

Les Cochran, *San Carlos Park*

Gold and brass

Let the cuts in the federal budget begin!

Did Congress forget that both parties agreed to cut \$85 billion if they couldn't come up with another solution? "I never thought that would happen," some now say in Congress. How ignorant can one be? They can't agree on anything!

What's wrong with cutting domestic budgets by 5 percent and the military by 8 percent?

"That's too much in one swipe."

Fine; make the cuts over five years in a common-sense way — 1 percent annually for domestic accounts and roughly 1.5 percent on the military. Many households have reduced spending that much per month in the recent years.

Rather than allowing Congress to say where the cuts should be, require the decisions to come from the operational level. Give each unit a bottom line to cut. It's a simple process used by businesses nationwide. And, it only requires two rules.

First, a unit cannot cut a program or service without input from other units. Second, a unit can't cut something that would pass the costs on to another unit.

Budget reductions of this type focus attention on the top of an organization (government) where large expenditures are layered. Most cuts can be achieved through attrition. For the military, that's fewer officers at the rank of colonel and above, particularly those in the Pentagon.

Our military budget is \$720 billion. That's more than the next nine largest national military budgets combined, and seven times more than Russia spends.

Doing more with less brass makes sense and doesn't cost a cent!