Funding the Force: Aligning the Defense Budget with Global Priorities

Moderator:

- Ms. Jennifer Griffin, Fox News

Panelists:

- Mr. Chris Brose, President and Chief Strategy Officer, Anduril
- Representative Ken Calvert, Chair, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense
- Representative Pat Ryan, U.S. House of Representatives, New York, 18th District

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Announcer:
Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to panel 10: “Funding the Force: Aligning the Defense Budget with Global Priorities.” Please welcome to the stage Ms. Jennifer Griffin of Fox News and our distinguished panelists.

Jennifer Griffin:
Well, thank you for joining us, I know we're at the end of a long day and I'm so glad you're here with us. I'm so grateful to be joined by Congressman Ken Calvert, Chairman of the House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee, Congressman Pat Ryan, who's standing in for Senator Shaheen who couldn't be here, West Point grad with two combat tours in Iraq and two Bronze Stars, started the Defense Modernization caucus with Republican Congressman Rob Whitman. So that is really, it's nice to hear about something that's bipartisan. And then of course Chris Brose, who served for years as the staff director for the Senate Armed Services Committee and is now president of Anduril, one of the hottest companies right now out there. So let's just start with talk of the budget, and what is different. I want to go down the line and just what's different about this budget—2026—than previous budgets. Is there a shift occurring in terms of

strategy and what happens if we get another one year CR? Last year was the first time we had a full year CR. What is the impact? You guys are the experts. Chris?

Chris Brose:
You want to start with me?

Jennifer Griffin:
Yes.

Chris Brose:
Oh, dangerous. I generally view my role here as to bring down the level of integrity on this panel with the two honorable members of Congress. I think a lot of the question for the forthcoming budget is really going to be in the hands of the two gentlemen to my right in terms of what the Congress is going to do, what the top line's going to be, what they'll appropriate and authorize. I think when you look at the budget request, you always have this in a transition year where an administration that just got in is more or less sending up a request that has been built by their predecessor and maybe they got a few of their thumbprints on it. I think the question on the CR to me is really the kind of compelling one. When I was back in the way, way back machine working in the Senate, the prospect of CRs went from being something that was a forbidden thought to kind of a regular order and the notion of a full year CR was always the thing like that, but which we'll never do.

I think now that we've done that, the concern is that we sort of define deviancy down and then it becomes a standing thing. I think that Congress did a great job in the challenging environment that they had to work with to actually provide flexibility to the Department inside of the constraints that a full year CR provides. I think the question is if we end up on another full year CR, will that flexibility still be there? Will it increase? Will it actually be pulled back—which I think would be detrimental. I think the big point that I would just offer—and we have a very different perspective on this at Anduril, right? We're an 8-year-old company, we've been doing a great job, we've been succeeding, but most of our success is still in the future. Like CRs and full year CRs are catastrophic for us in the sense that if there isn't that flexibility, it becomes very difficult for the Department to identify new priorities, to move flexibly, to adapt, to move at the pace that technology's moving. That becomes a very difficult challenge for young companies and even younger companies than us to be able to through.

Jennifer Griffin:
Great. On that note, Congressman Calvert, you made your presence felt, what happens if there's a one year CR?

Ken Calvert:
Well, we're not going to have that.

Jennifer Griffin:
Okay.

Ken Calvert:
I have to have the attitude, a positive attitude that we're going to get through this. We've obviously went through a shutdown period, which was not good, and so we have till January 21st to get this right. I'm hoping we can get some appropriation bills done before Christmas and get the rest of it done right after Christmas, and get the appropriation for the Department of Defense. We cannot continue to operate the Department of Defense— the largest enterprise on the planet—under a CR. It costs us probably a billion dollars a month to operate under a continuing resolution just because of the inefficiencies that are created throughout the enterprise and dealing with what we have to deal with. So, to me, that is not an option and I would hope that with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, that is not an option. So we're going to need to do what's necessary to get this done.

Pat Ryan:
Agree with everybody, and I think just to add from what I've heard today, and I think everybody in this room has been hearing this today too. We have all the momentum, all the energy, of all the things in this country where we're not aligned and we're divided, this is one of the few places where we have real bipartisan bicameral even outside of the Congress and the government. We've got alignment with industry, we've got alignment with markets, we have to get this done. I think it's a patriotic duty to get it done. I talked to so many companies today who said we're sharing specific examples of if this happens again, another even partial CR, we just keep losing momentum and our adversaries are just gaining on us each time. So I know we're all kind of beating that drum, and I have great faith in the chairman to carry through on what he said.

