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NPS IN THE NEWS

Weekly Media Report –Sept. 22-28, 2020

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COVID-19:

1. [In the Era of COVID-19, What’s Important to Monterey?](#)

(Monterey Herald 24 Sept 20) ... Dennis Taylor

A fiscal crisis. A deadly global pandemic. Aging city infrastructure. All of these are issues the city of Monterey must contend with, but the question becomes what things are urgent and what things need to wait?

Roberson added that a city of just 28,000 residents has many institutions that require maintaining sound relationships — the Naval Postgraduate School, Defense Language Institute, the Middlebury Institute of International studies to name a few.

BUSINESS/COMMENTARY:

2. [Techie Software Soldier Spy](#)

(Intelligencer 28 Sept 20) ... Sharon Weinberger

Back in 2003, John Poindexter got a call from Richard Perle, an old friend from their days serving together in the Reagan administration. Perle, one of the architects of the Iraq War, which started that year, wanted to introduce Poindexter to a couple of Silicon Valley entrepreneurs who were starting a software company. The firm, Palantir Technologies, was hoping to pull together data collected by a wide range of spy agencies — everything from human intelligence and cell-phone calls to travel records and financial transactions — to help identify and stop terrorists planning attacks on the United States... **Chris Ieva, a Marine infantry officer who was attending the Naval Postgraduate School in 2006**, was an early beneficiary of Palantir’s unorthodox marketing technique. The school is located in Monterey, California, just down the road from Silicon Valley, and Palantir had already established a foothold at the institution. Ieva was excited when he was invited to visit the tech start-up, where he saw engineers walking around with T-shirts that read GOOGLE IS OUR BACKUP JOB.

EDUCATION:

3. [North Macedonia Strengthens its Cyber Defenses](#)

(NATO 22 Sept 20)

Cyber defense experts in North Macedonia have been training to improve the capacity of their country to respond to cyber threats. Participants from seven government institutions recently completed two courses set up in the framework of NATO’s Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme. The training provided essential insights to facilitate informed decision-making and better communications across fields of expertise, as well as background information useful to understand and adapt to the evolving cyber threat landscape.

Adapting to the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, the SPS Advanced Training Courses in ‘Network Security’ and ‘Network Vulnerability Assessment and Risk Mitigation’ were delivered via remote learning platforms by the NATO School Oberammergau, Germany, **and the Naval Postgraduate School**, United States, between January and August 2020. Thirty civilian and military trainees successfully completed these two courses. “*I never expected to learn so much from an online course,*” stated one of the course participants.



4. [SECNAV, Fleet Leaders Praise Summer Quarter Grads](#)

(NPS.edu 24 Sept 20)

(Navy.mil 24 Sept 20) ... Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Nathan K. Serpico

Recognizing the challenging yet outstanding achievements of another graduating class, the Naval Postgraduate School celebrated its Summer Quarter graduates becoming alumni, Sept. 25. In a continuously evolving COVID-19 environment, this class adapted swiftly earlier in the year to implement remote learning and remained steadfast against its challenges completing the requirements for their rigorous academic and research programs.

FACULTY:

5. [How-to Book on the Craft of Wargaming Hits the Streets](#)

(NPS.edu 24 Sept 20)

(Navy.mil 24 Sept 20) ... Javier Chagoya

Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) scholars in the field of wargaming have authored a seminal work that lays out a detailed planning guide for defense planners and analysts in a new book, “The Craft of Wargaming.”

The book is co-authored by NPS Senior Lecturer retired Army Col. Jeff Appleget, NPS Associate Professor retired Army Col. Robert Burks and internationally-recognized Operations Research Analyst Fred Cameron. These three authorities bring more than 100 years of wargaming knowledge to an ever-expanding cadre of wargaming professionals.

6. [How the Allies Won World War II](#)

(wbur.org 25 Sept 20) ... Lisa Mullins (Audio)

How do you win a war? We're looking at that question as it applies to World War II, which ended 75 years ago this month.

Host Lisa Mullins speaks with John Arquilla, a distinguished professor of defense analysis at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School.

7. [Turkey-Greece Tensions: Mediterranean Waters Roiled by Blue Homeland Doctrine](#)

(Upnewsinfo.com 27 Sept 20) ... Matilda Coleman

Blue Homeland's aims are spelled out on a map showing Turkey's land mass surrounded by a wide buffer of nearly 180,000 squares miles of sea stretching beyond the Greek islands off Turkey's west coast. The concept — once narrowly associated with left-wing nationalists — is now regularly cited by Turkish officials, including President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, when talking about maritime disputes. Blue Homeland has energized Turks who feel the country has been unjustly denied its rightful claims to the sea, given its long coastline, and has confirmed for adversaries fears of resurgent Turkish expansionism... There is “significant evidence that suggests that Gurdeniz's views have had a profound impact,” **Ryan Gingeras, a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif.**, wrote in a June essay about Blue Homeland that noted its widespread use in the Turkish political establishment and among other former senior naval officers.

FACILITIES:

8. [Naval Support Activity Monterey to Resume Protestant Services and Catholic Mass](#)

(DVIDS 24 Sept 20) ... Tina Stillions

Naval Support Activity Monterey (NSAM) announced today that the installation's Command Religious Program will open its doors and resume services starting Oct. 4.

Although regular church services onboard NSAM have been suspended since March, installation Chaplain Cmdr. Mark Giralmo and Father Dominic Castro are ready to commence both Protestant and Catholic congregations, despite the fact many of their regular attendees have moved out of the area and Naval Post Graduate School (NPS) students remain in a virtual learning environment.

ALUMNI:

9. [Group Raising \\$50,000 to Send Science Kits to Schools in South American, Caribbean](#)

(ClickOrlando.com 24 Sept 20) ... Emilee Speck



A group of passionate science communicators from around the world are working to bring science supplies to students in South America and the Caribbean and one of the group members plans to fly down the supplies once it's all said and done.

"It's for kids and students who, you know, maybe are in high school who are going to be going into college to get into STEM degrees, or just starting off who looked at Bob and Doug go to space and said, I want to be an astronaut," Passage group member NASA engineer Joan Melendez-Misners, a Naval Postgraduate School alumna, said.

10. [Cybersecurity Pioneer Cyemptive Technologies Names Former Hitachi and Hewlett Packard Executive Lynn McLean as Senior Vice President of Sales](#)

(Business Wire 24 Sept 20)

Cyemptive Technologies, a provider of pre-emptive cybersecurity products and technology and winner of the Department of Homeland Security's 2019 national competition for most innovative border security-related solution in the market, today named former Hitachi and Hewlett Packard executive Lynn McLean, a Naval Postgraduate School alumna, as Senior Vice President of Sales.

11. [Sailors, Civilians Line Streets of Sasebo Naval Base in Japan to Salute Exiting Commander](#)

(Stars and Stripes 25 Sept 20) ... James Bolinger

Capt. Brad Stallings, a Naval Postgraduate School alumnus, handed off command of Sasebo Naval Base in southern Japan on Friday, ending a three-year tenure capped by a fight against the coronavirus.

UPCOMING NEWS & EVENTS:

October 12: Columbus Day

October 13: [V-SGL with Lt. Gen. John Shanahan and Nand Mulchandani](#)

November 3: Election Day

November 11: Veteran's Day



COVID-19:

In the Era of COVID-19, What's Important to Monterey?

(Monterey Herald 24 Sept 20) ... Dennis Taylor

A fiscal crisis. A deadly global pandemic. Aging city infrastructure. All of these are issues the city of Monterey must contend with, but the question becomes what things are urgent and what things need to wait?

Wednesday the city administration and elected officials huddled to review which priorities are critical and how the COVID-19 challenges now affecting local governments are influencing those rankings.

The meeting was not an official city council meeting and consequently, no official policies were adopted. Instead, it was a workshop where ideas and solutions could be voiced. It was an exercise that was conducted in October of last year and again in January. But a lot has changed since January.

What remains constant are well-established goals, the top three being fiscal accountability, affordable housing and staying on top of the city's infrastructure — streets, sewer and other facilities. City Manager Hans Uslar provided the council with a list of 74 different projects and focuses he believes the city should strive toward.

Not surprisingly, the top 10 concerns have "COVID-19" in the description. The pandemic has required increased workloads at a time when the subsequent recession has resulted in diminished fiscal resources to address the needed work.

"It requires a more focused approach because of the thinning of staff," Uslar said.

Certainly, everyone in the city would like to see their concerns addressed by city staff, and immediately. The reality, particularly after layoffs, is that the adage of you can't please everyone all of the time has never been more relevant — greater needs with fewer people to address those needs.

