Ground Truth - Missile Defense from Land
[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to a great May Day. You can feel the heat coming in Virginia here as summer is going to be coming soon.

I'm Riki Ellison. I'm the founder and chairman of the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance. We've been involved with missile defense for 40 years.

This organization was built over 20 years ago. Our whole mission is to advocate for missile defense because we believe that makes our nation and our world a safer place. We've had some big things happen, and we're on the tipping point of a tremendous surge for missile defense.

There's only been three of these in our lifetimes. If you go back, if you look at when we moved to actually have a limited capability, not limited, a capability that was put in Grand Forks in the early 70s where we actually had a missile defensive system for the entire country, that was in place, was in place long. We withdrew from that.

Then we went to the 80s where we decided to take another surge at taking out these nuclear weapons and making the world safer through the use of missile defense. That got us a little bit further, but did not get into space, did not get the full capability in play. It was really a research and development part.

Then we went to the early 2000s when 9-11 happened. Then we decided to deploy a missile defense capability to defend against a very limited threat of North Korea. We did that in remarkable time and under three years.

Now, the shift has come with an executive order by the president to do a surge like never before, like never before, to be able to defend our nation with the Golden Dome and put forward a full executive order with policies and authorities and everything to go forward. We're on the cusp of that happening. It's going to happen probably next week or the week after, but it is happening.

I wanted this discussion here to get to some of the ground truth. Get to some of the ground truth on what lessons learned on what we shouldn't do. Open up some of our scabs of the last 20, even 40 years so we don't go down that path again.

We don't need to go down paths and waste resources and not get to where we need to get. That's a key point here that we want to look at before we jump into the next phase. We want to look at the Army's role and Army's phenomenal history with missile defense and air defense and how it plays itself.

It's going to be a great discussion. We have the four-star general who just retired, of Pacific Forces, Charlie Flynn, with us today. I just want to start to get a little core competency here because I'm in love with the Army.

I've always been in love with the United States Army. I came over here in 69 at a cowboy ranch in Little Rimrock, Arizona. My foreman was a Sergeant Sherman Tank Commander for General Patton.

He went into Germany first. That was my role model. I had another buddy, another athlete that was in NAM that was on artillery and moving our field artillery for the U.S. Army. We, MDAA, have visited, I think, 784 American bases. Probably 500 of them are at least Army bases. It depends where the patriots are, where the THAADs are.

We had Turkey that was with Rumsfeld. We've been all over the place with them and hearing their soldiers and honoring their soldiers, honoring this branch that's somewhat not honored as much as everybody else is. We have really tried to do as much as we can to honor this branch and this part of the Army.

We created the whole Missile Defender of the Year on the anniversary of the first shoot-down of a patriot. We've had over, I think, 1,000 awardees from that aspect of it. It's more than that.

In 2012, I met with Chief Ray Arnero, with NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell. We did the first study and movement on traumatic brain injuries that now, when it wasn't popular, and learned from both sides of it, to go forward on it. There's no doubt that the Army is going to be a part of this.

First off, Charlie, I think we need to go back and look at how valued, how integrated air defense was with the Army. When was the last time? Because it's not today as it was in the 70s.

I'd like to have you give us a little history of the goodness of that.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

First, Riki, let me express to you my thanks for what you do here at MDAA and your advocacy. You're rallying everyone towards a common end state here and a voice outside of the organizations to bring clarity in ways that sometimes in the heat of the day, in uniform, you're not seeing. My thanks to you personally for what you've been doing here, as you said, for decades.

Because we need voices like that. We need people to bring us information that we're not hearing, potentially, inside of our own staffs and circles. Some of that information is helpful.

Some of that information has been hurtful too. But that pain is good, actually, because you need to shoulder up on that stuff so you can make some corrections. Let me just say in your lead in there, I agree we're at the cusp. And the executive order for Golden Dome breathes new life into, in my view, a matching organizations with technologies and formations. We have to bring these concepts together with these technologies so we can create a true capability. A little on the history here, and since you went way back, I'll just say no doubt when I came in the Army, there was an air defense branch. We had a full-up, short-range air defense capability in the battalions. We had air defense battalions inside of divisions. We had SHORAD platoons of Vulcans, Chaparral, and Stinger.

Look at Stinger today, right? And then, of course, we had Patriot and THAAD.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

And the Stinger back then was a remarkable weapon. And it remains remarkable. Remarkable for cheapness, for cost of scale.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

And so, when I think about just a quick glimpse into today, we've got Mobile SHORAD coming back. We've got DE SHORAD. We're working with high-powered microwaves and high-powered lasers and high-energy lasers. So, we're trying to recreate some of that wheel in the short-range air defense. And then, you look at what's happened with the radars inside, you know, TPY-2s, the 6s, and what has been happening with Patriot and Sentinel and ALPS towers and THAAD and the integration and the software work that's been going on with industry. There has been some bright spots.