Jennifer Griffin:
So you say that there's bipartisan agreement that CRs are bad, but why do they keep happening?

Ken Calvert:
Well, we're under a lot of budget pressure obviously, and I was mentioning to you earlier, when I came to Congress 34 years ago, 70% of our outlay was discretionary, 30% of it was non-discretionary. That has totally flipped. 70% of our outlays are

mandatory spending and so we've squeezed the discretionary budget so hard that it causes pain all the way around. So we have to now join the defense bill with Labor H in order to get the members of Congress and Senate to go along with getting the bill done. That's no great secret. So it's tough and we don't have enough money in the Department of Defense right now, so we need to increase the top line just to meet the obligations.

Jennifer Griffin:
What is the top line right now? Do you have a top line?

Ken Calvert:
Well, the house number is about $835 billion, the Senate number is about $22 billion higher. We need to come to an agreement between the House and the Senate—I think we will—and get on with it. I would hope in FY 27 there's going to be an agreement. I was listening to Secretary Hegseth today that there will be an increase in the top line. Mike Rogers, the chairman of the authorizing committee, would like to get to 5% GDP over a period of time and we need to do that in order to meet the obligations. The triad obviously is in trouble—the land-based part of the system. We've got problems with the Virginia-class submarine, the Columbia-class submarine, shipbuilding in general, the F-47, if we're going to build a secondary line on the F-15x, we go on and on and on. We do not have enough money to meet those obligations.

Jennifer Griffin:
Let's go to the slide for question 40 from the survey. It says, how large do you think that the US military should be and there was a surprising agreement. In fact, 44% of Americans think that the military should be large enough to win two separate wars against China and Russia at the same time. Is the US military large enough to win two wars? Pat, you want to start?

Pat Ryan:
Absolutely not. I mean, I wish I could say we were, but that agree or disagree with that percentage? I think that's a startling number. I think it was much lower even last year. It looks like that changed from last year. I don't see any way with where we are both top line, but also when you look under the hood of what's underneath that, and that pains me to say that that's not what we want to be saying, but I think we have to be real that that's where we are in that regard.

Jennifer Griffin:
Do you agree?

Chris Brose:
Tee off on that— I absolutely agree. I also think we're asking the wrong question, right? I think that we have become so focused on this environment of scarcity that defense has become that it's like, wow, we don't have enough food to feed both of our children. I guess we need to let one of our children go. It's like, no, you need to create more food. That's actually the right answer. When I go back and look at something like a lot of focus on weapons production, when I was back on the Hill under the leadership of Chairman Calvert and other members at the time, we started increasing funding for weapons that had been a massive shortfall for a long time. And if you look at it, we have increased funding for critical weapons over the past 10 years by 300%. When you look at the increases in production, we have got by individual weapon, by individual weapon, Patriot, SM-6, LRASM, and things that everybody knows by name now, production has moved 21, 23, 25%, so we are spending more money and we are getting less capability for the money that we are spending. We still need to spend that money. I agree the top line needs to go up, but we need a model of military power where we actually use technology to generate abundance and capability so that we're not in this question of how do I do more with the military that Ronald Reagan created? As opposed to, how do I create new capabilities using technology where I can do all of these things simultaneously because technology enables me to do it and I can afford it? That to me is the right question and I think that is a function of industrial capacity, not necessarily one of picking and choosing at the level of strategy we've got to get out of those false choices.

Pat Ryan:
Can I just very quickly add to that? I agree and I think what's been encouraging that I've heard today in a few different dimensions is it's not just that it has to of course start with federal government spending, but we have to broaden the view of whether that's the objective or whatever our strategic objectives are marshaling the fullness of our patriotic capital markets. Whether that's what we've seen and heard from JP Morgan and bringing a massive amount of private capital to match, seeing the deal flow on defense tech venture is going to reach 10 billion this year, that's double what it was just a year ago. So it's also what can we do at a policy level to reward, incentivize, and unleash that to be complimentary and synergistic and enabling with what the direct federal spend is too.

Ken Calvert:
One of the reasons we created this or reinvigorated DIU and APFIT and created the Office of Strategic Capital is to leverage more dollars into the defense realm. Just what we did, and what we're going to do in FY 26, is we will leverage about $200 billion along with the reconciliation money into the Office of Strategic Capital, which will go directly

into these private companies, especially those who have dual use capability. That's huge and that's probably what Chris is talking about. That's how we've kind of circumvented the existing procurement system. Because the procurement system—I am sure Pete Wilson would agree when he was in the Senate—it was broken then. It is really broken now and we've just, we don't have time to wait around to change it. We've got to move as quickly as possible.

