

RICHARD NIXON
FOUNDATION

GRAND STRATEGY SUMMIT

WASHINGTON, DC

2023 STRATEGY SUMMARY

A Recap of the Richard Nixon Foundation's
Grand Strategy Summit:
American Leadership in the 21st Century

Convened October 18 & 19 in Washington, D.C.

Schedule

WEDNESDAY Oct 18

6:00 PM **Dinner and Opening Remarks** Secretary Mike Pompeo
in-conversation with Katie Pavlich

THURSDAY Oct 19

8:00 AM **Beyond Ukraine: Building a Grand Strategy for the Western World** Jane Harman
Mike Waltz
Michael S. Rogers
Jacqui Heinrich, moderator

9:15 AM **Great Power Competition: A World in Flux** Bonnie Glaser
Shigeru Kitamura
Matt Pottinger
John Sittides
Leland Vittert, moderator

10:30 AM **Sanctions as Grand Strategy: Deter or Double Down?** Niall Ferguson
Morgan Ortagus
Arthur Herman, moderator

11:45 AM **Luncheon Keynote Speaker** Ambassador Robert C. O'Brien
in-conversation with Morgan Ortagus

1:00 PM **Protectionism in Grand Strategy** Elbridge Colby
Ro Khanna
Joe Kernan, moderator

2:15 PM **Financial Diplomacy: Working with Developing Nations** Matthew Johnson
Yerzhan Saltybayev
James Hohmann, moderator

3:30 PM **Energy Policy as Grand Strategy** Victoria Coates
Joni Ernst
Andrew Wheeler
Arthur Herman, moderator

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The dissolution of the Soviet Union was celebrated as “the end of history” but the last several years have shown us that those predictions were, at best, inaccurate and at worst, naive. We are witnessing a resurgence of changes to the global equilibrium that threaten to create great instability.

Last year, 50 years after the implementation of President Nixon’s grand strategy saw his groundbreaking trips to the People’s Republic of China and the Soviet Union, the Richard Nixon Foundation established the Grand Strategy Summit. This nonpartisan, two-day public policy conference gathers senior officials in and out of government, champions of American business, senior diplomats, media personalities and thought leaders to develop actionable foreign policy objectives to form a 21st Century American Grand Strategy.

Events today in Israel, Ukraine, parts of Africa and elsewhere no doubt show why American leadership and long-term strategic thinking matter, and will impact the everyday lives of Americans.

I invite you to read this Strategy Summary and explore October’s discussions, and connect with the Nixon Foundation online at [NixonFoundation.org](https://www.NixonFoundation.org), or across our social media channels.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Byron".

JIM BYRON, PRESIDENT AND CEO



2023 Participants



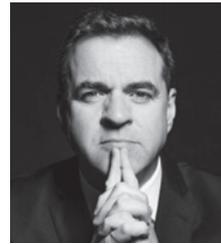
Victoria Coates,
Vice President, Kathryn
and Shelby Cullom Davis
Institute for National Security
and Foreign Policy



Elbridge Colby,
Co-founder and principal
of The Marathon Initiative



Joni Ernst,
U.S. Senator (R-IA)



Niall Ferguson,
Milbank Family Senior
Fellow at the Hoover
Institution



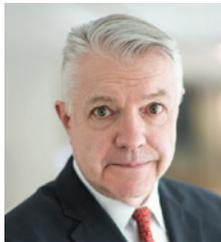
Bonnie Glaser,
Managing Director of the
Indo-Pacific Program at
the German Marshall
Fund of the U.S.



Jane Harman,
Chair of the Commission
on the National Defense
Strategy and former U.S.
Representative from
California's 36th
Congressional District



Jacqui Heinrich,
FOX News Channel
White House
Correspondent



Arthur Herman,
Senior Fellow at the
Hudson Institute



James Hohmann,
Columnist for the
Washington Post



Matthew Johnson,
Principal and Director
of Research at Garnaut
Global



Joe Kernen,
Co-host of CNBC's
Squawk Box



Ro Khanna,
U.S. Representative
from California's 17th
Congressional District



Shigeru Kitamura,
Former Secretary-
General of National
Security Secretariat
of Japan