But there's also some scars, as you mentioned, that we need to kind of uncover today a little bit. Let me point to one on short-range, because short-range is so important today, from the counter-UAS fight to really being able to put mobile protective, I'll say, bubbles, if you will, over forces that are going to be relatively mobile but need to get into firing positions or be able to get into collection positions or be able to set up sustainment nodes. We had those short-range air defense capabilities organic in our divisions. And so, we had a battalion commander, and then we had cells on the division and even down in the brigades.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

This is 80s?

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

This is in the 80s. Yeah. And I'm going to jump ahead real quick. This is in the 80s. When I joined, I'm a year group 86 officer. Those battalions were in each of the divisions, and you lived out in the field together. Okay. I jumped forward to, I'm a battalion commander in 2002 to 2004, 9-11, obviously, 2001. And I'm telling this story because I'm telling this story from the perspective of the later as a three-star general on the Army G357, just read as chief of operations for the Army. Okay. But basically, between the years of 2004 and 2007, we basically took out the entire short-range air defense branch within the Army. Why? Because we were in a counterinsurgency fight.

And those short-range air defense soldiers and the battalions, and of course, all the technologies that they had with them, they were mortgaged to go pay other bills because of what we were doing. And they didn't see the threat that was there? Oh, we didn't have one. I never looked up. I never looked up in all my time over in Afghanistan and Iraq. I never looked up and felt a threat from an enemy system.

Now, were there scuds during Desert Shield, Desert Storm? Yes, but that's not short-range.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

But we were using stingers at that point. That was a great way. We didn't think that they were eventually going to get something like that.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

We were using stingers, but then, of course, those things got proliferated in the hands of other people and they were using them then later against us. But my point is this. Now I'm going to jump forward. So in three years, we decimated the short-range air defense branch, or we

decimated the air defense artillery branch, and the short-range soldiers and capabilities in the Army paid for that because we kept the Patriot and THAAD. I jump forward to the G3 of the Army from 2018, 2021, and now all of a sudden, we're starting to see these threats with short-range. And around 2019, we're doing the analysis to bring back DE-SHORAD, M-SHORAD, the very things we're talking about today.

And I said then, and I'll say it again today, be careful when you take an entire capability down, and in the Army's case, a branch down to zero because we did it in three years. It's going to take us a decade to regain those capabilities at the short range, with short-range air defense. Now, why is that important? That's important because the rubber is being worn off the tire on the Patriots and on the THAADs and on the soldiers that man the Patriot, THAAD, and the TPY-2 radars because they're all generally the same. And by the way, we're trying to build the short-range air defense branch back up. And we're, in fact, we're doing structural work right now and trying to, of course, get technologies together. Again, we have to have a concept, we have to have organizations, we have to have technologies, and we have to bring those three together in order to create a real capability. And we're working on it. But again, I guess the moral of the story is to be careful what you do when you take an entire capability out of a service or a branch, because again, this is a great lesson. If it took three years to take that whole branch down, it'll take us at least a decade to regain it.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

Charlie, what part of that decade are we in right now? Because it seems to me, we're stuck. How many years are we in this 10-year deal here?

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Yeah.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

How many years are we in this 10-year deal here?

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Yeah, well, I would tell you we're probably at about year four to five of regaining it. And we're just getting it going, right? I know we want to talk about-

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

-But this is important.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Oh, it's really?

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

Because you got to rebuild the branch and your dwell time on the current capabilities, you don't have enough of this stuff and everybody wants it. That's when we first met. I think when I came over to help you figure out why we don't have a THAADS on Japan, why we got them

parked in El Paso, and why can't we put the capabilities, the demand, but they still don't pay for anything. They don't sacrifice any of the other funds for this branch. It doesn't look like it.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]
Well, no, that's fair criticism. I think getting the D.E. SHORAD and the M. SHORAD back on mobile platforms and the work that's going on now is important, but it's years late. I mean, we actually... So, if I rewind the clock a little bit, we probably should have started this at around the 13, 14 timeframes when we did begin to see things shift. And we did restart.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

But I think we did?

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Well, we did, but we weren't... To your point, were we popping money into it? No. And by the way, you actually need to grow those soldiers first. You got to get some soldiers through that short range training and education spigot so that they turn into non-commissioned officers. And then you got to get some commissioned officers in that pipeline. I mean, again, it's a full DOTML PFP rebuild. It's not just, well, let's get a system and we'll throw some people at it later. Thats not going to work.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

I think the requirements for some of your major weapon systems, the IBCS and IFPIC, go all the way back to 2012. And we don't have it in the field today in full on.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

No, we don't. We don't. And that's been probably...