Jennifer Griffin:
You've been a big backer of DIU, and what are two successes you like to tout from DIU?

Ken Calvert:
Well, I think there's a number of successes, especially in the missile world and counter drone technology. A number of companies have used it, and I don't want to pick out one, but we've had I think at least 50 companies over the last number of years that have successfully gone through the DIU process and added another $2 billion of money that goes into those programs and have been very successful and have created alternatives to the primes.

Jennifer Griffin:
And I realize some might not know DIU is the Defense Innovation Unit. Silicon Valley basically taking commercial off the shelf technology for the military.

Chris Brose:
I will pick out one company, and this is thanks to your leadership. Because of the support you've provided to DIU and the support in funding that Chairman Calvert provided, I could name multiple programs that never would've happened that our company is doing that are now happening because that we were able to compete through a process that was fast at DIU. There were resources there to do prototyping and then transitions have happened. I mean, I'll pick one US Air Force work with DIU on a low cost cruise missile program. They had a one paragraph requirement. They went from requirement release to vendors on contract in a matter of months. We were flying in six months after that. We are now in a position where we're in conversations about turning this into a multi-billion dollar procurement program with exportability as a massive success story if we're able to pull it all the way through. And it never would've happened without the kind of support the DIU received and the funding that they received from Chairman Calvert to do exactly this: to create a complimentary alternative pathway around the department, through the department, whatever you want to call it, to get good ideas into prototyping, prove them out and take them to scale quickly and having the resources to do that.

Jennifer Griffin:
Congressman Ryan, the Modernization Caucus, what headwinds or problems are you facing? Why did you feel you had to start this caucus?

Pat Ryan:
Yeah, I want to add to the compliments, I think it's important to say. It was two, or maybe three years ago. The prior administration's proposed budget for the Defense Innovation Unit was way too low. Under the chairman's leadership and others, it was 10xed. Congress is far from perfect. I'll take accountability for that. That was an important moment of Congressional bipartisan leadership sending direction to the Pentagon that we need to literally add an order of magnitude to our prioritization of innovation and that has then set the tone for a lot of continued momentum in that direction. The House Defense Modernization Caucus, and there's a Senate component. A lot of credit goes to Rob Whitman who I know is on another panel today and has been a great leader in this, a great partner for me. What we wanted to try to build was a place that I've only been here three years—sir, order of magnitude less than you—and I came in and said, there's no single place where authorizers and appropriators from both parties that care about the country and want to figure out how do we work with the good guys, the right great innovative companies, help them get through all the hurdles and all the pain points, all the friction points, big and small, and how do we create that regular recurring dialogue and then be able to move quickly on it.
So for example, a year ago we did a session, we got a bunch of input from folks that all immediately went into a series of NDAA amendments that already had built in bipartisan support we're able to get in on block passed through. One of the biggest pain points that I experienced in my prior life and a lot of others here is, I'm a startup, I'm trying to get SCIF accreditation to just actually get my product out there and tested. That's one example that we're actually able to get through based on this caucus. So would invite everybody out there if you're not already to be engaged with us in that and huge credit to Rob Whitman.

Jennifer Griffin:
Let's talk about the National Security Strategy—the new one—and the shift towards the Western hemisphere. I'd like to get your thoughts on the new strategy. Resources are obviously going to have to be shifting based on priority shifting. What are trade-offs, what are you going to get rid of? How's this going to work? And, what are your concerns in looking at this new strategy?

Chris Brose:

I'll plead guilty that I have not read every word of the National Security Strategy yet, but I have sort of read diagonally through it. I think the emphasis on homeland defense in Western Hemisphere has been a long time coming. If you go back and read National Defense Strategies prior and Quadrennial defense reviews, prior to that, homeland defense was always the first priority and it was generally a throwaway. It was basically like homeland defense is a priority, large oceans, weak adversaries, yada, yada, yada. I think that for the first time in a long time, we have adversaries with capability—conventional as well as nuclear—that can range and strike the homeland. The prospect of fighting an away game, which is what the U.S. military has traditionally done, now has the implication that we will have conventional attack against the United States if we decide to go fight an away game the way we have always planned to do.
That's a paradigm shift.