Robert C. O'Brien,
27th National Security
Advisor



Morgan Ortagus,
Founder of POLARIS
National Security and
U.S. State Department
Spokesperson
(2019-2021)



Katie Pavlich,
Fox News Contributor



Mike Pompeo,
70th Secretary of State



Matt Pottinger,
Former U.S. Deputy
National Security Advisor



Michael Rogers,
Retired U.S. Navy Four-
Star Admiral, former
Commander of U.S.
Cyber Command and
former Director of the
National Security Agency



Yerzhan Saltybayev,
Director of the Institute
of World Economics
and Politics



John Sitalides,
Principal at Trilogy
Advisors LLC., and Senior
Fellow, National Security
Program, at the Foreign
Policy Research Institute



Leland Vittert,
News Nation Chief
Washington Anchor and
host of "On Balance"



Mike Waltz,
U.S. Representative
from Florida's 6th
Congressional District



Andrew Wheeler,
15th Administrator of
the U.S. Environmental
Protection Agency

It is often said that timing in life is everything. Just 11 days after Israel was brutally attacked by the first large-scale invasion of its nation in 50 years, and with Russia still waging war in Ukraine, the Richard Nixon Foundation’s Second Annual Grand Strategy Summit convened at a pivotal and perilous time.

Bringing together 24 leading foreign policy experts and thought leaders from the United States and abroad, the Summit re-emphasized the importance of American power and influence in “defending and extending freedom and deterring and resisting aggression,” especially considering the current global situation. The timing of the Summit could not have been more propitious.

Ten Takeaways from the Grand Strategy Summit

- 1 Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has lacked a Grand Strategy for its role in the world
- 2 National political leaders need to do a better job explaining why it’s important to average Americans that the U.S. provide support to allies and friends around the world
- 3 The United States needs to more clearly define its “end game” goals for Ukraine and the Middle East
- 4 The U.S. needs to be more effective in deterring foreign adversaries from aggression
- 5 Economic sanctions are only effective if they are enforced
- 6 George Washington’s statement to Congress in 1790 remains true today: “To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace.”
- 7 Paying ransom for hostages encourages the taking of more hostages
- 8 America’s Defense Industrial Base needs to be rebuilt
- 9 The absence of a comprehensive American grand strategy creates openings for other global powers, as demonstrated by China’s Belt and Road Initiative; there is opportunity for America to strengthen relationships with allies in developing nations
- 10 America needs to regain its energy independence



Opening Remarks

Mike Pompeo—former member of Congress, one-time director of the CIA, and America’s 70th Secretary of State—kicked off the Summit in conversation with Fox News Contributor and Townhall.com editor **Katie Pavlich**.

They were introduced by Nixon Foundation Chairman, **Ambassador Robert C. O’Brien**. O’Brien drew on his long relationship with Pompeo to share some insightful and amusing anecdotes about his former boss.

Casually attired, Secretary Pompeo gave a no-holds-barred analysis of the consequences to the world of an irresolute American foreign policy. Unencumbered by the constraints of diplomatic niceties, Pompeo reminded attendees that evil exists in the world, as evidenced by the barbarity of Hamas in its invasion of Israel and the killing of 1,300 people, including at least 30 Americans.

He directly laid the responsibility for Hamas’ attack at the feet of Iran. “It is Tehran that, in the end, if one wants to confront this evil, that is the address to which the response must be directed.” But, he added, when the United States does not clearly demonstrate to the world its determination to lead, it invites aggression.

Pivoting to Ukraine, Pompeo observed that there has been little movement on the ground in the war to repel Russia’s invasion. He expressed his hope that the United States would continue to provide Ukraine with the tools it needs but regretted that U.S. military assistance has been “slow rolled.”

Addressing the question many raise of the importance of United States and western support for Ukraine, Pompeo asserted that, “A Putin that believes that he can take sovereign territory through aggression... is bad for every American.”

The discussion continued with a focus on the U.S.-China relationship. Pompeo said that two things must happen in the United States:

- American students need to be taught about American greatness in schools and at home.
- The U.S. government must engage in a consistent posture to protect itself and its allies from a hegemonic China.