So this is where I think this entire discussion in the Department of Defense, and I know it's going on in the Army because it was happening earlier, is about this acquisition reform and having some agility in it and being able to move money around. But I would also tell you that the joint capabilities do not get enough stature, and they need to. Now, the challenge with that is the joint commands don't have any real... They don't have any money. They got to come out of service lines. So it's this... And you know... I think Goldwater-Nichols was set up to have that kind of friction. But in a world that's moving as fast as it is right now, particularly with technologies, you can't have that kind of competition going on between the means and the ways to do business.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

So let's go back to... We agree that the demand is overwhelming for the U.S. Army to have more missile defense capabilities, whether it's short range, THAAD, Patriot, and we struggle. How do we fix it? How do we fix it... It seems like there's a lot of adverse risk in doing this or not wanting to go forward, or the chief doesn't want to focus his time and energy on it. We got to deal with it. This has got to happen.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Yeah. Well, I mean, again, back to the very beginning of this, this is where I think Golden Dome presents an opportunity for the joint force. Again, the joint force through the combatant commands have requirements. INDOPACOM has requirements. NORTHCOM has requirements, SPACECOM, STRATCOM, et cetera. And so do the services.

And there's got to be some giving of way here between the services and the combatant commands to be able to pull the means, the cash together, to then be able to prioritize those against the ways. And I think sometimes even before that, Riki, one of the challenges that we're going to have is an operational view, an operational concept. And if you don't agree upon the operational concept of how to prioritize the ways with which you're going to defend, then you're going to have a mismatch between the means you have to achieve the ways. I mean, we can get into it right now with Golden Dome.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

Let's get into it with Guam. Let's get into this with Guam, because that is exactly what I don't think Golden Dome, it'll fail if we're going to do it the way Guam.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

That's a lesson, yeah.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

That's a lesson. We're going to open the scab up. That scab needs to be open. Okay, yeah. And I just want you to walk everybody through a little bit on the process, because that's the process the building chose to implement an integrated air and missile defense system. And it's been a nightmare. So go ahead.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

So a couple of thoughts here. I'll go back to the 14-18 time frame when I was the 25th commander, and then I was the deputy at U.S. Army Pacific. And this precedes my time to coming back to the building to be the G3 and then going back out to U.S. Army Pacific. And I guess what I would say is when I look at the rear view mirror, the way that Army assets were deployed out into the Pacific was largely through a request for forces due to a crisis, and then they were put in locations.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

Just go back to exactly what, because there's not many... You started in Japan with the Patriots.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Yeah, so you've got Patriots and then you've got...

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

So when? Was that in Japan?

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Well, that first battalion went in there in 85. And then you've got Patriots on 10. And then you have TPY-2s go in, I think 2006 and 2012, if I'm not mistaken. And then the THAAD battery goes out to Guam. But I guess the point I'm saying is when you look at the... If you look at the trail of those assets from the Army going out to the Pacific, in large measure, they were done primarily through a request for forces and they were placed into location. I mean, the Patriot battalion in Kadena went into a condemned motor pool. The THAAD battery on Guam was in an open field. The first time I went out there was actually in 2015, because my soldiers from the 25th were their security forces for it.

And I said, I came back and I said, that position on Guam was worse than any position I had been in, in Iraq or Afghanistan, in terms of a FOB. It was gut-wrenching, actually. And so, my point is, in many ways, the Joint Force asked for these assets. They put them on other people's terrain, Kadena Air Force Base in Okinawa, an open field base in Guam. I mean, the last THAAD, what we sent to Korea just went to a golf course. So, the point I'm making here is the Joint Force needed the asset, the Army sent it out there, and then honestly, in many ways, the Army forgot about it. For tails and sustainment and being able to give them, you know, MilCon, all this stuff. Now, in defense of the Army, they're also not given money to do these things. And then you add in the mix.

So, the 94th MMDC is, I'm working with him. This is, you know, Dan Karbler, and then I'm with Sean Ganey. So, you know, that begins to happen. So now you've got the combatant commander putting a requirement on the building. That's followed up after Admiral Harris with Admiral Davison, and then on with Admiral Aquilino. And so, even today with Admiral Paparo. But the point being that Congress knows it's the number one priority because it's number one on the Indo Commander's list. But the services have to do their part by being able to put the money against these capabilities and then the capability development to meet the requirement. And so I'm just going to say my big takeaway from this is when you don't have a common agreed-upon operational view, this is for Guam, but this is the parallel to where we're going.

If you don't have a common understanding and an agreed-upon operational view of how you're going to defend, where you're going to prioritize so that you can match the resources against those priorities, and you don't have a single person in charge with the requisite authorities to make those decisions and accept the risk, then we will have a repeat of the defense of Guam.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

So Guam, just tell everyone, how did Guam happen? What did you just say? Yeah, so just for the common public, because I don't think they understand what the process was in Guam.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Yeah. So just one example. So, you have the island of Guam the property owner. In other words, the facilities owner, primary, and the landowner is the Department of the Navy. And then you have Anderson Air Force Base. And then you have, obviously, the National Guard. The Navy's obviously doing a lot in Upper Harbor. Air Force is doing quite a bit out there at Anderson Air Force Base. And then you have this Army THAAD battery out there, and then the security forces around it. Well, there was a memorandum of agreement that was in play where quarterly the vice chiefs of all these services would meet to talk about integrating

DOTML, PFP. How do we consolidate facilities? How do we support the efforts of missile defense on Guam?

