# 1NC

**The DoD budget is aligned with strategic pivot towards East Asia now – but new trade-offs collapse the entire strategy**

**Harrison 12** [Todd Harrison, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Priorities, 8/24/2012, ANALYSIS OF THE FY 2013 DEFENSE BUDGET AND SEQUESTRATION, http://www.csbaonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Analysis-of-the-FY-2013-Defese-Budget.pdf]

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 defense budget currently being debated in Congress is a departure from previous budgets in several respects. It is the first budget submitted following the release of the Pentagon’s new strategic guidance, marking the beginning of a “pivot” from the wars of the past decade to the Asia-Pacific region. It is also the first budget request in more than a decade to propose a real decline in defense spending from the level currently enacted. Moreover, the prospect of sequestration hangs over the budget, threatening to cut some 10 percent of funding if Congress does not act to prevent it. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta has argued that the budget request is a “complete package,” that “there is little room here for significant modification,” and that any further funding reductions, such as those called for by sequestration, would require the Department to fundamentally rethink its new strategy.1

**The plan causes massive trade-offs which undermine the military budget**

**Miller 12** [Jason Miller. “DoD lectures Congress on budget ‘rules of the game.’” 5/31/2012. <http://www.federalnewsradio.com/394/2884938/DoD-lectures-Congress-on-budget-rules-of-the-game>] AP

The Pentagon, again, is sending a warning to Congress: Every dollar legislators add back into DoD's budget and every program lawmakers keep alive that the military wants to end, will leave the department with an imbalance in how it meets its mission.¶ "The package that we submitted is one that is not only strategic, but the thing I want to stress, is carefully balanced. We are building the force we need for the future," said Ashton Carter, the deputy secretary of defense, Wednesday during a speech at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington. "We made decisions within the constraints of the Budget Control Act. We had to. When additions are made to that package in one area, we have necessity to take something out elsewhere — the rule of the game. That's what it means to be in, once you have a budget, a zero-sum game."¶ Carter's speech was a signal to Congress after the Defense Authorization bill advanced in both chambers. The House passed its version earlier this month. The Senate Armed Services Committee approved its version May 25.¶ "Pentagon leadership is facing opposition all across town," said Mackenzie Eaglen, a resident fellow who works on DoD issues at AEI. "Obviously, conservatives disagree with a lot of the budget and strategic priorities of this administration."¶ While the authorization sets some of the direction for DoD, the appropriations committees will have the final say on how DoD's budget will fall. The House Appropriations Committee approved a DoD spending bill May 17, but the full chamber has not yet voted on it.¶ TRICARE increases rejected¶ Still, Carter wanted to make no mistake that issues such as sequestration, not increasing health care fees under TRICARE, force structures that are too high in DoD's estimate, and many others, will cause a ripple effect across the department.¶ "Every dollar the U.S. spends on old and unnecessary programs is a dollar we lose from new necessary strategic investments," he said. "When we're forced to hold onto older, less capable systems, we cannot buy newer and more capable systems. So others can pick one item or another that they favor, but we have to balance them all."¶

Resourced strategic pivot it necessary for East Asian stability – solves multiple scenarios for nuclear war

Colby 11 [Elbridge Colby, research analyst at the Center for Naval Analyses, served as policy advisor to the Secretary of Defense’s Representative to the New START talks, expert advisor to the Congressional Strategic Posture Commission, August 10, 2011, “Why the U.S. Needs its Liberal Empire,” The Diplomat, online: http://the-diplomat.com/2011/08/10/why-us-needs-its-liberal-empire/2/?print=yes]