Pavlich asked Secretary Pompeo to explain why voters should care about foreign policy in the 2024 presidential election. He acknowledged that although foreign policy alone rarely drives voter’s decisions in presidential elections, there is no longer a clear demarcation between domestic and foreign policy. “We now live in a world where things that happen in Kiev or things that happen in the deserts of Israel impact each and every one of us. And I hope that’s the case because we do have to get this right so that we can live in this free and special place.”



Scan the QR code to watch the opening remarks



Beyond Ukraine: Building a Grand Strategy for the Western World

Panelists:

- **Jane Harman**, Chair, Commission on the National Defense Strategy, former Member of Congress
- **Mike Waltz**, Member of Congress, Florida's 6th Congressional District
- **Michael S. Rogers**, Senior Advisor, Brunswick Group, 17th director of the National Security Agency
- **Jacqui Heinrich**, moderator, Fox News White House Correspondent

The first panel focused on two issues:

- How long should the United States continue to support Ukraine's effort to defend its sovereignty from Russia's invasion?
- Is the failure by the United States and the west to develop a grand strategy following the end of the Cold War inviting aggression by nations hostile to western values and interests?

The panel engaged in a lively discussion about what is meant by the Biden administration's commitment to support Ukraine for "as long as it takes." Does it mean reversing Russia's annexation of Crimea and its occupation of the Donbas? Does it include reconstruction of post-war Ukraine?

The panelists agreed that Congress and the nation are divided over whether the United States should continue to provide military and financial aid to Ukraine. They identified the lack of a clear explanation of how support for Ukraine is in America's national interest – and the interests of the average American – as a significant reason for the divide.

A major takeaway of the panel was the fact that since the end of the Cold War in 1991, the United States has not developed a grand strategy for its foreign policy. The failure to develop a new grand strategy and to articulate the scope of American leadership in a changing world has proved destabilizing abroad and has contributed to the rise of isolationism at home.

In conclusion, the panel agreed that American leadership matters. However, they concurred that America's leaders must do a better job explaining to the public why such leadership is important to our country and to the cause of peace and freedom in the world.

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panel discussion





Great Power Competition: A World in Flux

Panelists:

- **Bonnie Glaser**, Managing Director of the Indo-Pacific Program, German Marshall Fund of the US
- **Shigeru Kitamura**, former Secretary-General, National Security Secretariat of Japan
- **Matt Pottinger**, former Deputy National Security Advisor
- **John Sitalides**, principal, Trilogy Advisors LLC.; senior fellow, National Security Program, Foreign Policy Research Institute
- **Leland Vittert**, moderator, News Nation Chief Washington Anchor and host of “On Balance”

A video of Richard Nixon discussing the 1973 Yom Kippur War opened the panel discussion. He observed that the war not only pitted Israel against Egypt and Syria, but that it also threatened to become a conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. He noted that the United States was able to help save Israel without alienating Egypt and that the war ended with a peace agreement, rather than the defeat of any of the combatants.

Cuing off the video, the panelists discussed the nature of today’s great power competition between the United States and China. Panelists discussed whether the United States had a grand strategy. They questioned whether the U.S. could sustain political support for such a strategy, given the deep political divisions in the country and the increasing influence of populism and isolationism on American politics.

There was general agreement that China does have a grand strategy for dealing with the United States and expanding its influence around the globe. The state of relations between Beijing and Moscow is another aspect of the great power competition that the United States needs to follow closely and influence. Panelists expressed concern over whether the United States recognizes the threat China poses.

The panel also discussed the effects that both the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war and the war between Israel and Hamas are having on the great power competition between the United States and China, and suggested that the United States has to look for opportunities to forestall a growing alliance between China and Russia.



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Sanctions as Grand Strategy: Deter or Double Down?

Panelists:

- **Niall Ferguson**, Milbank Family Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution
- **Morgan Ortagus**, Founder, POLARIS National Security; Spokesperson U.S. State Department, 2019-2021
- **Arthur Herman**, moderator, Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute

The panel discussed the use of economic sanctions – whether they can work alone, the importance of enforcing them, and whether they produce unintended consequences.