Well, the vice chief of the Marine Corps was on that, the vice chief of the Air Force was on that, the vice chief of the Navy was on that, but no vice chief from the Army. MDA is over here doing architecture work, disconnected from the services. And then I can't speak to this when I left as a two-star in the deputy job. But when I came back in 21, it became clear to me that one thing that really struck me was now MDA's doing facilities. They're doing surveys on C2 facilities, motor pools. I'm like, wait a minute, that's the Missile Defense Agency. They're not built to be doing facilities integration and MilCon and SRM and the trails that have to go with SRM. It's not a core competency of the Missile Defense Agency. So I guess what I'm highlighting is that it was just a tangled web and it was confusing.

And in my view, there's parts of this that still remains confusing. And that's why we need to kind of pick on this a little bit and make sure that we don't do this again with Golden Dome. Now, have things changed a bit since then? Yeah, I think that in the 22, 23, and now into 24 and 25, there's a better understanding of what we have to do to coordinate and collaborate. But there's still that disconnect between the way we're going to defend and the means in order to achieve those ways.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

Let's take it even deeper a little bit, because let's talk about the MDEP, the Missile Defense, and the CAPE (Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation office), and all these other figures that were also, like you said, no leader, but a consensus of all this that caused all sorts of issues, starting with CAPE (Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation office) on that. So that whole Guam was run by a process in the building. Is that correct?

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

I'm reflecting back on my time as the G3, and then going out as a component commander, I could see less about the process in the building as a component commander. But yes, it does run out of the building.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

And just go through what happened, why we couldn't, MDA didn't take control, DEPSEC, and the whole thing that was, it looked like a disaster.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Yeah, I mean, maybe my remarks are better to state that the process was not, the output from that process was not achieving the integrated operational requirement that was necessary to defend Guam, period. So, requirements

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

What happened?

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

That are in a BIPL from the combatant commander, and then agreed upon by other combatant commanders, those have to be addressed in the service lines. And when they're not addressed in those service lines, then they are not going to have the matching means to achieve the ways that the combatant commanders are looking for them to do that. Now, again, I'm picking scabs on everything here. The reason that is a problem for the services, having been on the service side of this as well, is that when you, again, when you don't have a common operational view of how you're going to defend, and that's understood from the building, to the services, to the combatant commands, then what you have is an uncoordinated and very dysfunctional way of trying to achieve a combatant commander's number one priority. Because if I'm not mistaken, and somebody can probably correct me on this, I think it was number one in the last year of Harris, number one through the three years of Davis, number one through the three years of Aquilino, and I'm not sure what it is today with Sam, but I'm sure if it's not one, it's probably up there.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

But somehow the Army ended up as the key after all this. Is that right? Wrong?

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]
Well, so somebody's got to be in charge of integrating these things. I guess because maybe my background and my relationships with Cruiser, General Wilsbach, who was out there at PACAF, and then Gumby right now, I mean, being able to pull the team in and say, hey, here are the requirements. And I think the thing that was my biggest concern out there is we just didn't have a voice at the table. Going back to that memorandum of agreement, nobody really knew what the Army's requirements were out there. Well, then you go back to the building, and in the building, the Army's working on IFPIC, IBCS, we've got ALPS towers going out there, you've got LTAMS radar. And I already covered all the short-range stuff that we're working on, not to mention the THAAD, C-2 and the JCO stuff that actually Major General Sean Ganey was doing as the JCO director to get that thing started. So now we had a multilayered responsibility from counter UAS to short-range to Patriot to THAADC. So yes, the Army should play a central role in this.

But when you don't have an organizing construct and sort of, I would say, an organizing statement from the Department of Defense directing the services and-

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

And they still don't have it yet? Or you're just saying the Army, they gave it to the Army, but the Army's-

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Well, I mean, I think this is a good point. I think we were getting that. We sort of had the contours of that as I left command. And I know that Admiral Paparo was being directive to the component commanders to get things in place there, which was a good thing. But again, the service has to follow up with the means to be able to do that. And sometimes that is where the disconnect ends. So, I'm going to jump forward now to really what you started with is, these are the kinds of things that we can ill afford to have on the front end of Golden Dome, that executive order. And then the way we organize has to be clear and unambiguous. And there's really three parts. After the organization and a single person is put in charge of this thing, then an operational view of how we're going to defend, right, in all domains, in space

and missile defense, an agreed upon common OV-1 operational view of that, where priorities are established within that operational view.