But the pendulum shouldn’t be allowed to swing too far toward an incautious retrenchment. For our problem hasn’t been overseas commitments and interventions as such, but the kinds of interventions. The US alliance and partnership structure, what the late William Odom called the United States’ ‘liberal empire’ that includes a substantial military presence and a willingness to use it in the defence of US and allied interests, remains a vital component of US security and global stability and prosperity. This system of voluntary and consensual cooperation under US leadership, particularly in the security realm, constitutes a formidable bloc defending the liberal international order.¶ But, in part due to poor decision-making in Washington, this system is under strain, particularly in East Asia, where the security situation has become tenser even as the region continues to become the centre of the global economy.¶ A nuclear North Korea’s violent behaviour threatens South Korea and Japan, as well as US forces on the peninsula; Pyongyang’s development of a road mobile Intercontinental Ballistic Missile, moreover, brings into sight the day when North Korea could threaten the United States itself with nuclear attack, a prospect that will further imperil stability in the region.¶ More broadly, the rise of China – and especially its rapid and opaque military build-up – combined with its increasing assertiveness in regional disputes is troubling to the United States and its allies and partners across the region. Particularly relevant to the US military presence in the western Pacific is the development of Beijing’s anti-access and area denial capabilities, including the DF-21D anti-ship ballistic missile, more capable anti-ship cruise missiles, attack submarines, attack aircraft, smart mines, torpedoes, and other assets.¶ While Beijing remains a constructive contributor on a range of matters, these capabilities will give China the growing power to deny the United States the ability to operate effectively in the western Pacific, and thus the potential to undermine the US-guaranteed security substructure that has defined littoral East Asia since World War II. Even if China says today it won’t exploit this growing capability, who can tell what tomorrow or the next day will bring?¶ Naturally, US efforts to build up forces in the western Pacific in response to future Chinese force improvements must be coupled with efforts to engage Beijing as a responsible stakeholder; indeed, a strengthened but appropriately restrained military posture will enable rather than detract from such engagement. ¶ In short, the United States must increase its involvement in East Asia rather than decrease it. Simply maintaining the military balance in the western Pacific will, however, involve substantial investments to improve US capabilities. It will also require augmented contributions to the common defence by US allies that have long enjoyed low defence budgets under the US security umbrella. This won’t be cheap, for these requirements can’t be met simply by incremental additions to the existing posture, but will have to include advances in air, naval, space, cyber, and other expensive high-tech capabilities.¶ Yet such efforts are vital, for East Asia represents the economic future, and its strategic developments will determine which country or countries set the international rules that shape that economic future. Conversely, US interventions in the Middle East and, to a lesser degree, in south-eastern Europe have been driven by far more ambitious and aspirational conceptions of the national interest, encompassing the proposition that failing or illiberally governed peripheral states can contribute to an instability that nurtures terrorism and impedes economic growth. Regardless of whether this proposition is true, the effort is rightly seen by the new political tide not to be worth the benefits gained. Moreover, the United States can scale (and has scaled) back nation-building plans in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Balkans without undermining its vital interests in ensuring the free flow of oil and in preventing terrorism.¶ The lesson to be drawn from recent years is not, then, that the United States should scale back or shun overseas commitments as such, but rather that we must be more discriminating in making and acting upon them. A total US unwillingness to intervene would pull the rug out from under the US-led structure, leaving the international system prey to disorder at the least, and at worst to chaos or dominance by others who could not be counted on to look out for US interests.¶ We need to focus on making the right interventions, not forswearing them completely. In practice, this means a more substantial focus on East Asia and the serious security challenges there, and less emphasis on the Middle East. ¶ This isn’t to say that the United States should be unwilling to intervene in the Middle East. Rather, it is to say that our interventions there should be more tightly connected to concrete objectives such as protecting the free flow of oil from the region, preventing terrorist attacks against the United States and its allies, and forestalling or, if necessary, containing nuclear proliferation as opposed to the more idealistic aspirations to transform the region’s societies. ¶ These more concrete objectives can be better met by the more judicious and economical use of our military power. More broadly, however, it means a shift in US emphasis away from the greater Middle East toward the Asia-Pacific region, which dwarfs the former in economic and military potential and in the dynamism of its societies. The Asia-Pacific region, with its hard-charging economies and growing presence on the global stage, is where the future of the international security and economic system will be set, and it is there that Washington needs to focus its attention, especially in light of rising regional security challenges. ¶ In light of US budgetary pressures, including the hundreds of billions in ‘security’ related money to be cut as part of the debt ceiling deal, it’s doubly important that US security dollars be allocated to the most pressing tasks – shoring up the US position in the most important region of the world, the Asia-Pacific. It will also require restraint in expenditure on those challenges and regions that don’t touch so directly on the future of US security and prosperity. ¶ As Americans debate the proper US global role in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis and Iraq and Afghanistan, they would do well to direct their ire not at overseas commitments and intervention as such, but rather at those not tied to core US interests and the sustainment and adaptation of the ‘liberal empire’ that we have constructed and maintained since World War II.¶ Defenders of our important overseas links and activities should clearly distinguish their cause from the hyperactive and barely restrained approach represented by those who, unsatisfied with seeing the United States tied down in three Middle Eastern countries, seek intervention in yet more, such as Syria. Indeed, those who refuse to scale back US interventions in the Middle East or call for still more are directly contributing to the weakening of US commitments in East Asia, given strategic developments in the region and a sharply constrained budgetary environment in Washington.¶ We can no longer afford, either strategically or financially, to squander our power in unnecessary and ill-advised interventions and nation-building efforts. The ability and will to intervene is too important to be so wasted.