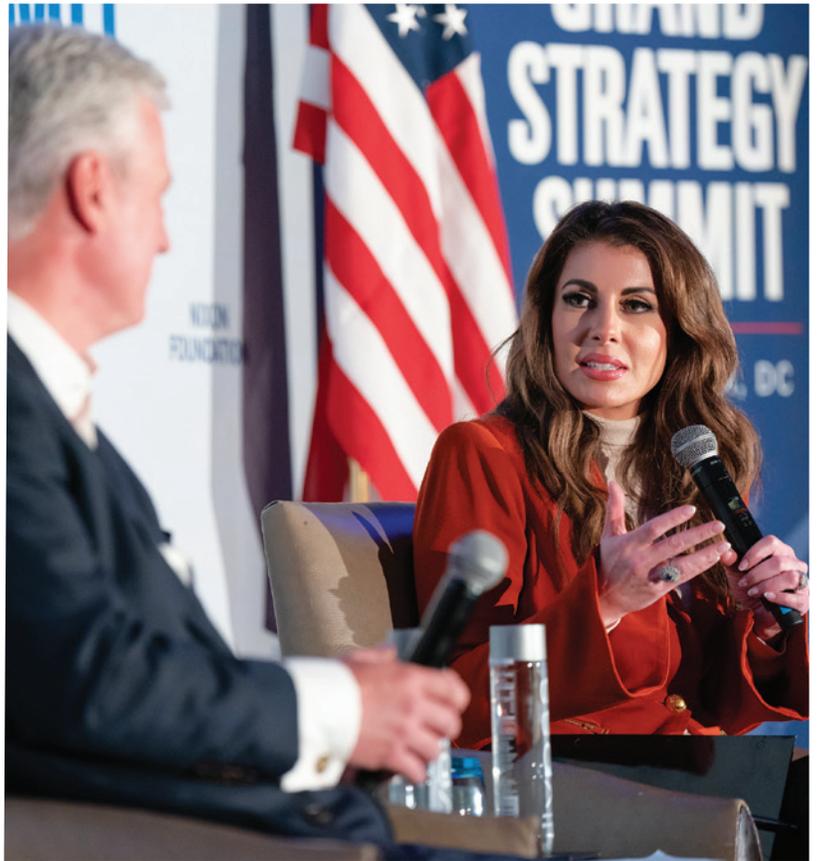
Panelists generally agreed that sanctions are not a “silver bullet,” and should not constitute a strategy by themselves. Rather, sanctions can serve as part of a larger strategy to influence the behavior of the targeted nation, or, in some cases, be imposed on such organizations as cartels, or even against specific individuals.

The panel agreed that, in a complex global economy, unilateral sanctions have a low likelihood of success. To be effective, multi-lateral sanctions – rigorously enforced – are much more likely to achieve the intended results. The panel explored whether sanctions must be coupled with the threat of military force to be truly effective.

The panelists also discussed the importance of American self-sufficiency in critical national security needs, such as energy, food, and pharmaceuticals. Without sufficient domestic production of such needs, the United States is vulnerable to sanctions imposed on it by the foreign governments on which it relies to supply such goods.



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Keynote Remarks: Ambassador Robert O'Brien in conversation with Morgan Ortagus

Ambassador O'Brien reflected on his service as the 27th U.S. National Security Advisor and as Special Envoy for Hostage Affairs, in discussing the overarching strategy of maintaining peace through strength. He noted that during his tenure in the Trump administration, the United States brought more American hostages home than during any other presidency – without ever paying a ransom to secure their release. He asserted that experience shows that paying ransom simply encourages future hostage taking, while also financing future terrorist activity.

Ambassador O'Brien also discussed the need to re-install American pride at home, especially among younger generations. The failure of every branch of the armed forces, save for the Marine Corps, to meet its recruiting goals reflects, in part, that lack of pride in the country and its institutions.

O'Brien invoked Theodore Roosevelt's maxim, "Speak softly and carry a big stick," as a general guide for American foreign policy.

He defined a good diplomat as someone who can "say the nastiest possible things in the nicest possible way," but added that in any grand strategy, America's adversaries must be convinced that if they do harm to America, they are going to pay a heavy price.

Looking to the future, O'Brien called for the United States to rebuild its military, and particularly its Navy, so that its foreign policy grand strategy is based on peace through strength.



