

## **“Shooting Ourselves in the Head”**

### ***What They’re Saying on Sequestration***

#### **Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta**

“We have made no plans for a sequester because it’s a nutty formula, and it’s goofy to begin with, and it’s not something, frankly, that anybody responsible ought to put into effect.”

February 28, 2012

“We’d be shooting ourselves in the head.”

September 22, 2011

“But if [sequestration] happened – and, God willing, that would not be the case – but if it did happen, it would result in a further round of very dangerous cuts across the board -- defense cuts that I believe would do real damage to our security, our troops and their families, and our military’s ability to protect the nation.”

August 4, 2011

#### **Office of Management And Budget Acting Director Jeffrey Zients**

“In terms of the sequester, it is a bad policy. It’s bad policy all around. It would lead to the cuts on the defense side that go across the board or indiscriminant totaling \$500 billion. We have similar cuts of similar magnitude on the discretionary side and elsewhere which are not appropriate. So overall, the sequester is bad policy.”

February 14, 2012

#### **Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Martin Dempsey**

“In my personal military judgment, formed over 38 years, we are living in the most dangerous time in my lifetime right now, and I think sequestration would be completely oblivious to that, and counterproductive.”

February 16, 2012

“[S]equestration leaves me three places to go to find the additional money: operations, maintenance, and training. That’s the definition of a hollow force.”

February 14, 2012

“I will tell you that I am prepared to say that sequestration would pose unacceptable risk...”

February 14, 2012

“What makes this period different is we’re doing all this while we’re still actively engaged in conflict and we have young men and women in harm’s way. And that - that adds a degree of complexity and a degree of uncertainty that I think we can’t discount.”

July 26, 2011

#### **Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Jonathan W. Greenert**

“[S]ome of the actions we would need to take under sequestration could have a severe and irreversible impact on the Navy’s future...If we end programs abruptly and some of these [shipbuilding] companies shutdown, [we] will be hard pressed to reconstitute them. And each ship we don’t build impacts the fleet for 20-50 years.”

February 16, 2012

**Commandant of the Marine Corps, General James Amos**

"I will tell you that the impact of sequestration, we'll have a reduced forward presence, it will be a refined strategy as we know it today. And I think it's certainly going to stagnate reset on my part in the Marine Corps. I mentioned in my opening comments 10 years of combat. The equipment that's in Afghanistan today came from Iraq. It came from Iraq. It will stagnate the ability to reset that force."

February 16, 2012

**Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, General Ray Odierno**

"[W]e are on a fine line right now with this cut...[F]rankly, we are on the razor's edge when we talk about readiness, modernization, our end strength and force structure. If sequestration goes into effect, we will have to stop."

February 9, 2012

"What I'm deathly afraid of is sequestering, because if we get a sequester, I believe it will fundamentally change how we conduct security operations across all services, to include the Army, because of the depth of the cuts."

October 10, 2011

**Fmr. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Mike Mullen**

"[The Joint Chiefs] share your concerns about the devastating impact of further automatic cuts should the Congress fail to enact additional deficit reduction measures...The Defense Department may represent 50 percent of the discretionary budget in this country, but there is nothing discretionary about the things we do every day for our fellow citizens."

August 4, 2011

**Fmr. Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, General Jack Keane**

"[Sequestration] would absolutely break the bank at the Defense Department. We would be a mere shadow of our former selves and be unable to face our global responsibilities."

October 11, 2011

**Fmr. Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, General Richard Cody**

"If we cut again and break trust with this force that stayed with us for 10 years, and then we run into something else...I don't know if we can grow that force back again...I worry about losing the all-volunteer force as we get into these fights about budgets and about entitlements versus defense."

October 4, 2011