"There are very high expectations that are nearly impossible to accomplish all at once," said Monterey Mayor Clyde Roberson, noting that some of the key concerns involve COVID-19, "economic pandemics, social justice pandemics and climate pandemics."

So lists are formed based on a model developed by Stephen Covey, the author of "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People." It's based on four quadrants: the first being "Important and urgent," the second being "Important but not urgent," the third being "unimportant but urgent," and the last being "unimportant and not urgent."

Among the items expressed in Uslar's first quadrant are the city's fiscal recovery plan, assistance in providing economic recovery for businesses, rental assistance and retooling of citywide operations and staffing. With the recent blazes burning nearby and the prospects for more and more costly wildfires as the result of climate change, priorities such as wildfire response and projects to clear fuel, such as brush and trees, away from critical areas were also in the first quadrant.

All of the council members agreed with the items in the first quadrant, while some wanted to see items that were ranked far below moved up to a higher priority. For example, Councilman Dan Albert wanted an ordinance regulating "small cell" communications, which are low-powered cellular access nodes in neighborhoods, to be moved higher than No. 60.

Wednesday's exercise did not incorporate specific renumbering of items, rather to provide Uslar and his staff with a greater understanding of the concerns of the individual council members. The particular issue of small-cell communications is highly vulnerable to the whims of the Federal Communications Commission.

Councilman Alan Haffa agreed that fiscal accountability was a key priority, but that achieving progress on affordable housing city infrastructure was essential as well.

Councilman Ed Smith noted that emphasizing a planned budget was in essence establishing priorities based on fiscal realities. He also said it's important to maintain the quality of life for Monterey residents, which includes public safety, particularly fire protection.

"We have the ocean, a little flat area, then boom, we're surrounded by trees," he said.

Councilman Tyller Williamson suggested staff provide elected officials with a calendar of anticipated issues facing the council in the near term "so we can have a better understanding of what's coming up."



He wants to see greater public input. For example, the city relies on feedback from presidents of neighborhood associations, but Williamson would like to have a great cross-section of the public, such as renters, providing input. Social justice was also a key driver for him.

Roberson added that a city of just 28,000 residents has many institutions that require maintaining sound relationships — the **Naval Postgraduate School**, Defense Language Institute, the Middlebury Institute of International studies to name a few.

“How many cities of our size operate two wharves? A conference center? It’s own city library and sports center? All of these assets in a town of 28,000,” he said.

<https://www.montereyherald.com/2020/09/24/in-the-era-of-covid-19-whats-important-to-monterey/>

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BUSINESS/COMMENTARY:

Techie Software Soldier Spy

(New York Magazine 28 Sept 20) ... Sharon Weinberger

Back in 2003, John Poindexter got a call from Richard Perle, an old friend from their days serving together in the Reagan administration. Perle, one of the architects of the Iraq War, which started that year, wanted to introduce Poindexter to a couple of Silicon Valley entrepreneurs who were starting a software company. The firm, Palantir Technologies, was hoping to pull together data collected by a wide range of spy agencies — everything from human intelligence and cell-phone calls to travel records and financial transactions — to help identify and stop terrorists planning attacks on the United States.

Poindexter, a retired rear admiral who had been forced to resign as Reagan’s national-security adviser over his role in the Iran-Contra scandal, wasn’t exactly the kind of starry-eyed idealist who usually appeals to Silicon Valley visionaries. Returning to the Pentagon after the 9/11 attacks, he had begun researching ways to develop a data-mining program that was as spooky as its name: Total Information Awareness. His work — dubbed a “super-snoop’s dream” by conservative columnist William Safire — was a precursor to the National Security Agency’s sweeping surveillance programs that were exposed a decade later by Edward Snowden.

Yet Poindexter was precisely the person Peter Thiel and Alex Karp, the co-founders of Palantir, wanted to meet. Their new company was similar in ambition to what Poindexter had tried to create at the Pentagon, and they wanted to pick the brain of the man now widely viewed as the godfather of modern surveillance.

“When I talked to Peter Thiel early on, I was impressed with the design and the ideas they had for the user interface,” Poindexter told me recently. “But I could see they didn’t have — well, as you call it, the back end, to automatically sort through the data and eliminate that tedious task for the users. And my feedback from the people who used it at the time, they were not happy with it at all. It was just much too manual.”

Smoking his pipe, just as he had when he testified to Congress 33 years ago about his role in facilitating covert arms sales to Iran, Poindexter told me he had suggested to Karp and Thiel that they partner with one of the companies that worked on Total Information Awareness. But the two men weren’t interested. “They were a bunch of young, arrogant guys,” Poindexter said, “and they were convinced they could do it all.”

Seventeen years later, Palantir is seeking to cash in on its ability to “do it all.” Over the years, the company has worked with some of the government’s most secretive agencies, including the CIA, the NSA, and the Pentagon’s Special Operations Command. As recently as two years ago, its value was estimated at \$20 billion, elevating it to the loftiest heights of the tech “unicorns,” privately held companies valued at more than \$1 billion. On September 30, Palantir is scheduled to go public, selling shares in a highly anticipated gambit that could make Karp one of Silicon Valley’s richest CEOs and



cement the reputation of Thiel, the first outside investor in Facebook and a co-founder of PayPal, as one of the most visionary tech entrepreneurs of his generation.

Palantir's public offering is founded on the company's sales pitch that its software represents the ultimate tool of surveillance. Named after the "Seeing Stones" in *The Lord of the Rings*, Palantir is designed to ingest the mountains of data collected by soldiers and spies and police — fingerprints, signals intelligence, bank records, tips from confidential informants — and enable users to spot hidden relationships, uncover criminal and terrorist networks, and even anticipate future attacks. Thiel and Karp have effectively positioned Palantir as a pro-military arm of Silicon Valley, a culture dominated by tech gurus who view their work as paving the way for a global utopia. (Palantir declined to comment for this story, citing the mandatory "quiet period" prior to a public listing.)

It's a strange moment, given the widespread alarm over the ever-expanding reach of technology, for a tech company to be marketing itself as the most powerful weapon in the national-security state's arsenal — wrapping itself in what one Silicon Valley veteran calls "the mystique of being used to kill people." But as Palantir seeks to sell its stock on Wall Street, even some of its initial admirers are warning that the company's software may not live up to its hype. More than a dozen former military and intelligence officials I interviewed — some of whom were instrumental in persuading government agencies to work with Palantir — expressed concerns about the firm's penchant for exaggeration, its apparent flouting of federal rules designed to ensure fair competition, and its true worth. The company has largely succeeded, they say, not because of its technological wizardry but because its interface is slicker and more user friendly than the alternatives created by defense contractors.

"Where you get into trouble is when the software gets so complicated that you have to send people in to manage it," said one former CIA official who is complimentary of Palantir. "The moment you introduce an expensive IT engineer into the process, you've cut your profits." Palantir, it turns out, has run headlong into the problem plaguing many tech firms engaged in the quest for total information awareness: Real-world data is often too messy and complex for computers to translate without lots of help from humans.

One of the central claims made about Palantir — its creation myth, in essence — is that its software was somehow instrumental in locating Osama bin Laden. The company, which has posted a news story repeating the rumor on its website, likes to shroud its supposed involvement in an air of mystery. "That's one of those stories we're not allowed to comment about," Karp once said in an interview.

The only known basis for the claim, which has been repeated in dozens of articles, comes from *The Finish*, Mark Bowden's book on the 2011 raid that killed bin Laden. Bowden does not actually say Palantir was used in the raid, but he credits the company with perfecting the data collection and analysis that Poindexter had initiated with Total Information Awareness in the aftermath of 9/11. Palantir, Bowden writes, "came up with a program that elegantly accomplished what TIA had set out to do."

No one I spoke with in either national security or intelligence believes Palantir played any significant role in finding bin Laden. Thiel, according to Poindexter, wasn't even interested in building on TIA's work. "His people were telling him they didn't need it," Poindexter recalled.

From the start, Palantir has drawn on a circle of loyal insiders to build the company. In the late 1980s, as an undergraduate at Stanford, Thiel founded a conservative student publication called *The Stanford Review* to wage war on what he saw as the university's liberal agenda, including "mandatory race and ethnic studies" and "'domestic partner' status for homosexuals." (Thiel, who is gay, married his longtime partner in 2017.) The *Review* served as a breeding ground for Palantir: Over the years, according to an analysis by a Stanford graduate named Andrew Granato, 24 of the company's employees came from the staff of Thiel's student publication.

