretary of the Navy, James H. Webb, Jr.

