



Elbridge Colby

Co-Founder and Principal

Elbridge Colby is co-founder and principal of The Marathon Initiative, a policy initiative focused on developing strategies to prepare the United States for an era of sustained great power competition. He is the author of [*The Strategy of Denial: American Defense in an Age of Great Power Conflict*](#) (Yale University Press, 2021), which *The Wall Street Journal* selected as one of the top ten books of 2021.

Earlier in his career, Colby served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Force Development from 2017-2018. In that role, he served as the lead official in the development and rollout of the Department's preeminent strategic planning guidance, the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS). The 2018 NDS shifted the Department of Defense's focus to the challenges to U.S. security interests posed first and foremost by China, followed by Russia; emphasized restoring the Joint Force's warfighting edge against these major power competitors; and stressed the importance of clearly focusing on these priorities over lesser interests. Colby also served as the primary Defense Department representative in the development of the 2017 National Security Strategy.

Colby has also worked as the Director of the Defense Program at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), where he led the Center's work on defense issues from 2018-2019, and earlier was a senior fellow at both CNAS and at CNA. Over the course of his career, he has also served in a variety of U.S. Government roles working on strategic forces, arms control, and intelligence reform matters, including serving with the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq in 2003 and with the Office of the Director of National Intelligence during its stand-up in 2005-2006. Colby has also served on the staff of a number of government commissions, including the 2014 National Defense Panel, the 2008-2009 Strategic Posture Commission, and the 2004-2005 President's Weapons of Mass Destruction (or "Iraq WMD intelligence") Commission.

Colby publishes widely both in the United States and abroad. In the United States, his articles have appeared in outlets such as *Foreign Affairs*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *Politico*, and *The National Interest*. Abroad, he has published articles or been extensively interviewed in outlets such as *Asahi Shimbun*, *Yomiuri Shimbun*, *Nikkei Asia*, *The Hindustan Times*, *The Economic Times*, *The Australian*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *Der Spiegel*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Welt*, *Handelsblatt*, *Die Zeit*, *Internationale Politik*, *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*, *The Financial Times*, *The Spectator*, *The Telegraph*, *The New Statesman*, *Survival*, *Chosun Ilbo*, *Yonhap*, *JoongAng Ilbo*, *Hankook Ilbo*, *The National Post*, *Corriere della Sera*, *La Stampa*, *Il Foglio*, *The Taipei Times*, *The New Straits Times*, *The Manila Standard*, *Politiken*, *Dagens Nyheter*, *Schweizer Monat*, and *Lidove Noviny*. He also regularly appears on television on networks such as BBC, CBC, CNBC, CNN, C-SPAN, DW, Fox News, Fox Business, NHK, and Sky News as well as on radio, podcast, and online programs in both the United States and abroad. He has testified a number of times before Congress and the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission.

Colby is a recipient of the Distinguished and Exceptional Public Service Awards from the Department of Defense and of the Superior and Meritorious Honor Awards from the Department of State. A member of the Council on Foreign Relations, Colby is a graduate of Harvard College and Yale Law School.