Palantir's initial technology was likewise adopted from one of Thiel's other endeavors: PayPal. In 2000, engineers at the online-payment company wanted to use software to help identify fraudulent transactions, but they found that computer algorithms alone couldn't keep up with how quickly criminals adapted. Their solution was a program called Igor, after a Russian criminal who was taunting PayPal's fraud department, that flagged suspicious transactions for humans to review.



In 2003, after PayPal was sold, Thiel approached Alex Karp, a former Stanford classmate with a Ph.D. in neoclassical social theory, with a novel idea: Why not apply Igor to track terrorist networks through their financial transactions? At the time, the CIA unit responsible for locating bin Laden had little experience, or even interest, in such an approach. Thiel put in the seed money, and after a few years of pitching investors, Palantir got its first major breakthrough in the national-security world with an estimated \$2 million investment from In-Q-Tel, a venture-capital firm set up by the CIA. According to a former intelligence official who was directly involved with that investment, the agency hoped that tapping the tech expertise of Silicon Valley would enable it to integrate widely disparate sources of data regardless of format. “I have mixed feelings about the CIA,” Richard Perle told me, “but their angel investment in Palantir may have been their most inspired move.”

In-Q-Tel’s investment provided Palantir with something even more important than cash: the imprimatur of the CIA. As doors started to open in Washington, Palantir began to attract fans in the secretive communities of intelligence and national security. One former senior intelligence official recalled visiting the company in Menlo Park, California, around 2005. Palantir didn’t even have its own space — it was working out of the offices of a venture capitalist involved in the firm. “We go out back to the carriage house, and there were sleeping bags under the desks,” the former official recalled. “That’s where the engineers who were doing the code were actually living and sleeping.”

But contracts with spy agencies were never going to provide Palantir with enough scale to satisfy investors. The company needed new customers, especially in the lucrative world of defense contracting, and Thiel knew just how to get them. In *Zero to One*, his 2014 book on entrepreneurship, Thiel notes a critical move in PayPal’s success: In the early days, the company essentially paid people to sign up, handing out \$10 to each new customer.

Under federal rules for procurement, which are laid out in a telephone-book-size manual, you can’t pay Pentagon officials to buy your product because that would constitute bribery. And it makes no sense to entice individual soldiers to use your product, because they don’t have the power to make procurement decisions. But that, remarkably, is exactly what Palantir did.

Not long after In-Q-Tel’s investment, the company began providing software and training to members of the armed forces about to deploy to Iraq and Afghanistan. Rather than focusing on lobbying the Pentagon from the outside, Palantir introduced its product from inside the military, creating both an internal demand and a network of pretrained users. “They would basically contact the soldiers and say, ‘Hey, I would like to give you some training on this tool you will get in theater. Would you like to get trained on it?’ ” recalled Heidi Shyu, then the Army’s chief weapons buyer.

Chris Ieva, a Marine infantry officer who was attending the Naval Postgraduate School in 2006, was an early beneficiary of Palantir’s unorthodox marketing technique. The school is located in Monterey, California, just down the road from Silicon Valley, and Palantir had already established a foothold at the institution. Ieva was excited when he was invited to visit the tech start-up, where he saw engineers walking around with T-shirts that read GOOGLE IS OUR BACKUP JOB.

But Palantir wasn’t trying to recruit Ieva as an employee. Instead, he said, he got funding worth about \$10,000 to support his graduate work, which paid for a high-end computer and access to critical data. Ieva was also supplied with Palantir’s software, which the school was leasing for \$19,000 a year; the company provided an analyst at its own expense to work with students. “In return,” Ieva told me, “I had to publish a thesis, and the findings would sort of go back to them.” By the time he deployed to Afghanistan in 2011, Ieva was a true believer in Palantir. He was not only trained to use the company’s software but given a personal version to take with him.

It didn’t take long for word of Palantir to make its way up the chain of command. Intrigued by the software his troops were using, Major General John Toolan, the commander of coalition forces in southwestern Afghanistan, met with Palantir. At the time, the primary software for integrating data on the battlefield was the Distributed Common Ground System–Army, which was being produced by leading defense contractors at a cost expected to exceed \$10 billion. But users of DCGS–A, particularly those with no training in intelligence systems, found it to be clunky and prone to crashing.



In Afghanistan, improvised explosive devices were the leading killer of troops, and Palantir allowed users to quickly track where the attacks were taking place. Toolan, impressed with the technology, secured some modest funding to buy the software, which came with the added benefit of a team of company engineers who embedded with his forces in Afghanistan. Palantir’s “forward-deployed engineers,” as they are called, essentially operated as a mobile sales force, customizing the software to the needs of each client. “They sent young Palantir technicians and engineers and software designers with us so that when we had a problem, we worked on it together,” Toolan, who later served as an adviser to Palantir, told me. “And that was a heck of a lot better support than what was coming out of the Army for DCGS–A, which was nothing.”

Palantir quickly made inroads in Afghanistan with both the Marine Corps and the Army. But back at the Pentagon, its bottom-up salesmanship was attracting high-level scrutiny. Shyu, the Army’s chief weapons buyer, warned that it was illegal for soldiers to accept free training and software from Palantir. She resolved the issue by putting the company on a modest contract to pay for what it had been providing for free. Palantir’s marketing campaign had not only worked, but the Pentagon was essentially picking up the tab for it.

But Palantir didn’t want one-off contracts — it wanted to become the Pentagon’s primary provider of intelligence software on the battlefield. That drew the ire of military officials who were invested in DCGS–A. What was this off-the-shelf software with a slick user interface that was challenging the system they had spent years assembling? At that stage, as critics were pointing out, Palantir couldn’t do the type of data integration across the armed services that the Pentagon needed.

Shyu decided to check things out for herself. In 2013, she visited military bases in Afghanistan, including those at Bagram, Kandahar, and Kabul, and spoke with intelligence analysts and soldiers engaged in military operations on the battlefield. At one point, she even watched analysts using DCGS–A and Palantir side by side.

Both software programs operated as a sort of Google for spies, allowing users to search and sift through intelligence and battlefield data. But the user interface for Palantir was more like the everyday programs soldiers were accustomed to running on their PCs or Macs. After loading Palantir on their laptops, soldiers could quickly scroll and click through to different options, whether they were searching for a Taliban leader’s associates or tracking the financial network of a drug kingpin. Palantir also incorporated appealing visual icons to represent things like brigades and battalions, in contrast to the stodgy military interface of DCGS–A, which relied on less intuitive features.

With Palantir, an analyst could pull up a map of an area soldiers were about to patrol, draw a bubble around it, and see where improvised explosive devices had gone off in past weeks or months. With just a few clicks, Palantir created a heat map of potential danger zones. Analysts could do the same thing with DCGS–A, but it took longer. Another plus for Palantir: It didn’t crash nearly as often. Its software wasn’t necessarily any better at parsing intelligence, but Shyu could see why some soldiers, particularly infantry who didn’t have time to learn a complex program, preferred it. “I walked away convinced that Palantir is much easier to use,” she says.

As Palantir established itself with the Pentagon’s leadership, it began to operate more like the top-tier defense contractors it was hoping to replace, hiring lobbyists and spreading money around Washington. It launched an all-out war over the future of DCGS–A with two big guns on its side: Lieutenant General Michael Flynn, the soon-to-be head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, and Representative Duncan Hunter, a Marine reservist from California who had been elected to Congress in 2008.

At a congressional budget hearing, Hunter berated the Army’s senior leadership for not providing Palantir to the troops, leading to a near shouting match with a prominent general. No one quite understood Hunter’s obsession with Palantir. “I won’t question his passion,” a former senior Army official told me. “But sometimes his passion overtook his veracity.”

Flynn also advocated for Palantir and called for the military to replace DCGS–A. “The Army needs to move to a DCGS 2.0 quickly,” he told the *Washington Times* in 2016. “Frankly, I would even change the name, because it just has such a bad moniker right now.”



That same year, Palantir went nuclear: It sued the Army, accusing it of improperly excluding the company from the competition for the next stage of DCGS–A. In court, Palantir’s lawyers, from the high-powered firm Boies Schiller Flexner, accused two Army intelligence officials of having a vendetta against the company that resulted in “six years of bias and prejudice and irrational behavior from the Army.” Hunter also worked to scuttle the nomination of one of the officials, Lieutenant General Mary Legere, who had been slated to become the first woman to head the Defense Intelligence Agency.

Several former military officials told me there was no personal bias against Palantir. The issue, they said, was the way the company had ignored the rules by giving away free goods and services in the form of Palantir software and training. “They did that in amounts of over a million dollars, I know for sure,” said a former senior Army official who was involved with the issue. “And that was just one customer at an Army-brigade level.” (The company’s allies insisted that Palantir did not violate Pentagon rules.) What’s more, the former official added, the company refused an offer from the Army to incorporate its user interface into the existing system, citing its proprietary technology. “They wanted DCGS–A to be all Palantir,” the official said.