And everyone understands what those priorities are. Like, hey, we're going to wait the boost phase for kill, or we're going to wait launch, or left of launch, or we're going to wait terminal. Where are you going to place the weight of your defense? Then you can match those ways with which you're going to kill or defend and protect against the means that you have available. Absent that, and a single element in charge of that, with the authorities to make decisions and accept risk and match the means against those ways that you're prioritizing how you're going to defend, then we will repeat the miscues, missteps, and the, I'll just say, the very fragmented and fractured way that we went about the defense of Guam. Well, it's well done.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

But I want to keep-

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

I'm sure that there'll be incoming some of what I was, and that's good though. Yeah.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]
So, it looks like they went backwards with this and just shoved a bunch of stuff over there and tried to put it all in there. Just talk to that a little. Is that all we got?

And where's the innovation? Where's the new stuff that's coming? The cheap stuff, the other stuff with that?

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Well, I mean, this is where this, I think, agile funding and some adaptive adaptation of the processes that we have in the building to get technologies out there just as quick as we can. I mean, you know, I know the other commanders in the Pacific feel it. I certainly felt it when I was out there, but that is an absolute laboratory for technology, concepts, and organizations to come together. Like, really, when I say organizations, commanders and formations, whether they're at sea, in the air, on the ground, in the cyber domain, in the space domain, they have to get those technologies out there quicker. Let me give you a couple of examples. And I'll just, you know, I'll stick with the bread-and-butter stuff that I know.

Ground terminals. Like, we have got to get ground terminals out there, because as I've said for many, many years, space actually starts and it ends on the ground. I mean, I know there's a huge fight going on up in space, and space terminals are really important. But at the end of the day, all of this has to downlink to something in the terrestrial layer, but be that at sea or be that on land to make decisions, to see sense and make sense, to understand what the threats are, and then actually to first protect, to second defend, and to third conduct a counter-strike in the event that you can no longer defend. You have to attack.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

Isn't that supposed to be a big, broad part of architecture first, or are you putting systems in there first without?

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

No, no, no. Just the opposite. We need to have the OV-1 operational view first, and then from that OV-1, then a operational architecture should be designed to support that OV-1. That's a great point, Riki. I mean, I'm bringing up the organization. The organization that leads Golden Dome has got a two-part problem. The first part is, what is the operational view of how you intend to defend? Okay?

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

Yeah.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

And where's your weight of effort going to be? And once you have that, and everybody's got a common view on how you intend to defend, then you need to design the operational architecture that supports that operational view.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

There's two types. There's a technical one, whatever the technical one, and the integration of all that, and then the warfighter one, and then the operation.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Yeah. There's kind of three parts to it. There's the concept. Let's say the OV-1 is the concept, and then you need the organizations that are going to support it. What are they? 94th AAMDC, okay? A surface action group with Aegis. If you've got Aegis for sure, what about your sensing network? I mean, the formations that actually support it. Then you need the technology. You need those technologies brought out there so that, and we put it in the hands of those commanders and those units, and let them discover, learn, achieve successes, but also fail. Because you have to fail out there.You have to make some things. You have to stress test some things where they don't work so you can get feedback to industry. Now, I'm going to jump on PEOs, PMs, and acquisition guys.

They can't make those corrections in Washington DC or Huntsville, Alabama or pick another. They got to get out forward with those systems and see those things in play to get that feedback. That intellectual gap between where the test community and where the program executives sit versus where the operational force is actually employing the systems, it's too big. It's too wide. The gap is too far. We have to shorten that. Why? Because industry will come. Industry will come, but industry won't go forward unless everybody else is forward.

It's incentivizing them to get with commanders, get with formations because they have a concept. They have an operational view that's agreed upon, and then they can bring the technologies that we need to be able to turn over very, very quickly. I hope that- That's what we saw.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

Two things. On this operational viewpoint, we're going to be in space, so it's going to cover a lot more than the United States. In the fight, it's the allies.

How do the allies fit in this overall operational viewpoint aspect of it? There's so much process and so much time and rules and laws to get products in, and we've got this new innovation coming. How does that get inserted into this process?

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

I guess I'm trying to distill in my mind to take a highly complex topic and crystallize it into simple. The way I look at this is that if we look at the layers, if we look at the terrestrial layer, the aerial layer, and the space layer, and back to the operational view of how you intend to defend, it's got to look at it through the lens of all five domains, all three layers, and then how you're going to integrate that air, space, and missile defense architecture. Your point about the allies is an interesting one.

They have to be in the discussion, but probably after we, as the United States, agree and have a common understanding of what that operational view is. Then say, and here's the open architecture that we're going to describe to you, allies, so that you have a way of plugging into this. They must know what that looks like. How do they plug into it? Again, back to if we're going to put one person or one, we should have a leader and an organization in charge of Golden Dome. The first two things they have to do is, and my recommendation would be, get an operational view one together, be commonly agreed upon and understood how you intend to defend.

The second thing to do is then take that operational view and say, here is the integrated architecture that is going to support that operational view. As part of that integrated architecture, I'll use the word open. It's going to be open for the Japanese. It's going to be open for the Koreans. It's going to be open for the Saudis. It's going to be open for PIK country to be able to plug in so they know where and how to plug in.