# 2NC Overview

**Most probable**

**Campbell et al 8** (Kurt M, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Dr. Campbell served in several capacities in government, including as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asia and the Pacific, Director on theNational Security Council Staff, previously the Chief Executive Officer and co-founder of the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), served as Director of the Aspen Strategy Group and the Chairman of the Editorial Board of the Washington Quarterly, and was the founder and Principal of StratAsia, a strategic advisory company focused on Asia, rior to co-founding CNAS, he served as Senior Vice President, Director of the International Security Program, and the Henry A. Kissinger Chair in National Security Policy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, doctorate in International Relation Theory from Oxford, former associate professor of public policy and international relations at the John F. Kennedy School of Government and Assistant Director of the Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University, member of Council on Foreign Relations and  International Institute for Strategic Studies, “The Power of Balance: America in iAsia” June 2008, <http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CampbellPatelSingh_iAsia_June08.pdf>)

Asian *investment* is also at record levels. Asian countries lead the world with unprecedented infra­structure projects. With over $3 trillion in foreign currency reserves, Asian nations and businesses are starting to shape global economic activity. Indian firms are purchasing industrial giants such as Arcelor Steel, as well as iconic brands of its once-colonial ruler, such as Jaguar and Range Rover. China’s Lenovo bought IBM’s personal computer¶ We call the transformations across the Asia-Pacific the emergence of “iAsia” to reflect the adoption by countries across Asia of fundamentally new stra­tegic approaches to their neighbors and the world. Asian nations are pursuing their interests with real power in a period of both tremendous potential and great uncertainty. iAsia is: *Integrating:* iAsia includes increasing economic interdependence and a flowering of multinational forums to deal with trade, cultural exchange, and, to some degree, security. *Innovating:* iAsia boasts the world’s most successful manufacturing and technology sectors and could start taking the lead in everything from finance to nanotech to green tech. *Investing:* Asian nations are developing infrastruc­ture and human capital at unprecedented rates. But the continent remains plagued by: Insecurity: Great-power rivalry is alive in Asia. Massive military investments along with historic suspicions and contemporary territorial and other conflicts make war in Asia plausible. Instability: From environmental degradation to violent extremism to trafficking in drugs, people, and weapons, Asian nations have much to worry about. *Inequality:* Within nations and between them, inequality in Asia is more stark than anywhere else in the world. Impoverished minorities in countries like India and China, and the gap in governance and capacity within countries, whether as back­ward as Burma or as advanced as Singapore, present unique challenges. A traditional approach to Asia will not suffice if the United States is to both protect American interests and help iAsia realize its potential and avoid pitfalls. business and the Chinese government, along with other Asian financial players, injected billions in capital to help steady U.S. investment banks such as Merrill Lynch as the American subprime mortgage collapse unfolded. Chinese investment funds regional industrialization, which in turn creates new markets for global products. Asia now accounts for over 40 percent of global consumption of steel 4 and China is consuming almost half of world’s available concrete. 5 Natural resources from soy to copper to oil are being used by China and India at astonishing rates, driving up commodity prices and setting off alarm bells in Washington and other Western capitals. Yet Asia is not a theater at peace. On average, between 15 and 50 people die every day from causes tied to conflict, and suspicions rooted in rivalry and nationalism run deep. The continent harbors every traditional and non-traditional challenge of our age: it is a cauldron of religious and ethnic tension; a source of terror and extrem­ism; an accelerating driver of the insatiable global appetite for energy; the place where the most people will suffer the adverse effects of global climate change; the primary source of nuclear proliferation; and the most likely theater on Earth for a major conventional confrontation and even a nuclear conflict. Coexisting with the optimism of iAsia are the ingredients for internal strife, non-traditional threats like terrorism, and traditional interstate conflict, which are all magnified by the risk of miscalculation or poor decision-making.