In November 2016, the court rejected Palantir’s “bad faith” allegations but ruled the Army had erred in not allowing the company to compete for the DCGS–A contract. Several former national-security officials I spoke with — including some who support Palantir’s technology — expressed bewilderment over the company’s bridge-burning approach. Suing your customer is not the way the Raytheon or Lockheed Martins tend to do business, but it’s not unprecedented for Silicon Valley. Elon Musk, the founder of SpaceX, sued the Air Force in his quest to break into the market for military rockets. “The lesson of Palantir,” said one former official, “is that sometimes being a jerk pays off.”

Just days after winning its lawsuit against the Army, Palantir had another stroke of good luck. Donald Trump, who had received more than \$1 million in campaign and super-PAC contributions from Thiel, won the presidential election. Thiel served on Trump’s transition team, and Palantir suddenly found itself with direct access to top administration officials.

According to emails that Andrew Granato, the Stanford graduate, received under the Freedom of Information Act, Thiel met in January 2017 with Francis Collins, who was on his way to Trump Tower to ask the president-elect to reappoint him as head of the National Institutes of Health. “I am looking forward to learning more about Palantir’s current areas of interest,” Collins informed Thiel after the meeting. At the same time, he nudged Thiel about his reappointment. “Of course I’m also curious about what the next steps will be after the interview in Trump Tower,” he wrote. “Is there any way to predict the timing of a decision?”

In June 2017, Trump announced that he was reappointing Collins as head of NIH. And in September 2018, NIH awarded Palantir a three-year contract worth \$7 million.

More taxpayer money quickly followed. In 2019, Palantir won a ten-year contract for DCGS–A worth as much as \$876 million. That same year, the company renewed a multiyear contract with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, where Palantir’s software has been used by the same division that targets the families of immigrants for deportation. In April, without soliciting any bids from competitors, the Department of Health and Human Services awarded Palantir nearly \$25 million to track national COVID-19 data. And in May, the Department of Veterans Affairs spent \$5 million on Palantir’s software to “track and analyze COVID-19 outbreak areas” and to provide timely data on supply-chain capacity, hospital inventory, and lab diagnostics.

The company has lost two of its biggest supporters in Washington. In January, Duncan Hunter resigned from Congress after pleading guilty to corruption. And Michael Flynn, who was forced to resign as Trump’s national-security adviser, is currently fighting to have his case dismissed after he pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI. But one of Thiel’s closest associates has occupied high-level posts in two of the places that matter most to Palantir. In 2019, Michael Kratsios, Thiel’s former chief of staff, was appointed chief technology officer for the White House, where he served as one of Trump’s top technology advisers. In July, Kratsios — a 33-year-old with an undergraduate degree in political science — became acting chief technologist at the Pentagon, where he replaced Mike Griffin, a former NASA administrator with a Ph.D. in aerospace engineering.



Like all smart defense contractors, Palantir has ensured its future in Washington by spreading money around to Democrats as well as Republicans. But despite all its federal contracts and bipartisan connections, Palantir is far from healthy. After nearly two decades of aggressive marketing, the company is still losing money and burning cash. In 2019, although its revenues grew by 25 percent, Palantir lost nearly \$600 million for the second year in a row. In that light, analysts say, its decision to go public amid a historic economic downturn could be driven by investors and longtime employees eager to be paid out. “Insiders may be struggling to sell their equity and options in Palantir in secondary markets,” observes Sanford C. Bernstein & Company, which advises institutional investors. “A public listing would potentially end the frustration [that] has apparently been an issue for Palantir management for at least a few years.”

Palantir has struggled to expand its commercial business, a key pillar of its promise to investors. By Karp’s own account, the company considered Palantir Metropolis, a product designed for financial institutions, to be an “unmitigated failure” and scrapped it when it failed to find a market. A much-vaunted joint venture with Credit Suisse to police the bank’s own employees was also deemed a “complete bust.” In addition, Palantir appears to be out of favor in some intelligence and national-security circles. By 2015, according to BuzzFeed News, the company’s relationship with the NSA had ended, and Karp was telling employees that the CIA was “recalcitrant” and didn’t “like us.” (Both agencies declined to comment.)

Palantir has also had surprisingly limited success in marketing itself to police, a seemingly natural customer for software that can track criminal networks. The company worked pro bono for the New Orleans Police Department for six years on a secretive contract to target alleged criminals, but the project appears to have ended in 2018.

The New York Police Department also ended its contract with Palantir several years ago. Zachary Tumin, who served as the NYPD’s deputy commissioner for strategic initiatives until 2017, was a fan of the technology. He dispatched a member of his analytics staff to help Bronx detectives use Palantir to create a map of gang members and their activities, marrying data from social media and a wide variety of government sources. “Being able to bring all that data together into one place helped us get a very precise idea of who was involved around a particular set of events,” Tumin said.

On April 27, 2016, apparently aided by Palantir, the NYPD and ICE conducted the biggest gang raid in New York history. Hundreds of officers and federal agents swooped down on the Bronx, bursting into homes and waking families at gunpoint. According to emails obtained by the Appeal under FOIA, a Palantir employee assisted ICE’s Violent Gang Unit. “FYI we’re all set here,” the employee wrote ahead of the raid. “Helping some random agents get set up but we should have a good viz on everyone.” Prosecutors indicted 120 people for gang activity, though residents protested that many of those swept up in the raid had no gang connections.

Palantir, Tumin recalled, was a “highly effective” tool, but its help didn’t come cheap. Every time the NYPD asked the company to add more data, the price went up. “The more powerful and interesting it became, the higher the tax on you for using it,” Tumin said. In addition, the software required a lot of customizing to fit the NYPD’s needs. “We couldn’t make it work without those modifications,” Tumin recalled. “It was too kludgy — it was built for a generic something or other.”

The need for customization points to a deeper problem for Palantir. The customization is what clients like, but it’s also what could prevent the company from scaling. All those software engineers sleeping under their desks may have been great in 2005, when the company was flush with venture capital, but employing an army of humans to endlessly tweak the software doesn’t exactly presage huge profits. “I used to have a metric when I was in the government,” said the former senior intelligence official who visited Palantir’s engineers back in their sleeping-bag days. “People would come in and say, ‘We’ve got this fantastic automated translation system,’ or automated anything. I would say, ‘Does this use RFOP?’ And they would say, ‘I don’t know what that is.’”

The acronym stood for Rooms Full of People, meaning the army of analysts required to clean up the data and crunch the numbers. How good any given data-mining system is depends in large part on what’s lurking behind the curtain. Is it artificial intelligence parsing large data sets of complex financial



transactions to find the next terrorist? Or is it a room full of eager software engineers sleeping on the floor? Palantir portrays its software as like its namesake — a crystal ball you gaze into for answers. The company emphasizes that it has reduced the time needed to get its software up and running, and former officials told me Palantir has made big improvements to its back end over the years. But the truth is that it still appears to take a lot of manual labor to make it work, and there's nothing magical about that.

That distinction did not matter to the soldiers in Afghanistan who were trying to pinpoint IEDs, but it makes a huge difference to potential investors, because Rooms Full of People are not nearly as profitable as simply installing software and walking away. "Here's the dirty secret of all of these data-analytics solutions," a former Pentagon research manager told me. "They all claim to take these disparate data sources and put them together and then discover these amazing correlations between variables. But the problem is that all of these data sets are terrible. They're dirty." Many types of information, after all, are gathered and processed by humans. It may be entered inconsistently or provided in wildly different formats or riddled with inaccuracies. It's messy, like the real world it reflects and records, and it doesn't always fit into software with any sort of mathematical precision.

When I saw a recent demonstration of Palantir software, it became clear that this dirty secret isn't very secret. The interface struck me as user friendly, something anyone with basic computer literacy could figure out. Want to know how many aircraft are available for a specific mission and how long it will take them to get to their destination? With a simple query, Palantir can tell you. Then I was shown a data set on military personnel, which had to be "cleaned up" to make it usable on Palantir. It wasn't only a magic code doing the cleanup; it was human beings — and even locating someone who could explain what needed to be done had proven time consuming. "It took many calls to find a subject-matter expert," one person involved told me.

It sounded a lot like Rooms Full of People.

On September 9, Alex Karp appeared on an investor webcast dressed in bright sports gear and hiking up a trail on roller skis. Often described as "eccentric" or a "deviant philosopher," he stopped and faced the camera, his unruly curls pointing in different directions, and began to talk about Palantir's tremendous growth. Some 17 years after Karp and Thiel met with John Poindexter, full of confidence and short on engineering, the company was finally set to go public.