So I think when you look at something like Golden Dome, that's a long time coming, right? Our missile defense architecture is archaic. These are programs that were put in place when I was in high school and college, which was actually a long time ago. We need an updated approach to this. And I think that's an example of a good idea that we need to get moving on, and I've seen estimates thrown around in the think tank community, this is going to cost $200-250 billion. I literally have no idea how you could count that high. I think this is going to be several billion. I think that it's something that can predominantly be fielded on this President's watch. I think the country will be better off for it.

I don't think that this needs to come at the expense of a lot of other things that we are doing. This is kind of my main point here is like these trade-offs we keep being faced with is because of the scarcity that we have enabled or sort of allowed to be created inside of defense because of how archaic so much of our technology is. But with new technology—particularly the emphasis on the space-based approach to Golden Dome—I think you can actually field these game-changing capabilities. You can do it much faster and you can do it at a fraction of the cost that people are assuming because they're assuming that, well, if I take the current architecture that I have and multiply it by 2,500, it costs $300 billion. And it's like I majored in philosophy, but I think that's a really bad way to cost-estimate. So just again and again and again, I think there's an opportunity to solve these problems differently with technology. I think the homeland defense emphasis is a good idea in a long time coming, and frankly I welcome it.

Ken Calvert:
Yeah, I think homeland is, I agree with Chris, it's a long time coming—

Jennifer Griffin:

But that's not what the National Security Strategy is. It’s not only about homeland—

Chris Brose:
Not only, but predominantly. I mean that's ultimately what we're talking about.

Ken Calvert:
It's a big part of it. Look, when you have several hundred thousand people dying of fentanyl poisoning in the United States and the Chinese actively sending the precursor chemicals to the cartels, the cartels working with the Chinese to manufacture and distribute this drug—or poison as I would call it—and help them launder their money through the banks in Central America and take their cut and fund their Belt and Road initiative in Central and South America, why are we putting up with that? Why as a nation are we putting up with that? And so I think those days are over and I think it's important.

Golden Dome— I worry that we haven't defined what it is and whether it's a strategic system, a theater system. How are we going to deal with drones? We got the World Cup coming up and the Olympics, and I know there's a lot of concern about drones and so forth that we're going to have to counter. And so we need a national defense strategy that deals with the homeland. How do we pay for it? I mean obviously have legacy systems that have to be looked at, but we have to at the same time replace those in an orderly fashion. We can't just throw away something old, not have anything for a while. So we've got to be able to replace that. And the only way we're going to do that is we're going to have more money, to be honest with you. That's why we're going to have to have a higher top line to build the weapon systems of the future to replace those that are out-molded.

Jennifer Griffin:
What would be a top line for 5% of GDP? What are we talking about?

Ken Calvert:
Probably, well, if you take 5% of GDP, you're probably looking at about a trillion 5, 6.

Jennifer Griffin:
You think Americans are ready for that?

Ken Calvert:
I think we need to explain to them the alternatives. We won't go there overnight. It's going to take a while. We need to grow the economy. We need to do other things. But we’re at the lowest level of defense spending since prior to World War II.

Jennifer Griffin:
Congressman Ryan, National Security Strategy concerns?

Pat Ryan:
I agree. I think it's been a long time coming that the Western Hemisphere has been deemphasized, and I think that's an important macro thing and there should be bipartisan agreement on that, what that looks like in the National Defense Strategy and how much of that is a defense thing versus a law enforcement. I mean the Coast Guard today just picked up 20,000 pounds of cocaine. It's the single biggest seizure by the Coast Guard in 20 years. So let's look at all the elements within our larger national security means while we focus on, of course, interdicting fentanyl and other drugs. The concern that I have paired with that though is that I do love the idea of resource unconstrained, but still live in the real world where there are trade-offs here. So we have a carrier strike group now, an entire carrier strike group in the SOUTHCOM AOR, and that comes at some cost.

Then you look at this National Security Strategy, and in a 29 page document, the first mention of China is on page 19. So there's no mention of several of our key allies in the INDOPACOM AOR. The Philippines isn't even in there. AUKUSis not at all barely mentioned. Japan and South Korea are talked about as burdens on us when they've been incredible allies and partners and in co-investing with us. So you put all that together and we get to a situation where I get very worried. My theory is no greater friend, no worse enemy. And then you read this National Security Strategy—we're criticizing a lot of allies, and some of it's merited, but that's now been said, and I think, and going back to the Trump administration's first National Security Strategy where China was number one on that list and they were very clear about both the interests and the values disagreement there, I just think we have to have a real serious debate about that—that shouldn't be partisan. That's a major change from a longstanding consensus, which I don't think the American people would actually agree that China shouldn't be our number one adversary.