If we try to retrofit it, it's not going to work. Let's go back to one thing we haven't talked about. I mentioned it earlier, but just to footstomp it, if this leader and this element does those two things, then back to the process in the building, if they're running the missile defense board, then guess what? Everybody's got to rally around that leader, that organization, that operational view, that architecture, and the open architecture because that's the only way to be able to make really hard decisions and choices to support those things. Otherwise, you're going to have what we had in Guam.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

You said earlier the three big layers, the terrestrial air and space, but that seems to be the hardest problem. That's a joint domain. We don't have a joint C2.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Let me go back to the operational view again and the architecture. Again, if you have a commonly understood operational view on how you intend to defend, it's not like we're going to defend this way. I'll just use one example. If the weight of the defense is going to be in the boost phase, if you're going to prioritize that's where we're going to defend, then your sensors on the terrestrial layer, your sensors in the area layer, your sensors in the space layer, your defeat mechanisms are prioritized first in those layers. Okay. I mean, look, I'm just a simple infantryman, but when we set up a defense, you set up an engagement area and you said the enemy is defeated at this point, at this place, and he will be degraded to this level.

I mean, you have to be that clear in this thing. So if we're doing defend, you have to prioritize where you're going to defend because if you defend everywhere, you defend here.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

You can't. Again, I think it should be more mid-course. Well, that's fine. Where are they going to go? That leader ought to decide that. But that's your viewpoint. We created an agency called the Missile Defense Agency to do this as a separate group. So just your thoughts on that. My view.

But they kicked ass. They put something in three years, but the risk adversity has gone. So just your viewpoint on how they insert themselves in this or how do they come back or should they be that guy?

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Well, they should be essential. They should be a key player in the development of both the OV-1 and the architecture. I'll tell you what they shouldn't be doing. And I mentioned it earlier. I was stunned when I got back out to Hawaii. In fact, I was in Camp Smith at the conference room up at IndoPaycom headquarters. And I found out about it earlier, but I was stunned that they were as deep as they were into doing site surveys, land assessments, and MilCon and SRM. MilCon designs and SRM for dollars to sustain facilities. I'm like, why is the Missile Defense Agency doing stuff like that? That's not a core competency.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

Health services have trouble doing it. They were forced to do that in Romania and Poland to build that agency.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

There's no Army help. But that's my point. My point is, keep them in their core competencies. And MilCon is not a core competency, or at least it shouldn't be a core competency of Missile Defense Agency.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

Just going back to MDA, you've got one of your major systems THAAD that's still inside MDA. Why isn't the Army taking that out of that and owning that? If you're going to have an agency develop products for you. Probably because they're not getting funded for it.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

I don't know exactly why, but I mean, again, back to the very early part of the problem that the Army has with this particular topic is the effectors are so expensive. And we're so far behind on the production, right? And that's organic industrial base, the defense industry.

That's a major problem in and of itself. Then we're on the wrong side of the cost curve. But yet the Army is making investments in non-lethal means to also take things out of the sky. And there's a number of them, and they're really good. And we ought to be sinking more money into those kinds of things. Again, back to ground terminals, there's ground effects that are coming from space or there's space effects that are coming from ground terminals.

And then the positioning of all these things, right? This is where you want land forces to be able to get access and placement, and then be able to put sensors so you can see, sense, and make sense of actually what's going on. Now you just opened up a whole nother area in the terrestrial layer. And I'll say this particularly out in the Pacific that we haven't really deeply invested in in years. Years. There's plenty of sensors out there on the surface of the ocean.

Well, we need some sensors on the ground too. And ground terminal development is going to be an important part of what we're doing here.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

All right. I think we've got some questions. It's been a great conversation.

We're going to open it up a little bit now. So we have our board member, J.D. Ganey, who's worked with General Flynn recently in the Pacific. Okay, J.D., you can open it up. Open it up for yourself first. Let me get a couple of questions just from you before you open it up to the audience.

[Mr. JD Gainey, MDAA Board of Directors]

Well, thanks for hearing a lot of questions from me because there's only one question from the audience. General Flynn, great to see you again, sir. Listening to you talk brought back some memories, not necessarily good ones, by the way.

At times it was fun and comical, the pain we went through realizing Guam. So I just want to make a couple comments to reiterate and use your word, foot stomp, of some of the things that you've and some of the messaging that we've been putting out there. We have the trifecta of mismatches, right? They call it the strategy policy mismatch. We have the operations mission and resourcing mismatch, right? An example of that is you're taking Army air defense systems that's designed to be operational, flexible, transportable, go anywhere in the world and be excellent, which they do, by the way.

However, because we don't have the resourcing or a function, as you said, Goldwater-Nichols type outcomes, unfortunate outcomes, we're putting them all in Guam, right? And the other trifecta mismatch is the resourcing and technology mismatch or the means and the ways. So I want to go back to that second one, operations and mission and resourcing mismatch. So I want you to put your operational commander back on, sir. And here's the thought for you. Once the Army systems are in place on Guam and you had that integrated defense design in place in a few years out, about 50% of the Army's available air defense resources in the Pacific are going to be tethered to that 200-square-mile island.