Karp blames the darlings of Silicon Valley, not Palantir, for violating people's privacy. It's companies like Facebook and Google, he argues, that are selling their users' data, while Palantir targets terrorists and criminals. "The engineering elite of Silicon Valley may know more than most about building software," he observed in the company's filing to go public. "But they do not know more about how society should be organized or what justice requires." (His argument ignores the fact that Palantir has been used to analyze data from social media, including Facebook posts.)

Poindexter wrote to me shortly after we spoke about his meeting with Karp and Thiel back in 2003. He had seen a recent article about Palantir, he said, and he was shocked at Karp's transformation. "Karp was clean shaven and had a conservative, traditional-length haircut," Poindexter told me. "I have no idea why he changed his image. I would not have recognized him from current photos."

With Karp, as with Palantir, it's often hard to know what is real and what is mythmaking. It's often repeated in articles, for example, that Karp studied in Germany under Jürgen Habermas, perhaps the most influential living philosopher. "The most important thing I learned from him is I couldn't be him, and I didn't want to be him," Karp confided on a recent podcast with a sort of knowing intimacy. In fact, as Moira Weigel, a historian of media technologies, has pointed out, Karp not only didn't do his dissertation under Habermas, he didn't even study in the same department.

That sort of exaggeration could be chalked up to Silicon Valley bravado. Yet it bears an eerie similarity to the bin Laden story, a rumor Palantir has allowed, or even encouraged, to be repeated as fact. As the company goes public, however, it will be required to open its books, and the facts will become inescapable. As recently as 2018, Palantir was being cited as having a valuation of \$20 billion, ranking it among Silicon Valley's top-five unicorns, alongside Uber, Airbnb, SpaceX, and WeWork. Since then, WeWork has imploded, Uber is trading below its public-offering price, and Airbnb has been hit by a



pandemic-driven collapse in bookings. While Palantir’s filings indicate it hopes to surpass \$20 billion, some industry analysts suspect that goal is far beyond what its business model can justify.

How much Palantir is worth depends in large part on what kind of company you think it is. Palantir markets itself as “software as a service” — a business category that includes products like Microsoft Office 365. But Microsoft is not embedding software engineers in Afghanistan to help soldiers with Excel. If, on the other hand, Palantir is more like a traditional government IT contractor, which provides people as a service, it would be valued at about one times revenue — a number that would place its current worth at less than \$1 billion. “You have to make sure that you can get to a dramatically different model at Palantir ... to get a valuation up to the kinds of numbers that we’re hearing out there,” Douglas Harned, a Bernstein analyst, explained in a recent webinar.

So why are people still so excited about Palantir? One former national-security official told me the company is now famous for being famous, sort of like the Kardashians. But he’s doubtful Palantir’s technology can match the sky-high valuations that came with all the hype. “As soon as there’s an IPO, I will short the stock,” he said. “If I’m right — if, in fact, Palantir is loved in the way the Kardashians are loved — well, the Kardashians are not going to be famous forever. So short the stock while they’re famous — and just wait for their 15 minutes of fame to end.”

<https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/09/inside-palantir-technologies-peter-thiel-alex-karp.html>

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EDUCATION:

North Macedonia Strengthens its Cyber Defenses

(NATO 22 Sept 20)

Cyber defense experts in North Macedonia have been training to improve the capacity of their country to respond to cyber threats. Participants from seven government institutions recently completed two courses set up in the framework of NATO’s Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme. The training provided essential insights to facilitate informed decision-making and better communications across fields of expertise, as well as background information useful to understand and adapt to the evolving cyber threat landscape.

Adapting to the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, the SPS Advanced Training Courses in ‘Network Security’ and ‘Network Vulnerability Assessment and Risk Mitigation’ were delivered via remote learning platforms by the NATO School Oberammergau, Germany, **and the Naval Postgraduate School**, United States, between January and August 2020. Thirty civilian and military trainees successfully completed these two courses. “*I never expected to learn so much from an online course,*” stated one of the course participants.

Trainees included both managers and technicians, who will be able to apply their knowledge to better understand potential vulnerabilities of networked systems, as well as mitigation. “*The competencies provided by these courses will strengthen and enhance the cyber defenses of national infrastructures and networks in North Macedonia,*” stated Dr Deniz Beten, Senior SPS and Partnership Cooperation Advisor at NATO Headquarters. In the cyber defense field, the next steps for NATO’s latest Ally include defining its future cyber defense cooperation with NATO.

Looking ahead, two new cyber defense Advanced Training Courses will be delivered via distance learning to NATO’s Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) partners starting in September 2020, and more courses involving other partners are planned for 2021.

https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_178245.htm

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SECNAV, Fleet Leaders Praise Summer Quarter Grads

(NPS.edu 24 Sept 20)

(Navy.mil 24 Sept 20) ... Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Nathan K. Serpico

Recognizing the challenging yet outstanding achievements of another graduating class, the Naval Postgraduate School celebrated its Summer Quarter graduates becoming alumni, Sept. 25. In a continuously evolving COVID-19 environment, this class adapted swiftly earlier in the year to implement remote learning and remained steadfast against its challenges completing the requirements for their rigorous academic and research programs.

In commencement remarks recorded prior to graduation day, Secretary of the Navy Kenneth J. Braithwaite congratulated the 295 graduates, including 24 international students from 13 countries, in highlighting and drawing similarities to obstacles that Adm. Arleigh Burke faced during the global flu pandemic of 1918 that curtailed his high school education, but not his spirit in attending the U.S. Naval Academy later that year, and ultimately graduating not just from the Academy, but also what later became NPS.

“Arleigh Burke did not allow a pandemic to stall his pursuit of innovation and neither have you,” said Braithwaite. “Through the challenges of COVID-19 and the many other hurdles in your way, you’ve each kept your focus on the mission at hand. Each of you has helped strengthen our Force and protect our nation for the future through late nights, hard work, and the spirit of inquiry you brought to your studies, your partnerships, and your projects.”

Braithwaite highlighted the importance of an NPS education and the investment it represents to the American people.

“The Naval Postgraduate School is a keystone of our Education for Seapower Strategy which will position our Naval force to dominate the cognitive age against all adversaries and challenges of the future. The American people sent you to this great institution as an investment. It’s a mark of faith in your capability to deliver the next great innovation and forge the next historic partnerships with our allies around the world.”

“You have delivered a fine return on that investment,” he continued. “Now you must take what you know and apply it with determination, urgency and imagination.”

As Braithwaite expects these leaders to use their education to deliver seapower, NPS President retired Vice Adm. Ann E. Rondeau also believes the graduates will take their NPS education and be leaders who not just produce solutions, but know how to use them.

“The Department of the Navy operates in all warfighting domains, and our NPS graduates and their research are critical to prevailing across all of those domains,” said Rondeau. “Our graduates are tackling key operational problems in every domain, which often puts us in the position to examine the broader implications of what an education from NPS means. At NPS you have become technically astute and strategically savvy thought leaders and change agents who are the ground truth of our education for seapower strategy, and you define the value of an NPS education – graduates uniquely equipped to lead the future force.”

Among this group of new NPS graduates is U.S. Marine Corps Maj. Ezra Akin, the first student to graduate from NPS’ Marine Corps Doctor of Philosophy Technical Program. During the hooding ceremony that conferred on him his doctoral credential, Akin echoed Braithwaite’s emphasis on the weight an NPS education holds for the future protection and prosperity of our nation.

“I pursued being the first in the technical component to the Corps’ PhD program because, as a master’s student here at NPS, I recognized the value of this education to the Marine Corps’ current and future fight,” stated Akin. “I wanted to do more, to take what I was learning as an NPS student and deliver additional capability to our leaders through the education I was entrusted with, and the research we pour into as graduate students.

“As our military and those of our allies face the trifecta of a resurgence of Great Power Competition, rapid technological advancement across society, and the increasingly widespread collection of data at every level, the education provided here by the Naval Postgraduate School is absolutely critical to meeting these challenges and increasing our strategic and tactical advantage,” continued Akin.



Braithwaite urged the graduates to keep in touch with their classmates, shipmates, and instructors as they move forward in their career.

“Work together to forge the breakthroughs that will help protect our people and preserve the rules-based international order that enables the prosperity of all of us,” said Braithwaite.

Joining Braithwaite in applauding NPS’ latest graduating class was Vice Adm. Lisa Franchetti, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfighting Development (OPNAV N7), who echoed Braithwaite regarding the great advantage an NPS education brings to the table.

