

# JFCOM closure begins new debate

Re 'Dangerous winds in JFCOM closure,' editorial, Aug. 10: I enjoyed reading the editorial on Secretary Robert Gates' proposed closing of the Joint Forces Command and other cuts. It is important that a debate begins on tough issues within the U.S. defense budget.

I wanted to share a blog post written by Christopher Preble of the Cato Institute. Preble, a member of the Sustainable Defense Task Force that calls for \$100 billion in cuts to the defense budget, argues that Gates is confronting hard truths but has not gone far enough.

'But Gates either misapprehends or mischaracterizes the true source of the problem. U.S. military spending has grown for 13 years, 86 percent in inflation-adjusted dollars from 1998 to 2011. Claiming that uncertainty over future military spending impedes effective planning and creates waste ignores that relative certainty over ever-rising defense budgets has enabled the very waste and mismanagement that Gates now proposes to cure.'

Additionally, while it is unfortunate people may lose their jobs because of this closure, the fact is politicians continually argue for defense spending as a jobs program. It allows them to bring back economic benefits to their constituents to the detriment of the taxpayers as a whole.

This is not the purpose of our defense budget, and until this stops, little change will take place.

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