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Defense dollars can be trimmed, too

In her column "The danger of deficits," Isabel Sawhill overlooks the defense budget as a source of funds for deficit reduction — or for veterans, highways, teachers, national parks and other stuff we all care about (The Forum, Tuesday).

As a matter of fact, Ronald Reagan's former assistant secretary of Defense, Lawrence Korb, has identified at least \$60 billion in the Pentagon budget that could be trimmed without affecting our nation's ability to fight terrorists. Much of the money wasted over at the Pentagon is being spent on nuclear bombs, fighter jets and other weapons that were designed to fight the Soviet Union. And, last time I checked, that nation does not exist.

Yes, it's true that shaking money loose from the Pentagon wouldn't solve our nation's problem regarding the deficit. But still, \$60 billion would buy a lot of health care for our kids and veterans, highway improvement, environmental protection, and much more. Or it could be used directly to reduce the deficit.

It's time America stopped treating the Pentagon as a sacred cow, off limits from budget scrutiny. We can't afford this thinking any longer.

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