**Triggers a massive arms race**

**Kemp 10**

Geoffrey Kemp, Director of Regional Strategic Programs at The Nixon Center, served in the White House under Ronald Reagan, special assistant to the president for national security affairs and senior director for Near East and South Asian affairs on the National Security Council Staff, Former Director, Middle East Arms Control Project at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2010, The East Moves West: India, China, and Asia’s Growing Presence in the Middle East, p. 233-5

A third scenario, Asian Balance of Power, assumes that while economic growth on a global level resumes and India, China, and Japan continue to show economic strength, the overall prosperity of the Western world—particularly of the United States—weakens. That leads to increasing domestic pressures for the United States and Europe to pay less attention to security problems in the Middle East and Asia, given the high price that they already paid for intervention in the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century. While the Western World still has an interest in stable energy markets, there is less inclination to intervene and play the role of policeman. In the United States, there is an equivalent of the East of Suez debate that took place in Britain in the 1960s, when Britain decided to draw down its military presence in both the Indian Ocean and the Gulf. With the unilateral decision by the United States to draw down its presence, the major Asian powers—given that they continue to have unresolved problems among themselves**—**expand their own military forces, particularly their nuclear and maritime capabilities, ultimately leading to a triangular Asian arms race among India, China, and Japan. Under those circumstances, Japan is likely to obtain nuclear weapons, especially if the crisis on the Korean peninsula remains unresolved, and the security of the region ultimately will be in the hands of the Asian powers themselves. The sorts of alliances and arrangements that they make with the Gulf states and other Middle East countries would be uncertain. In all probability, India would play a key role, particularly in the Gulf. Indeed, India would be most assertive if it felt that China was encroaching on a region in which India believes that it should have hegemonic control. A fourth scenario, International Cooperation, assumes that while the world economic situation may not be as rosy as outlined in the first scenario, there nevertheless remains a strong interest on the part of all the major industrial powers in ensuring secure energy supplies; as a result, the price of energy is kept at a reasonable level. The United States does not go through an East of Suez moment and continues to play a responsible and significant role in the maritime peacekeeping operations in the region. However, there is more pressure on the regional powers to share more of the burden and to participate in joint security operations ranging from sea control missions to cooperative ventures to curb terrorism, proliferation, and radicalism. Under these circumstances, the presence of the United States is seen as beneficial and reduces the tendency of the Asian powers to compete among themselves. While the U.S. commitment is not open ended, it serves long—term U.S. interests, in much the same way that the U.S. presence in Europe today continues to serve U.S. national interests. In this cooperative environment, local conflicts are easier to manage since it is in the interests of the all major powers to resist the forces of radicalism and proliferation—particularly nuclear terrorism.