Jennifer Griffin:
I mean, that's a question Congressman Calvert, is the current budget serious about confronting China? Is it looking towards deterrence or overmatch? What are we buying for? What are we preparing for? The Secretary said today that we have the best relations with China that we've had in a while. That confused me.

Ken Calvert:

That confused me, too. The FY26 bill obviously is not adequate, but we pair that with reconciliation and we're leveraging a considerable amount of money and what we're doing with DIU and with Office of Strategic Capital, we're leveraging more dollars. But as we get into FY 27, those dollars—if we get to a top line, we can start looking at our ship building capability, planes, muscles, ammunition. We're low on everything, so we're going to have to plus up those numbers to get to where we have to be, and that's to counter primarily China. We need our allies, no doubt. China has a lot of advantages right now; they have 360 ships to our 280 ships. We're going to have to have our allies build more ships, whether it's in South Korea or Japan, the Philippines, we need 'em all. Australia, obviously, New Zealand.

Jennifer Griffin:
And they build 200 ships for every one ship that we build right now.

Ken Calvert:
Yeah, you can take every public shipyard in the United States and private shipyard, it'll fit in one shipyard in China, and there's about 15 that size.

Chris Brose:
I agree with all of this. I guess the complimentary point I would make is it took us 40 years to get into this problem, right? It turns out if you de-industrialized for 40 years while your major strategic competitor is hyper-industrializing, you're going to end up with the kinds of disparities that we're talking about, a 200-to-1 shipbuilding capacity disparity.

As much as we try to grow back traditional looking industrial base, I think we have to create new industrial base, right? We need a lot of different ships. We need autonomous surface vessels and autonomous undersea vessels in every war game we've run since I've ever paid attention to this, we all run out of critical munitions in the first nine days of the war. And that's not because there's some confounding problem here. It's because we didn't plan to actually have protracted conflict, which we will, and we've believed that we can get away with the military equivalent of luxury goods when it comes to the way in which we're going to fight.

And I think we just see in all of the recent conflicts, Ukraine and the Middle East and everywhere, you have to have mass. That's how we won World War II. The mass that we can deploy and the capacity we can create to build it is going to look very different from a lot of the military capabilities that we have here that will require increased funding, but it will get us an enormous amount of additional capability for a relatively less amount of money.

Jennifer Griffin:
We have a really good question that's come in from the audience that says, “Understanding that we can't fund anything, one could argue that Ukraine's devastation of the Russian Army has made our country safer. Why is continuing to fund their resistance a partisan issue and not just a national security one?” Congressman Calvert?

Ken Calvert:
I think there has always been a vein of isolationism, especially within the Republican ranks. It's been around for a long time. With this feeling that we have the oceans to protect us and that we don't need to involve ourselves in this, but we don't live in an isolated world. Russia is an adversary, and I think we have to look at them that way. And the war that they're engaged in with Ukraine is something that is destabilizing all of Europe and it can destabilize the world. And China is funding that, they're buying oil and long-term contracts to stabilize the ruble. And so China's kind of behind all of this—weakening Europe and weakening the United States at the same time. So yeah, obviously Russia's lost a lot of people, but I don't think at the end of the day, I hope we can work out a reasonable peace agreement because this is costing too many people's lives.

Jennifer Griffin:
But in terms of cost, if you have a trillion dollar defense budget, why don't you have enough money to provide weapons to Ukraine when they're doing the fighting against one of your main adversaries?

Ken Calvert:
We don't produce weapons on scale rapidly enough, and as was mentioned, our industrial capacity to build weapons in large numbers isn't there right now, we need to build that up.

Jennifer Griffin:
Congressman Ryan?

Pat Ryan:
To tie together the points on the new National Security Strategy and the budget piece of this—one of the most concerning lines to me in that document was something to the effect of the way they characterize Russia was, there are some European countries that think Russia's bad. I mean, we're at the Reagan National Defense Forum, can you imagine what Ronald Reagan would've said had he heard that or seen that line written into the United States National Security Strategy? And so thinking about exactly as a

smart question phrased it, there's an opportunity as we've been doing to great effect for the last several years, and Anduril has been doing it too, and a lot of our great commercial partners to see this as an opportunity to not only stand with a crucial ally, we're aligned on values and interests, but to learn a tremendous amount about the future nature of warfare, to iterate on our own capabilities that'll keep Americans safe, and to do it at a fraction of the cost of what it would cost us in blood and treasure if God forbid we had to do it.

