FROM: Mackenzie Eaglen, AEI

TO: Battleland

DATE: 8 FEB 12

RE: Some key points I hope to make tomorrow

Abandoning the long-standing 2-war construct is significant, particularly as the last decade proved the U.S. military struggled to fulfill that pledge even when we said we had the capability. If the emperor already had no clothes, so to speak, what does that mean for the Pentagon’s formal abandonment of this and our status as a global military superpower?

The ‘pivot’ to Asia is not new although it is an important effort were it not a zero-sum proposition. Secretary Panetta alluded to as much in describing force cuts in Europe in part to "free up money so the United States could maintain or increase its forces in Asia."

But it was the bipartisan Quadrennial Defense Review Independent Panel whose members found unequivocally in 2010: “The force structure in the Asia-Pacific area needs to be increased. In order to preserve U.S. interests, the United States will need to retain the ability to transit freely the areas of the Western Pacific for security and economic reasons.” The same group recommended the U.S. military’s force structure be sized, at a minimum, at the end strength outlined and a base line force structure identified in the 1993 Bottom Up Review (BUR). This would mean a 346-ship Navy, for example. Not one shrinking as proposed in the forthcoming 2013 defense budget.

The question, unfortunately, isn’t whether or if we should cut defense and military spending but rather is beginning to disarm during conflict going to cause tremendous consequences for those in uniform and potentially the nation as a result?