“You may not fully realize how much you’ve learned and how much your thinking has been shaped by the NPS experience, but as a former Strike Group and Sixth Fleet Commander I can personally attest to the value NPS grads brought to the table every day,” said Franchetti.

On the subject of perseverance, FEMA Administrator Peter Gaynor praised the graduates and acknowledged his homeland security colleagues among them for staying the course and completing their studies in face of a global pandemic and local wildfires.

“Your knowledge and leadership will help us create new policies and strategies to meet the challenges we face in this ever-changing world,” said Gaynor. “All of us at FEMA honor the perseverance and commitment of your graduating class. We can’t wait to see your NPS education in action. Thank you for serving your country, your states, and your local communities.”

Visit the [Summer Quarter Graduation](#) website.

<https://nps.edu/-/secnav-fleet-leaders-praise-summer-quarter-grads>

<https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/display-news/Article/2361561/secnav-fleet-leaders-praise-summer-quarter-grads/>

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FACULTY:

How-to Book on the Craft of Wargaming Hits the Streets

(NPS.edu 24 Sept 20)

(Navy.mil 24 Sept 20) ... Javier Chagoya

Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) scholars in the field of wargaming have authored a seminal work that lays out a detailed planning guide for defense planners and analysts in a new book, “The Craft of Wargaming.”

The book is co-authored by NPS Senior Lecturer retired Army Col. Jeff Appleget, NPS Associate Professor retired Army Col. Robert Burks and internationally-recognized Operations Research Analyst Fred Cameron. These three authorities bring more than 100 years of wargaming knowledge to an ever-expanding cadre of wargaming professionals.

The book is designed to support defense planners and analysts on their journey from wargaming apprentice to journeyman, with topics of particular interest to commercial wargamers. With its focus on design and development, the book serves a primer for initiates to senior commanders seeking to advance their knowledge and understanding of the wargaming field.

So far, the work has been well received.

“A coherent and comprehensive guide that is essential reading for any practitioner of professional wargames,” says Graham Longley-Brown, author of the “UK Ministry of Defense Wargaming Handbook and Successful Professional Wargames.”

Lt. Gen. Michael K. Jeffery of the Canadian Army called the new book, “A must read for any military leader sponsoring or developing analytical wargames.”

Appleget’s colleague, friend and mentor, NPS Professor of Practice retired Navy Capt. Jeff Kline, Director of the new Naval Warfare Studies Institute (NWSI), provided impetus for the book’s creation, suggesting the effort be geared to real-world problem solving for real-world sponsors.



“There’s a lot of books about wargaming but there’s not many about how to do wargaming – that’s what this book is about,” said Kline.

Appleget says he and his coauthors took advantage of countless lessons learned through the activity of the university’s Wargaming Activity Hub, which Appleget leads. In just about every case, students are guided through the execution of a sponsored wargame, and the game must be structured to meet the sponsor objectives.

It was in 2014 that Appleget credits inspiration for his book from then Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert O. Work, because of his call to further the design and implementation of wargaming throughout the DOD.

“At the time, Bob Work set out to re-invigorate wargaming in DOD, which was a great call as it was much needed,” said Appleget. “But it became clear in the months and years that followed that there were a lot of different ideas of what DOD wargaming was, and what it should strive to be.

“Peter Perla had a great foundational book out there, ‘The Art of Wargaming’ written in 1990 that I read cover to cover before I designed the NPS wargaming course in 2009,” Appleget continued. “I adopted the general structure for wargaming design, the seven elements of a wargame, as well as many other gems, from the second part of Peter’s book.”

To date, Appleget has mentored over 90 NPS student team wargames and continues to learn in each matriculation he teaches the wargaming course.

“One critical takeaway that both apprentices and seasoned warriors need to take from our book is the idea of defining the problem correctly,” said Appleget. “After over 30 years of serving as an Army analyst and after working with 70-plus sponsors here at NPS, we can guarantee you that no one walks away from an initial interaction with a sponsor with a clear vision of what the sponsor wants.

“Many times, the sponsor is seeking help understanding his or her own problem,” he added. “Today’s world is so complex, and our technology is so advanced that the sponsor and the wargaming team need to communicate in a structured way several different times to ensure they have a common azimuth for the wargame’s creation.”

<https://nps.edu/-/how-to-book-on-the-craft-of-wargaming-hits-the-streets>

<https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/display-news/Article/2360929/naval-postgraduate-school-publishes-how-to-book-on-wargaming/>

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How the Allies Won World War II

(*wbur.org* 25 Sept 20) ... Lisa Mullins (AUDIO INTERVIEW)

How do you win a war? We’re looking at that question as it applies to World War II, which ended 75 years ago this month.

Host Lisa Mullins speaks with John Arquilla, a distinguished professor of defense analysis at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School.

His book "[Why The Axis Lost: An Analysis of Strategic Failures](#)" looks at the strategy and tactics used by the Allies and the Axis powers in the conflict. He says the Allies used what we would today call hacking, along with design decisions for weapons to counter and defeat their enemy.

<https://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2020/09/25/how-allies-won-world-war-ii>

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Turkey-Greece Tensions: Mediterranean Waters Roiled by Blue Homeland Doctrine

(*Upnewsinfo.com* 27 Sept 20) ... Matilda Coleman

Blue Homeland’s aims are spelled out on a map showing Turkey’s land mass surrounded by a wide buffer of nearly 180,000 squares miles of sea stretching beyond the Greek islands off Turkey’s west coast.



The concept — once narrowly associated with left-wing nationalists — is now regularly cited by Turkish officials, including President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, when talking about maritime disputes. Blue Homeland has energized Turks who feel the country has been unjustly denied its rightful claims to the sea, given its long coastline, and has confirmed for adversaries fears of resurgent Turkish expansionism.

“We cannot neglect the seas again. We cannot be pushed away from the geopolitics of the Mediterranean, the civilization of the Mediterranean,” Gurdeniz said in an interview in an Istanbul cafe overlooking the Bosphorus and, in the distance, the Black Sea.

Rival claims by Turkey and Greece over sovereignty in the island-dotted seas that separate them have set off a squall, marked by taunts, denunciations, rival maps and aggressive deployment of warplanes and ships.

In the last few months, tensions have centered on the Oruc Reis, a Turkish seismic research vessel that has been exploring for oil and gas deposits in contested waters while escorted by Turkish naval ships and stalked by Greek frigates. Greek and Turkish naval ships collided in mid-August, heightening concerns of a wider conflagration.

The conflict has cleaved the region into feuding camps, pitting Turkey and Libya against an alliance led by Greece, Cyprus, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt. France has sided with Greece, and the United States finds itself stuck between its NATO allies.

Increasingly bellicose attitudes toward Europe among elements of Turkey’s political establishment have proved fertile ground for promoters of Blue Homeland. “Just as our nation achieved victory in its fight for independence despite poverty and deprivation, it will never hesitate to thwart the desires and moves for a Sèvres in Blue Homeland today as well,” Erdogan said in a speech last month, referring to the Treaty of Sèvres, which divided up the Ottoman Empire among European powers.

Turkey’s Defense Ministry has referred to Gurdeniz’s vision — Mavi Vatan in Turkish — as its “covenant.” The admiral has become a frequent guest on television talk shows. Blue Homeland has seeped into the culture as well, featuring, for instance, in a recent radio commercial for a Turkish solar panel company.

There is “significant evidence that suggests that Gurdeniz’s views have had a profound impact,” **Ryan Gingeras, a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif.**, wrote in a June essay about Blue Homeland that noted its widespread use in the Turkish political establishment and among other former senior naval officers.

A clear sign of the doctrine’s influence was a maritime agreement Turkey struck with one of Libya’s two warring governments last year that seeks to extend Turkish jurisdiction far into the Mediterranean, south of Crete.

Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Greece’s prime minister, writing this month in several European newspapers, called Turkey’s agreement with Libya “illegal” and cited a litany of provocative actions carried out by Erdogan, including hydrocarbon exploration in disputed waters. “Turkey’s rhetoric is from a bygone age,” Mitsotakis wrote. “It talks about enemies, martyrs, struggle, and a willingness to pay any price.”

A recent announcement by the Trump administration that it would conduct military training with Cyprus, Greece’s ally, angered Ankara. In the last few days, the United States has taken the unusual step of denouncing a rival map that has been used to justify claims by Greece and Cyprus to broad swaths of the sea — a move intended to assuage Turkish fears.

“The United States does not regard this document as having legal significance,” David M. Satterfield, the U.S. ambassador to Turkey, said during a meeting with journalists Tuesday, referring to the Seville Map commissioned more than a decade ago by the European Union.