**Goes nuclear**

**Cirincione 2k** (Joseph, director of the Non-Proliferation Project at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Foreign Policy, “The Asian Nuclear Reaction Chain,” 3/22/00, lexis)

The blocks would fall quickest and hardest in Asia, where proliferation pressures are already building more quickly than anywhere else in the world. If a nuclear breakout takes place in Asia, then the international arms control agreements that have been painstakingly negotiated over the past 40 years will crumble. Moreover, the United States could find itself embroiled in its fourth war on the Asian continent in six decades--a costly rebuke to those who seek the safety of Fortress America by hiding behind national missile defenses. Consider what is already happening: North Korea continues to play guessing games with its nuclear and missile programs; South Korea wants its own missiles to match Pyongyang's; India and Pakistan shoot across borders while running a slow-motion nuclear arms race; China modernizes its nuclear arsenal amid tensions with Taiwan and the United States; Japan's vice defense minister is forced to resign after extolling the benefits of nuclear weapons; and Russia--whose Far East nuclear deployments alone make it the largest Asian nuclear power--struggles to maintain territorial coherence. Five of these states have nuclear weapons; the others are capable of constructing them. Like neutrons firing from a split atom, one nation's actions can trigger reactions throughout the region, which in turn, stimulate additional actions. These nations form an interlocking Asian nuclear reaction chain that vibrates dangerously with each new development. If the frequency and intensity of this reaction cycle increase, critical decisions taken by any one of these governments could cascade into the second great wave of nuclear-weapon proliferation, bringing regional and global economic and political instability and, perhaps, the first combat use of a nuclear weapon since 1945.

# 2NC Link

**Hendren 12** [Karen Hendren, Reuters. “Pentagon makes tough tradeoffs to meet 2013 defense budget.” Video Transcription. <http://blog.thomsonreuters.com/index.php/pentagon-makes-tough-tradeoffs-to-meet-2013-defense-budget/>] AP

The 2013 Defense Budget sent to Congress this month by President Obama marks the start of 487 billion dollars of defense cuts that will hit the Pentagon over the next ten years. It’s the first serious reduction in military spending since the end of the Cold War and it is already shaking up the old order and forcing tough trade-offs. Speaking on Capitol Hill last week, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said the Pentagon’s greater focus on threats in Asia prompted the decision to keep 11 aircraft carriers on its fleet. “We maintained the 11 carriers in the Navy in order to ensure that we have sufficient forward presence. There’s nothing like a carrier to be able to allow for quick deployment in that area. But in the new era of austerity, that meant delaying other naval programs instead like the Virginia Class SSN submarine and work on the Ohio Class ballistic missile replacement systems. The loser: General Dynamics, which will see these projects and payments pushed back . But in some cases, the trade-off forced by the need for deep cuts has experts scratching their heads. In the Air Force, it’s out with the new and in with the old. To cut costs, the Air Force plans to retire 38 recently purchased3-27J planes and 18 new Global Hawk Block 30 aircrafts in favor of decades-old U-2 aircraft for intelligence and surveillance missions

**Hendren 12** [Karen Hendren, Reuters. “Pentagon makes tough tradeoffs to meet 2013 defense budget.” Video Transcription. <http://blog.thomsonreuters.com/index.php/pentagon-makes-tough-tradeoffs-to-meet-2013-defense-budget/>] AP

. Todd Harrison of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments: “And I think what we’re seeing as budgets tighten and services are forced to make difficult choices, they’re tending to rely on the things they’re comfortable with. And so that’s why I say I think there’s a bit of an institutional inertia going on here. Harrison says the U-2’s imagery sensors are far superior to the Global Hawks, but because the U-2s have been in service since the 80’s, they have maintenance and personnel costs that the unmanned Global Hawks don’t have. “If the Air Force truly factored in all of these additional costs of the U-2, it’s then hard to understand why they thought that was less expensive than keeping the Global Hawk Block 30s that they already paid for.“ Cushioning this decision for contractor Northrop Grumman but not taxpayers, the government will have to pay contract termination costs for cancelling production of the full order of the other planes. Harrison says that over the past 10 years, the Pentagon has spent about $46 billion in current dollars on development programs that were terminated before production. But is the Pentagon saving money or wasting it? You know, the service chiefs, they want to rely on the things they’re comfortable with. You know, the things that they’re familiar with through their careers; what they’ve seen to be important to their services. And so, that’s what’s being reflected in the budget choices they’re making. So far unscathed in the latest cuts: the Pentagon’s biggest weapons program, the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, which is to get $9.1 billion. Good news for its maker – Lockheed Martin. Karen Hendren, Reuters.

