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## [...And Keep It Shut!](#)

### **What parts of the government should be permanently furloughed?**

**APRIL 8, 2011**

Ground Forces

By Benjamin H. Friedman

We could do without much of the nearly \$700 billion we annually spend in the name of defense. First on the chopping block should be the Army and Marine Corps. Even counterinsurgency enthusiast Defense Secretary Robert Gates says that we are unlikely to soon repeat our nation-building misadventures in Iraq and Afghanistan. Shedding our tendency to conflate counterterrorism and occupational warfare would allow us to reverse the recent growth in the ground forces, saving almost \$ 9 billion annually, according to the Congressional Budget Office. Actually, as Chris Preble and I write in a recent [Cato Institute report](#), we should go further, cutting roughly one-third from those services, saving almost \$300 billion in the next decade. On top of these initial savings, this cut would discourage us from wasting blood and treasure in fighting other people's civil wars.