“This cannot be resolved by declarations, nor can it be resolved by production of maps or other documents,” he said.

On Tuesday, in what seemed like a breakthrough, Turkey and Greece agreed to start a new round of negotiations “in the near future” over their contested maritime claims, Greece’s Foreign Ministry said in a statement.



But in advance of any talks, Turkey and Greece have staked out “maximalist positions,” according to Sinem Adar, an associate at the Center for Applied Turkey Studies in Berlin. “Reaching a compromise will be a hard and long path if it ever happens,” she said.

Arguments over maritime claims have brought the two countries close to blows before, including in 1996, when the United States stepped in to defuse a conflict over a 10-acre uninhabited island. The stakes are higher now, because of the scramble for oil and gas deposits in the contested waters around Cyprus.

The disputes will be solved only when Ankara and Athens show a willingness to compromise, analysts say, but so far, the two governments have been unable to even agree on the ground rules, with Turkey rejecting definitions laid out in the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea, which it has never ratified, and Greece saying its claims — including to expansive jurisdiction around its many islands — apply to Turkey as a matter of settled international law.

Before Blue Homeland was widely adopted by Turkish politicians, it was seen as reflecting the worldview of nationalists who oppose Ankara’s orientation toward NATO, the United States and the E.U. and favor closer ties with Russia and China. Gurdeniz — **who studied at the Naval Postgraduate School**, worked at NATO and collaborated extensively with U.S. naval officers — said he agreed with those views but is not a “zealous” nationalist. He called himself a “Kemalist,” referring to the secular ideology of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey, and distancing himself from Erdogan’s Islamist-based policies. But he added: “I don’t get involved in the daily politics of Turkey.”

Gurdeniz joined the Turkish navy in 1972 as a 14-year-old cadet, became an officer seven years later and was promoted to admiral in 2004. He came up with the concept of Blue Homeland while working in the navy’s policy and planning office in 2006, drawing inspiration for the phrase from his late mother, who was a “maritime poet,” he said.

In the interview, Gurdeniz laid out his doctrine’s lineage, a history of grievances stretching back to the Ottoman era that he said showed how Turkey had missed opportunities to exert its maritime claims or been unfairly hemmed in by foreign powers. A turning point, he said, was Turkey’s 1974 invasion of Cyprus and the division of that country between the Greek Cypriot south and the Turkish Cypriot north. Only Turkey recognizes the northern government. “Turkey changed the map,” he said, referring to the invasion as “one of the biggest achievements in military history.”

In 2011, Gurdeniz was among hundreds who were arrested in a purge of nationalist officers and convicted of plotting to overthrow Erdogan’s Justice and Development Party. He said he promoted his ideas about naval power at his trial and later, as he served 3½ years in prison, in a column he wrote every Sunday for a newspaper affiliated with Vatan, a Turkish nationalist party.

But it was not until after a coup attempt against Erdogan’s government in 2016 that the concept of Blue Homeland really took off, Adar said, as Erdogan formed a political alliance with nationalists and embarked on a more aggressive foreign policy that has seen Turkish armed forces engaged in conflicts from northern Iraq to Libya.

She said Turkey’s ruling circles had concluded after the coup attempt that “Turkey is under threat. The global order is changing. We can’t trust our Western partners. We have to help ourselves.”

It is unclear, however, how long Blue Homeland will remain popular. A recent poll by the Turkish research group Metropoll showed the Turkish public overwhelmingly opposed to a military conflict in the eastern Mediterranean, Adar said. Among Turkey’s ruling elites, a central disagreement has been whether to emphasize diplomacy with Greece or continue to lean on military power. Another point of divergence is Turkey’s relationship with Egypt, with some — including Gurdeniz — arguing Turkey should mend fences with Egypt’s military-backed government, which is an adversary in the current crisis but some view as a natural ally.

Ultimately, the question for Gurdeniz is how to resist adversaries that want to see Turkey “landlocked.”

At stake, he said, is Turkey’s defense, its security, its access to resources and its welfare. “Even happiness,” he said.

<https://upnewsinfo.com/2020/09/27/turkey-greece-tensions-mediterranean-waters-roiled-by-blue-homeland-doctrine/>



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FACILITIES:

Naval Support Activity Monterey to Resume Protestant Services and Catholic Mass

(DVIDS 24 Sept 20) ... Tina Stillions

Naval Support Activity Monterey (NSAM) announced today that the installation's Command Religious Program will open its doors and resume services starting Oct. 4.

Although regular church services onboard NSAM have been suspended since March, installation Chaplain Cmdr. Mark Giralmo and Father Dominic Castro are ready to commence both Protestant and Catholic congregations, despite the fact many of their regular attendees have moved out of the area and Naval Post Graduate School (NPS) students remain in a virtual learning environment.

"We have been busy and have had to do things differently," said Giralmo. "Chaplain services at NSAM have changed from a traditional religious services approach to being on the telephone or online with people in a Zoom or Teams."

Both pastors have made themselves available to people in need of spiritual support. Giralmo said his first message to his congregation is appropriately titled, "Whose hands are you in."

"As we continue in a COVID environment, we see this as key to helping people deal with ongoing loneliness and restrictions," he said. "There is an even greater need right now because of fear, uncertainty and the issues that drive contentment and happiness."

In addition to helping people with domestic issues that arise from being stuck at home with a spouse or kids, they have seen a rise in anger management problems, depression and self-medicating leading to substance abuse as well.

Giralmo said reopening will be like planting a new church. Part of that challenge is there will be no fellowship hour or childcare provided, services that under a normal, non-COVID environment often strengthen the fellowship of a congregation.

"Through worship and prayer, we will provide real, relevant and relational messages that help people apply biblical principles to how they are living today," he said. "The service may look a little different, but the objective will be the same."

Both Protestant services and Catholic mass will last approximately 60 minutes. The pastors are requesting that people arrive 30 minutes prior to the service in order to ensure adequate time for COVID-19 screening.

Castro, or Father Dom as he is called, has worked for more than nine years as a contract priest at NSAM. He has been providing mass, counseling and sacraments to NPS students, staff and faculty.

"There will not be a regular weekday mass until students are back on campus," said Castro. "But I'll provide sacraments and counseling upon request."

Both men plan to ensure the chapel meets the highest standards of cleanliness and safety, which will include temperature checks, questionnaire, mandatory facemasks, spacing every other seat in the pew and deep cleaning after services. In addition, the chapel will be at no more than fifty percent capacity to adhere to social distancing mandates.

"Sunday services are about five percent of what we do on a weekly basis and are an important part of the pastoral duties we perform," said Giralmo. "We have no idea how many will show, but we are anticipating a good group to attend. The Sunday service is open to all."

The NSAM chapel will restart Catholic services at 9:00 a.m. and Protestant services at 10:30 a.m. on Sundays.

Naval Support Activity Monterey (NSAM) was established in 2010 to provide base operation and support for Navy commands on the California Central Coast. Home to over 15 tenant commands, NSAM provides primary support to the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), Navy Research Lab (NRL) and the Fleet Numerical Meteorology and Oceanography Center (FNMOC). NPS is the largest producer of



advanced graduate degrees for the Department of Defense and proudly graduates thousands every year from all services and from over 50 countries. NRL provides all scientific and weather modeling as well as atmospheric and aerosol studies. FNMOC provides the highest quality, most relevant and timely worldwide meteorology and oceanography support to U.S. and coalition forces.

<https://www.dvidshub.net/news/378617/naval-support-activity-monterey-resume-protestant-services-and-catholic-mass>

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ALUMNI:

Group Raising \$50,000 to Send Science Kits to Schools in South American, Caribbean

(ClickOrlando.com 24 Sept 20) ... Emilee Speck

A group of passionate science communicators from around the world are working to bring science supplies to students in South America and the Caribbean and one of the group members plans to fly down the supplies once it's all said and done.

Passage was founded by a growing group of young and veteran leaders in science, with the goal of supplying more than 20,000 pre-kindergarten to high school-age children with the tools to help them learn about science, technology, engineering and math fields.

"It's for kids and students who, you know, maybe are in high school who are going to be going into college to get into STEM degrees, or just starting off who looked at Bob and Doug go to space and said, I want to be an astronaut," Passage group member NASA engineer Joan Melendez-Misner said.

Melendez-Misner, who grew up in Orlando, didn't always know she wanted to work in spaceflight but after meeting NASA engineers in the field during the NASA social event for the SpaceX Crew Dragon test mission in 2019 she was hooked.

Melendez-Misner previously worked on fighter jets at the Naval Flight Air Systems Command but after getting inspired by the launch she made the switch to rockets and was hired by Blue Origin. Now, she is an engineer with NASA's Launch Services Program at Kennedy Space Center.