Chris Brose:
Just 30 seconds. The thing that I'm concerned about is I don't think we've actually learned the lessons of Ukraine in the United States. Unfortunately, I think Russia has. I think it got its ass kicked for the first two years, and then it started to change. It has industrialized, and it has basically built a war economy that I do not think is going to stop looking for problems if and when God willing the war in Ukraine ends. They have built a hammer in that country and they're going to go looking for nails in Europe. So if we think that all of this is going to stop and Europe is going to become stable in the aftermath of some type of resolution to the conflict, I think we're fooling ourselves. I think this is going to continue to go because it is the only thing sustaining their economy at this point.

Jennifer Griffin:
Let's go back—we just have a few more minutes—but let's go back to the budget process. Why is it so broken? How do you fix it? And if you look at China, they don't budget at the end of the year. They don't do one year budgets for their military. Why don't we have five year budgets? Why don't we have two year budgets? Why not start at the beginning of the year?

Ken Calvert:
Well, China doesn't actually have to worry about elections. You got basically one person who wakes up in the morning determines what the budget's going to be and how they're going to spend it. And so we live in a democracy and people have a say in how things are done. So we have to go through this process, and we've been working with diminishing dollars over the years, and so the competition for those dollars is great—whether it goes to healthcare or to national security. But I agree with Chris, we have to grow this economy to get more dollars so we can satisfy both concerns without taxing our people to death. And that's a complicated thing, and it's not easy. And that's why this budget process has become so difficult.

Jennifer Griffin:

And if you could get rid of one program—everybody has to come up with one program that you get rid of that would save money, we never get rid of anything—Congressman Ryan?

Pat Ryan:
I'm going to get in a lot of trouble here: F-35.

Ken Calvert:
Oh boy.

Pat Ryan:
I'm not saying the capability, but the way that program has been run—it's a mess. It's a mess. I'm never going to get invited back here again. We got to be real. I mean, we got to have hard conversations.

Jennifer Griffin:
You're in the hot seat!

Ken Calvert:
That's why I made a remark at an AEI conference a couple of years ago where I said, we ought to take a look at aircraft carriers because if you shoot a hundred hypersonic missiles at one, what happens? And I think half the United States Navy had a heart attack.

But I think every weapon system has to be looked at. I think weapons of today are not necessarily the weapons of tomorrow. And so everything that we have needs to be reevaluated, especially now what we've seen in Ukraine, what we've seen in Israel, autonomous weapon systems, that's where we're going. And we have to be honest with ourselves: what is survivable in modern warfare?

Jennifer Griffin:
So we are probably heading towards more robotics, but you can't really forget, the primes have kind of been, as this conference has evolved over 12 years, start off with the primes as sponsors. Now you have Anduril, Palantir, all these other new startups that didn't even exist when the conference started. What's the balance between the old legacy systems that you still need? We still had B-2 bombers that took out the Iranian nuclear sites—it can't all be robotics.

Chris Brose:

No, of course not. I think, and this gets back to your last question, right? When I was on the Hill, we always got this question of why won't the Hill let us retire this, that, or the other thing? And I actually think we were looking at the problem through the wrong end of the telescope. It was not the Hill's desire to hang on to legacy things for the sake of doing it. It was because the new things never showed up. And the Hill is very smart and they're very serious, and they believe—at least when I was there, I'm pretty sure it's still true—that I'm not going to take a tool away from someone who has it if I'm not going to give them a better tool. The prospect from the Pentagon was always, we're going to eliminate this thing today, kill it entirely, eliminate all the jobs and the bases, what have you, and then in 5 to 7 and maybe to 12 years, this new thing is going to show up. I think the emphasis needs to be fielding new things quickly. I think if you do that, you can then have a far more nuanced conversation about getting rid of old things. Look, most of our military, Ronald Reagan would recognize—that's a problem. I think the question of balance is the right question, right? I am sitting here as the President of Anduril. We need Virginia-class submarines. We need B-21s. We need F-47s. I would get rid of the F-35. I would move to F-47 and F/A-XX to end the long national nightmare of fifth gen and get to the next iteration. We can do it quickly. We need to do it quickly. I would collaborate those systems with robotics systems because that's the right idea.

How do you do a real high low mix? You need to do it across the entirety of the joint force. Like our weapon systems are archaic. We need to compliment legacy weapons with new weapons that can be cheaply built and mass produced. This is not hard. America can do this. We can do this in a short period of time for not a lot of money.

Jennifer Griffin:
On that note, thank you very much panelists, and thank you to our audience.

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