# 2NC Link - Alaska

**DoD 11** [US Department of Defense. “Report to Congress on Arctic Operations and the Northwest Passage” May 2011; <<http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/Tab_A_Arctic_Report_Public.pdf>>]  
The near-term fiscal and political environment will make it difficult to support significant new U.S. Government investments. This is an assumption, but also serves as a constraint on action. Agencies will only operate in the Arctic to the level to which they are resourced, meaning that new efforts will likely have to be funded through reallocation of existing resources. The Arctic is currently seen as a peripheral interest by much of the national security community, a situation not likely to change significantly in the next decade or more, absent some external forcing event, such as a major environmental or human disaster or activity in the Arctic viewed as threatening U.S. interests in the region.

# **2NC I/L**

Resourced strategic guidance key to overall hegemony, and Asia and Middle East stability

Barno and Bensahel 12 [David Barno, Lieutenant General, Center for a New American Security Senior Advisor and Senior Fellow, Nora Bensahel, Ph.D., CNAS Deputy Director of Studies and Senior Fellow, 1/6/12, You Can't Have It All, www.cnas.org/node/7641]

On Thursday, President Barack Obama and his top defense advisers unveiled new strategic guidance to direct the U.S. military as it transitions from a decade of grueling ground wars to an era of new challenges, including a rising China and looming budget cuts. The administration has adopted what is best characterized as a "pivot but hedge" strategy: The United States will pivot to the Asia-Pacific but hedge against unexpected threats elsewhere, particularly in the greater Middle East. This new guidance makes good sense in today's world, but it assumes that the Pentagon will absorb only $487 billion in budget cuts over the next decade. If far deeper cuts occur, as required by sequestration, the Department of Defense will not have the resources to execute the guidance. "Pivot but hedge" will die in its crib.¶ The pivot to the Asia-Pacific is essential because the region stands poised to become the centerpiece of the 21st-century global economy. By 2015, East Asian countries are expected to surpass North America and the eurozone to become the world's largest trading bloc. Market opportunities will only increase as the region swells by an additional 175 million people by 2030. As America's economic interests in the Asia-Pacific grow, its diplomatic and military presence should grow to defend against potential threats to those interests.¶ From the perspective of the United States and its Asian allies, China and North Korea represent the most serious military threats to regional security. China's military modernization continues to progress, and its foreign policy toward its neighbors has become increasingly aggressive over the past two years. Meanwhile, the death of Kim Jong Il means that nuclear-armed North Korea has begun a leadership transition that could lead to greater military aggressiveness as his son Kim Jong Un seeks to consolidate his power and demonstrate control. In light of these potential dangers, several Asian nations have asked the United States to strengthen its diplomatic and military presence in the region so it can remain the ultimate guarantor of peace and security. A bolstered U.S. presence will reassure allies who worry about American decline by clearly conveying an unwavering commitment to Asian security.¶ But while the Asia-Pacific is becoming more important, instability across the greater Middle East -- from Tunisia to Pakistan -- still makes it the most volatile region in the world. The Arab Spring unleashed a torrent of political change that has reshaped the region in previously unfathomable ways. Iran continues to pursue nuclear weapons, and it has threatened recently to close the Strait of Hormuz. Trapped in the middle of the upheaval is Israel, a permanent ally and key pillar of America's regional security strategy. Meanwhile, U.S.-Pakistan relations continue to plunge toward a nadir, lessening American influence over a nuclear-armed and terrorist-infested state that is arguably the most dangerous country in the world.¶ Amid these dangers, U.S. interests in the greater Middle East remain largely unchanged: ensuring the free flow of petroleum from a region containing 51 percent of proven global oil reserves, halting nuclear proliferation, and guarding against the diminished but still real threat of Islamist-inspired terror attacks. Protecting these interests will unquestionably require the active involvement of the U.S. military over the next 10 years and beyond, though this certainly does not mean U.S. troops will necessarily repeat the intensive counterinsurgency campaigns of the last decade.¶ The administration's new guidance tries to balance America's rightful new focus on the Asia-Pacific with the continuing reality of deep instability in other areas of the world where U.S. interests are at stake. Yet implementing this "pivot but hedge" strategy successfully depends largely on how much Congress cuts from the Pentagon's budget, something that still remains undecided at the start of a divisive presidential election year.¶ The 2011 Budget Control Act, signed as part of last summer's negotiations over raising the U.S. debt ceiling, contains spending caps that will reduce the Department of Defense's base budget (excluding ongoing war costs in Afghanistan) by at least $487 billion over 10 years, according to Pentagon estimates. This represents a decline of about 8 percent compared to current spending levels. Administration officials have repeatedly described these cuts as painful but manageable. Indeed, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta stated Thursday that these cuts require difficult choices but ultimately involve "acceptable risk."¶ Yet deeper cuts are an entirely different story. Administration officials are extremely concerned about the Budget Control Act's automatic spending reduction process known as sequestration, which was triggered in November by the failure of the deficit reduction "super committee." According to the Congressional Budget Office, this process would roughly double the cuts to the Pentagon's base budget, resulting in nearly $900 billion in total reductions. Current law requires these cuts to take effect in January 2013 unless Congress enacts new legislation that supersedes it.¶ The new guidance says little about what cuts the Department of Defense will make when it releases its fiscal year 2013 budget request next month. But the Pentagon has made clear that its new guidance and budget request assume it will absorb only $487 billion in cuts over the next 10 years. Defense officials have acknowledged that the new guidance cannot be executed if sequestration takes place. When announcing the new strategy, for instance, Panetta warned that sequestration "would force us to shed missions, commitments, and capabilities necessary to protect core U.S. national security interests."¶ Sequestration would likely require the United States to abandon its longstanding global engagement strategy and to incur far greater risk in future military operations. If sequestration occurs, the Pentagon will likely repeat past mistakes by reducing capabilities such as ground forces that provide a hedge against unexpected threats. A pivot to the Asia-Pacific might remain an executable option under these conditions, but the U.S. ability to hedge against threats elsewhere -- particularly in the volatile Middle East -- would be diminished. This is a recipe for high risk in an uncertain and dangerous world.¶ The Pentagon's new strategic guidance presents a realistic way to maintain America's status as a global superpower in the context of shrinking defense dollars. But further cuts, especially at the level required by sequestration, would make this "pivot but hedge" strategy impossible to implement and would raise serious questions about whether the United States can continue to play the central role on the global stage.