From your point of view, what dilemma does that put in front of you? And the following one to add is, is your hope with the solution set coming out of Golden Dome ultimately replace that defense design on Guam to make those forces available to go out and do other things?

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Yes, it is absolutely that. And I know that Admiral Paporo and I talked about this a bit, and I'm glad you're kind of teasing this out, J.D. So if we think about 27, this is why, and I was a component commander, but I was putting pressure on the Army to deliver this stuff. If you

get IFPIC, IBCS, LTAMs, the Composite Air Defense Battalion out there, ALPS Towers, with what's already there, and this is where technology and industry has to help us.

Because if we get more smaller form factors and we have lighter forces that we can move around, and then we are able to put towers to be able to connect that architecture from the northern Marianas, Guam, down to Yap and Palau, then you actually have a credible—I'm going to go even further north—if you go up to the Aleutian Islands and you tie that down to the northern Marianas to Guam, Yap, and Palau, and who knows, someday all the way down to Australia, you've got a no-kidding second layer, second island chain Golden Dome, or the beginnings of the Golden Dome. To your point, I am and have been communicating that once those assets go to Guam, they cannot stay on Guam. They have to be able to be transported to other locations and networked into that architecture with those towers so that they can protect, defend, and conduct intercept from any location.

Now, what I just said is not—I don't know how widely that's talked about, but we can't be thinking about just the defense of Guam as a point defense. It's got to be the entire second island chain layer from the Aleutians, and I would say all the way down to Australia, and we can do that. We can do that. So, I hope that answers your question.

[Mr. JD Gainey, MDAA Board of Directors]

It does, sir. You also made a comment notwithstanding constitutional changes to Goldwater-Nichols, which hampens the ability for the joint force to actually be joined. You made a comment that this is the opportunity for the joint force to actually come together in a rally underneath the Golden Dome construct. That was our number one argument when we came up with the initial Guam defense design. Space, Air Force, Army, Navy, they all had equities with respect to defending just that one piece, and we thought—and we assumed incorrectly that the services would be, oh, yeah, I'll contribute some. I'll send some resources.

I'll see some time and talent to be able to provide an integrated effort on Guam, ultimately drive into the joint fires network. But anyway, JFN took another hard right turn and went after killing ships and airplanes, which is—there's no issue with that. When we talk about being able to change bad behavior in the building that keeps leading us down this path, and you mentioned a four-star in charge, what is your—and also based on your experience being thrown into Indo-Pekong when the Regain the Advantage and Seize the Initiative was front and center, number one priority, number three funded, and those challenges there.

What is your recommendation to that four-star coming in and saying, having experienced critical mission, prioritization of the mission, but absolutely no support from the Pentagon and a whole bunch of talking and attempts to fulfill from Congress, what's your advice to him to go after?

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Well, we didn't touch on this much, although I think I've said it twice. This goes to authorities. I mean, whatever they write in the language on the authorities of the—I'll say the whoever is going to be in charge of Golden Dome, that executive general needs to be given the authorities that are—that have service qualities but are in support of the combatant commander because Golden Dome, you know, I mean, I know the U.S. Indo-Pekong commander cares about the defense of Guam, but there are other combatant commanders that also care about the defense of Guam. But I think that—and this is where the services need to

be told that, listen, you're getting this means, we're giving you these dollars in order to support this effort, and they can't tax that, if you will, to go to other efforts.

And that's where I think somebody in the building, because a combatant commander, their headquarters are not staffed to do that kind of thing, and they're busy every day with a fight. So I guess what I'm trying to say, JD, is there's got to be some connection back to the funding streams, which are, you know, almost wholly in the service lines that need to be accounted for against those priorities as designated by the combatant commander, and combatant—in this case, combatant commanders, if we just stay on defense of Guam, which is a component or a part or maybe a foundational layer to Golden Dome.

And because of that, then the executive that is placed in charge of Golden Dome needs to be sitting as the chair in the MDEB, and he needs to be calling balls and strikes and given the authority to call the balls and strikes so that the services are now on the hook to provide the means against the priorities within the ways of which we're going to defend. I keep talking about this because in Washington, D.C., means is dollars, right? It's the resources to do it.

And if you're not matching your money and your manpower and your energy and time and effort against the ways to actually achieve the OV-1, then we're never going to get there. And so I guess that's my answer, and I'll simplify it this way, is if the executive, the general in charge of Golden Dome, doesn't have the authorities to call balls and strikes at the MDEB, then we're already starting on the back foot. And before that person runs that MDEB and his team, they better get that OV-1 together that shows how they intend to defend and then the architecture to support that, how we intend to defend.

