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Where to make Pentagon funding cuts

Mary Ann McGivern | Aug. 9, 2013 NCR Today

Ordinary people mostly agree we spend too much on the military. We suspect there is plenty of waste, fraud and abuse. But where? And what about the jobs the Pentagon creates? And what about security? Better safe than sorry.

Well, there is plenty of waste, fraud and abuse. On Thursday morning, the radio news reported [1] that the Pentagon is opposed to some of the weapons we give to Egypt under the Camp David Accords. Congress approves them because the arms manufacturers want the business. Weapons production should not be a jobs program. That's morally wrong, but that's another blog. So we shrug and accept that giving fighter planes to Egypt is the cost of doing business.

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel complained at a news conference [2] that he's being forced to choose between readiness now and a generation of new weaponry. For two decades, the stated Pentagon goal has been to have the capacity to fight two wars simultaneously. But no one asks why we would want to do that. That, too, is another blog.

The Pentagon wants a new fighter plane, new aircraft carriers and a new long-range strike bomber. The F-35 will cost more than a trillion dollars. Why do we need it? We don't really need it, but the threat is those older fighter planes we are giving and selling to countries like Egypt.

Yet instead of canceling the F-35, we are canceling food stamps.

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Links:
[1] http://www.npr.org/blogs/money/2013/08/08/209878158/egypt-may-not-need-fighter-jets-but-u-s-keeps-sending-them-anyway
[2] http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/01/us/politics/hagel-sees-2-paths-for-cuts-paring-militarys-size-or-capability.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit_th_20130801