Asia conflict likely and goes nuclear war

Landy, National Security Expert @ Knight Ridder, 3/10/’2K

(Jonathan, Knight Ridder, lexis)

Few if any experts think China and Taiwan, North Korea and South Korea, or India and Pakistan are spoiling to fight. But even a minor miscalculation by any of them could destabilize Asia, jolt the global economy and even start a nuclear war. India, Pakistan and China all have nuclear weapons, and North Korea may have a few, too. Asia lacks the kinds of organizations, negotiations and diplomatic relationships that helped keep an uneasy peace for five decades in Cold War Europe. “Nowhere else on Earth are the stakes as high and relationships so fragile,” said Bates Gill, director of northeast Asian policy studies at the Brookings Institution, a Washington think tank. “We see the convergence of great power interest overlaid with lingering confrontations with no institutionalized security mechanism in place. There are elements for potential disaster.” In an effort to cool the region’s tempers, President Clinton, Defense Secretary William S. Cohen and National Security Adviser Samuel R. Berger all will hopscotch Asia’s capitals this month. For America, the stakes could hardly be higher. There are 100,000 U.S. troops in Asia committed to defending Taiwan, Japan and South Korea, and the United States would instantly become embroiled if Beijing moved against Taiwan or North Korea attacked South Korea. While Washington has no defense commitments to either India or Pakistan, a conflict between the two could end the global taboo against using nuclear weapons and demolish the already shaky international nonproliferation regime. In addition, globalization has made a stable Asia \_ with its massive markets, cheap labor, exports and resources \_ indispensable to the U.S. economy. Numerous U.S. firms and millions of American jobs depend on trade with Asia that totaled $600 billion last year, according to the Commerce Department.

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