Because then when you go into those boards, at least everybody's got a common view of how we're going to do this stuff. They're still going to argue over how much and how little, but at least everybody's got a common view, and then somebody can call balls and strikes, which has been our problem.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

And Charlie J.D., the MDEB for Guam had all sorts of power and all sorts of things that they weren't supposed to be doing that made this what it was. Yep. You want to talk to that, or do you want to let that alone? That scab's over.

[Mr. JD Gainey, MDAA Board of Directors]

No, yeah, no. We don't have to rehash that. I mean, it's, yeah, yeah. So in the last question, and it's okay to take a hard pass, General, is what are the implications of quantum compute in the future of missile defense? Balls and strikes, right? This is the question that came up.

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

Yeah, yeah. But I guess two things. The first thing that comes to mind is encryption. That power, that quantum power is going to give us, I'm going to say, I'll jump ahead and say, it's so important for our country to be working on this, that the quantum leap is going to give us a way to maintain the safety of the keys or the key design, if you think of encryption as a key. I think it's incredibly important. I guess the other thing that I would say is that one of the things that I used to scream about, still scream about, is at the edge, we are limited with storage capacity and processing power. And quantum will also help us solve that by having more

storage capacity and having more processing power. I know you and I talked about this when we're out there. I'll just go to FIRES.

If we aren't able to store 125 target folders in a forward edge node because something's happening, and we need to sort through all 125 because we only need eight of those 125 to package a strike together, and then send that information out to the joint force, ground nodes, but also 35s, 22s, Aegis, carrier battle groups, then we're going to be, again, on the back foot. I think the importance of quantum is encryption and speed of encryption, and then storage capacity and processing power at the edge. And that's why we've got to get there fast. That's another executive order from the president on the Stargate executive order on artificial intelligence, a little bit related, but it's in similar vein. One thing while I'm on it, because I got the mic too, this is another area, J.D., that I know you heard me talk about it when I was out there, but the AUKUS agreement has two pillars, and everybody spends a lot of time talking about Pillar 1, and there's a huge opportunity in Pillar 2 with quantum AI ML robotics. And nobody's talking about it.

But that's where these multi-domain task forces become so important, because they're able to do edge, lethal and non-lethal, with those types of capabilities. So if we want to sink our teeth in on AUKUS, we ought to be sinking it in also to Pillar 2 and getting industry and these tech giants out there to help us with it, because if you want to see an exponential gain, if you want to see a leap ahead, then get it in quantum AI robotics and machine learning at the edge. And that's exactly what I used to talk about those multi-domain task forces being so powerful, because they can do that from distributed locations forward, and they can reach back to like PED and do it at scale and then get that stuff out to any shooter.

[Mr. JD Gainey, MDAA Board of Directors]

Yes, sir. Fantastic response. And I'll just throw the doom on top of that is each service, and even within OSD, are all pursuing their different types of models and tools to be able to pursue that. So again, you talk about an opportunity to rally next-generation warfighting underneath the Golden Dome umbrella. To your point, this is bigger than missile defense. This is the opportunity for DoD to jump into the next couple of generations and truly seize the initiative and get after it. So that's all I have. I'm not going to do closing comments, because we're a little bit over. General, it's great to see you. Looking forward to working with you in the future, sir.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

Great to see you, J.D. Thank you, J.D. Appreciate it. Any closing remarks, Chuck?

[Gen. (Ret.) Charles Flynn Former commanding general of U.S. Army Pacific]

No. Actually, that last part that J.D. just mentioned, I mean, we just brought it up now, but you have an executive order out there on Golden Dome. You also have an executive order on AI. And that executive order, in summary, basically says the United States is going to be the AI capital of the world. There is great value in being able to run those things in parallel, because the AI executive order, the Stargate initiative, will help the Golden Dome initiative and vice versa. And then one other thing.

Sorry. This is where this effort with rare earth elements and critical minerals, we have got to get our organic industrial base up and running, because it's a precursor to the defense industrial base. So, if we're not able to get manufacturing back and get moving in some of

these factories that we have, and take technology and bring that into that so we can do things more quickly, we're going to be in trouble.

And we need to get out of trouble by moving with a sense of urgency and focusing on that.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

Any other closing remarks? No, that's it. Yeah, I would just, because there's some bigger things than missile defense in the Golden Dome. Oh, yeah. And one of them is fires. Sure. Anywhere in the world at any time. You're setting foundation for that, for all of it. But thank you for your clarity, the clarity on authority, and the clarity on ground truth. Ground truth on what has happened and learning from that and opening that up. Because the worst thing we can do, the worst thing we can do is not do what you're saying or not know what is this going to kill the whole thing. And it's just, boom.

So, I think everybody's in alignment for what we're moving. There obviously are antibodies against it. But this was a great way to open up the conversation and discuss it and make it just invincible. Make this movement for the four-star invincible. So, thank you. Thank you, JD. Thank you for taking the time, Charlie, to be here.

[Mr. JD Gainey, MDAA Board of Directors]

I really appreciate it.

[Mr. Riki Ellison MDAA Founder and Chairman]

Thank you.