Sequester highlights a regional weakness

Local economy will pay the price of dependence on federal spending

BY JOE TINKERL

Recent American history is strewn with examples of regional economies that are dependent on a single industry. Los Angeles’ success in the early 20th century, for example, was based on manufacturing; San Francisco’s growth was due to the black market during World War II; and Las Vegas grew on the backs of its casinos. When those industries slowed, those regions’ economies—like the nation’s—tended to suffer.

However, 14.3% of the state’s employment is in military-related industries, according to the California Department of Finance, a percentage that’s second in the nation only to Virginia. This makes the state’s economy dependent on the federal government—which is not necessarily a good thing, given the sequester’s potential impact.

Terror suspect brought to U.S.

SOVIET-LAW OF BIN LADEN

Abu Ghaird will face trial in New York

BY GREG MILLER

A former spokesman for al-Qaeda’s al-Shabaab movement in Somalia, Osama bin Laden, was captured in Niger in October. But his capture may not mean the end of his reign, as the U.S. has yet to determine his status. This could be a major setback for the U.S., which is currently focusing on bringing bin Laden to justice.

Obama turns on charm to reach Republicans

Face-to-face contacts, he hopes, will break gridlock and hostility

BY PHILIP ROURCE AND RONAN FLOCKHAM

For more than two years, the White House has reached out to Republicans, but resulting gridlock and partisan bickering have been the norm. Now, President Obama is taking a different approach. He’s focusing on building personal relationships with key lawmakers.

Obama says he’s teaming up with a key Senate GOP leader to break the deadlock on fiscal issues. “I believe that the president and his team are doing exactly the right thing by reaching out directly to Republicans,” the leader said.

Stronger protections for women

Addressing the U.S. Congress, President Obama signed an updated version of the Violence Against Women Act, allowing states to utilize emergency powers to protect women and extending new protections to same-sex couples. The bill was praised by many, but it also faced criticism from some groups.