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remarks

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Protectionism in Grand Strategy

Panelists:

- **Elbridge Colby**, Principal, Marathon Initiative
- **Ro Khanna**, Member of Congress, California's 17th Congressional District
- **Joe Kernen**, moderator, Co-host, CNBC's *Squawk Box*

Panelists discussed protectionism largely in the context of the decline of America's Defense Industrial Base (DIB). They expressed concern that the United States currently lacks the capacity to rapidly produce sufficient military platforms, equipment, weapons, munitions, and parts to field a modern armed forces. They discussed the need for greater transparency about the Pentagon's defense procurement, namely how much is produced domestically and how much comes from foreign sources.

The panel examined whether protectionism should be used as an element of Grand Strategy, considering America's rivals have employed a production strategy of various strategically important goods, which drive American producers out of certain markets

They discussed whether tariffs are sometimes necessary to protect the DIB from unfair competition. The United States has the ability to re-create a robust DIB, but it needs the will to do so and its polarized domestic political climate hampers such an important goal.

Concern about America's reliance on goods made in China prompted a discussion of whether its economic relationship with China should be reconsidered. The panelists agreed that outsourcing critical goods to countries with cheaper labor makes the U.S. a potential victim of foreign embargoes of such goods to the United States.



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Financial Diplomacy: Working with Developing Nations

Panelists:

- **Matthew Johnson**, Visiting Fellow, Hoover Institution; Research Director, Garnaut Global
- **Yerzhan Saltybayev**, Director, Institute of World Economics and Politics
- **James Hohmann**, moderator, Columnist, *The Washington Post*

This panel largely focused its discussion on the provision of financial assistance by China and the United States to non-aligned or weakly-aligned nations in the developing world as a means of strengthening relationships.

China's Belt and Road Initiative, which was inaugurated a decade ago, was the topic of much discussion. Panelists largely agreed that the United States lags China in providing financial aid to the

developing world, but debated whether the United States should attempt to match China's efforts. They considered Richard Nixon's view that foreign aid is not as effective as foreign trade in building relationships between nations; in the case of China, its Belt and Road Initiative has, in certain cases, exposed flaws in its courting of the developing world, which may open up opportunities for the United States.

The panel agreed that there are opportunities for China and the United States to use financial diplomacy to bolster their relationships with the developing world, both to improve their status as a great power and to increase access to strategically important natural resources.



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Energy Policy as Grand Strategy

Panelists:

- **Victoria Coates**, Vice President, Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for National Security and Foreign Policy
- **Joni Ernst**, United States Senator, Iowa
- **Andrew Wheeler**, 15th Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- **Arthur Herman**, moderator, Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute

The final panel tackled America's energy policy and the role it plays in the nation's foreign policy. The panelists all concurred that having reliable, affordable, and abundant supply of energy is of vital importance to the United States and expressed regret that the United States is not operating with energy independence.

The panel expressed deep concern about the current administration's energy policy, which has made the country more reliant on foreign sources of energy. They were deeply skeptical that renewable sources of energy could meet demand in the near future and pointed out that much of the resources needed for renewables are controlled by China; China controls 90 percent of rare earth minerals needed for batteries and produces 80 percent of all solar panels.

Panelists urged a return to American energy independence by increasing the domestic production of oil, natural gas, and nuclear power. They recalled President Nixon's "Project Independence" proposal, which he announced in the wake of the 1973 Arab Oil embargo. President Nixon's plan called for ramping up production of nuclear energy, natural gas, and clean coal, and anticipated alternative sources of energy, such as solar energy.

The panel also discussed the environmental costs of relying on foreign sources for energy. Environmental standards governing production overseas are not as protective of the environment as are standards in the United States.

Senator Ernst shared her experience on a recent trip to the Middle East as part of a bipartisan Abraham Accords Caucus delegation, that included a visit to Israel three days after the attack on October 7.

In addition, the panel discussed how the cost of foreign oil has driven up the cost of gasoline, diesel, and home heating oil in this country, while noting that money sent to certain oil producing countries, such as Iran, ends up funding terrorism. The panel called for vigorous enforcement of sanctions on Iran's oil production and opposed the relaxation of sanctions on Venezuela.



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“Only the United States has the combination of military, economic, and political power a nation must have to take the lead in defending and extending freedom and in deterring and resisting aggression.”

—Richard Nixon, *Beyond Peace*, 1994

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