"I knew that I wanted to be there," she said. "That was kind of the kick that I needed to work for the space industry. I talked to so many NASA engineers, I made so many connections. And then less than a year later, I worked at Blue Origin."

The University High School graduate earned a Bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland and her **Master's Degree from the Naval Post Graduate school.**

For Melendez-Misner, inspiring the next generation of engineers or leaders in STEM is important. She was the first in her family to graduate from college. Both her parents are from Puerto Rico and taught her the meaning of what it takes to reach your goals through hard work.

"I want to be that person that anybody can come up to me, whether on social media or even in person and say, 'Hey, you know, I saw you in this webinar, I would love to talk to you about your journey.'" she said. "I want to be that person, just because it's so important to, with STEM careers, especially women in STEM, especially Hispanic women in STEM, which I think it's like less than 2.7% of us in the field, it's so important to have people who are in these positions, talk to you, as you're a human, that they're just it's an attainable position that you can have."

Outside of Passage, the Orlando native is also involved in Engineering Gals, a community of female engineers working to help other young women who want to work in STEM. Melendez-Misner and other Latinas in the group will be part of YouTube talk soon where girls and young woman can ask questions about engineering.

On Tuesday, Passage launched its GoFundMe campaign. There are perks to donate as well, including an official mission patch and some rewards a little more exclusive.

Of the 20-some people involved, each one has signed up to teach a MasterClass for \$25 donors, Melendez-Misner said.



“Not only are we giving back to these countries, we’re also giving back to the people who are donating,” she explained.

Pilot and University of North Florida graduate Lee Giat, 22, is also making a documentary film about the fundraiser and the journey to deliver the supplies. Anyone who donates more than \$200 will earn a VIP ticket the film’s premiere at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex but tickets are limited.

Those who put up the big bucks and throw down \$500 can earn a flight for two on the Spirit of Science, the name of the plane Giat will deliver the supplies to schools in Haiti, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Chile and Colombia.

“What we’re trying to do is, as science communicators is not only get involved in just the United States, but we want to be involved all over the world, especially in the parts of the world where they’re not as privileged as we are,” Melendez-Misner said. “So 85% of the students that we are going to be bringing these school supplies to are below the poverty line.”

About a day into the GoFundMe campaign’s launch the team has already raised more than 10% of its \$50,000 goal. [Anyone can donate here and learn more about the mission.](#)

<https://www.clickorlando.com/news/local/2020/09/23/group-raising-50000-to-send-science-kits-to-schools-in-south-america-caribbean/>

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Cybersecurity Pioneer Cyemptive Technologies Names Former Hitachi and Hewlett Packard Executive Lynn McLean as Senior Vice President of Sales

(Business Wire 24 Sept 20)

Cyemptive Technologies, a provider of pre-emptive cybersecurity products and technology and winner of the Department of Homeland Security’s 2019 national competition for most innovative border security-related solution in the market, today named former Hitachi and Hewlett Packard executive Lynn McLean as Senior Vice President of Sales.

In her new role with Cyemptive, McLean will be responsible for continuing to drive revenue growth, leading direct and indirect sales globally for the company.

McLean brings more than 35 years of experience in high technology sectors as an experienced international sales leader in digital transformation, big data, cloud services, enterprise data center and additive manufacturing solutions, managing large teams of both direct and partner sales. Most recently, she led the Americas Go-To-Market sales team at 3D Systems with accountability to drive revenue, profitability, and market penetration for their 3D Printer Solutions and On Demand parts manufacturing.

Previously, McLean was with Hitachi Vantara where she was highly successful leading sales with Strategic Global System Integrators (GSIs) driving significant revenue growth for Hitachi’s Emerging Solutions, including solutions created by Cyemptive founder, Rob Pike.

“Lynn brings both extensive experience and passion that will accelerate Cyemptive Technologies’ growth and expansion into this next critical phase of our business. Her background leading application development teams in IT Systems Development, combined with her many successful years of front-line sales, provides a valuable addition to our executive team,” said Rob Pike, CEO and Founder, Cyemptive Technologies, Inc.

Prior to joining Hitachi, McLean served as the Vice President of partner development for Technology Integrator, MTM Technologies. Formerly, she spent more than eight years with Hewlett Packard, advancing through the sales management organization to the executive level, where she managed the HP Services Sales for consulting, outsourcing and technical support in the Western US.

She also served as an Officer in the United States Navy, managing large systems development projects supported by Federal System Integrators. McLean holds a master’s degree in Computer Science from the Naval Postgraduate School, and a bachelor’s degree in Computer Science from Marquette University.



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Sailors, Civilians Line Streets of Sasebo Naval Base in Japan to Salute Exiting Commander

(Stars and Stripes 25 Sept 20) ... James Bolinger

Capt. Brad Stallings handed off command of Sasebo Naval Base in southern Japan on Friday, ending a three-year tenure capped by a fight against the coronavirus.

Capt. David Adams, most recently the reactor officer aboard the nuclear-powered carrier USS John C. Stennis, took over from Stallings at a ceremony reduced to just 50 attendees due to coronavirus restrictions.

“It is my great honor to stand before you as the successor to a great lineage of commanders who set the example and guarded against external threats, preserved an amazing relationship with our Japanese friends, and secured a course of peaceful development and progress for over seven decades,” Adams said during his address inside the base fitness center Friday.

Adams, a native of Beaumont, Texas, graduated in 1997 from the University of San Diego with a bachelor’s in business administration and a commission through Naval ROTC, according to a Navy statement issued Friday.

Stars and Stripes was provided with copies of Adams’ and Stallings’ speeches prior to the ceremony.

Stallings’ next assignment is not far away. He’s heading to Yokosuka Naval Base, south of Tokyo, to serve as chief of staff to Rear Adm. Brian Fort, the commander of U.S. Naval Forces Japan.

A native of Attica, Ohio, **Stallings holds masters’ degrees in electrical engineering from the Naval Postgraduate School** and in military studies from the Command and Staff College. He was commissioned through the Enlisted Commissioning program, according to the Navy. He has also served in South Korea and Afghanistan.

Fort, guest speaker at the ceremony, presented Stallings with the Legion of Merit for his service at Sasebo, about 30 miles northwest of Nagasaki.

“I am one of many who are exceptionally proud of this entire team, your contributions to the mission, and your strengthening of the relationship between the United States and Japan,” Fort said to Stallings, according to the Navy. “Success is always a team sport and you played it well.”

Though the ceremony was sparsely attended, many sailors and civilians lined the street, properly spaced and wearing masks, to render salutes and farewell waves as Stallings drove past, according to a video posted Friday on the base Facebook page.

It was definitely not a traditional change-of-command ceremony, Stallings said during his remarks.

“In order to keep the numbers down, there is no band, there were no side boys posted for a formal entrance of the official party,” he said, “as you can see there are very few guests, there are no flowers to hand out and there is no reception.”

To punctuate the past seven months of Stallings’ career, the base on Friday morning announced that the only active coronavirus patient there had tested free of the virus.

Sasebo is homeport for the amphibious assault ship USS America, the flagship of an amphibious readiness group, along with 48 tenant commands and 7,400 sailors, civilian employees and family members, according to the Navy. Keeping the coronavirus off the base, and out of the amphibious group warships, became Stallings’ daily first priority.

“Although COVID-19 interrupted our lives, all of you here continue to serve the fleet by providing gas, ordnance, stores, services and repairs,” Stallings said Friday, referring to the respiratory disease caused by the coronavirus. “Schools are open, training has resumed, church services are happening, folks are eating out and going to the gym. All this is possible because all of you take personal responsibility every day, and you demand it from others.”

The base reported a relatively low number of coronavirus cases as the pandemic moved across Japan. Meanwhile, Stallings on social media posted regular, personalized messages to encourage or scold, as the circumstances required. He was often blunt.

He also held frequent townhall meetings via Facebook Live to pass information and answer questions about the coronavirus and base policies.

At the start of a livestream session April 23, he tallied up the U.S. dead from the virus, a number then nearly equal to the Americans killed in the Vietnam War. In a subsequent session, Stallings shared the fact that because of travel restrictions he could not attend the funeral of a cousin who had succumbed to the virus.

In May, Stallings barred several civilians from the base after they violated a prohibition on patronizing area bars and restaurants in order to curb the virus' spread.

“COVID-19 has changed how we operate,” Stallings said during his address, “and we live in a very different world as compared to just seven months ago.”

<https://www.stripes.com/news/pacific/sailors-civilians-line-streets-of-sasebo-naval-base-in-japan-to-salute-exiting-commander-1.646392>

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