



# The Passport

World Affairs Council of the Monterey Bay Area (www.wacmb.org)

May 2018

## Why Iran Remains a Challenge for U.S. Foreign Policy

**Professor Afshon Ostovar**  
Naval Postgraduate School

**Thursday, May 17, 2018**

**11:30 am: registration ~ 12:00: luncheon ~ 12:50 pm: program**

**Rancho Canada Carmel Valley Road**

The United States and Iran have long had an adversarial relationship. Many observers point to the U.S.'s long history of interventions into Iranian politics as the factor that has most shaped the modern relationship between the two nations. More recently, Iran's expanding foothold across the Middle East has exacerbated U.S.-Iran relations. As of this writing, the most imminent threat emanates from Washington, where the Trump Administration is poised to retreat from the 2015 nuclear agreement, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.



Dr. Ostovar is an Assistant Professor in the Department of National Security Affairs at NPS. His research and writing focus on conflict and security in the Middle East, with a special focus on Iran and the Persian Gulf. His most recent book, *Vanguard of the Imam: Religion, Politics and Iran's Revolutionary Guards* (Oxford University Press, 2016) examines the rise of Iran's most powerful armed force—the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, or IRGC—and its role in power politics, regional conflicts, and political violence.

Afshon Ostovar, a popular professor of Middle East politics at the Naval Postgraduate School, will examine the dynamics of the U.S.-Iran relationship and the U.S.'s strategy to combat Iran's regional influence and nuclear ambitions.

Dr. Ostovar earned his B.A., *summa cum laude*, in Near Eastern Studies from the University of Arizona and his Ph.D. in history from the University of Michigan.

*(Please see page 3 for reservation information)*

### Calendar of Events

Thursday, May 3	Board Meeting: McCone Building Conference Room, MIIS. Open to members.	4:30 pm
Sunday, May 13	Mother's Day: Tell Her She Means the World to You	All Day
Monday, May 14	Discussion Group: MPC Social Science Building Room 101. Parking \$3.00 in Lot D	4:00-5:30 pm
Thursday, May 17	Luncheon and Presentation: <i>Why Iran Remains a Challenge</i> by Dr. Afshon Ostovar	11:30-2:00 pm
Monday	Memorial Day: Remember Those Who Gave Their All For Our Freedom	All Day

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## March Program Report

### Summary of “North Korea’s Weapons of Mass Destruction”

Melissa Hanham, MIIS

March 27, 2018

The World Affairs Council was treated to a real-life Sherlock Holmes detective story during our March luncheon. Melissa Hanham from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (MIIS) spoke about North Korea’s weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and particularly about the missile program designed to deliver nuclear weapons. Melissa and her colleagues at MIIS have gained an international reputation for using publicly available tools to shed light on WMD programs in various countries around the world.

When it came to tracking down the building in which North Korea houses its large missiles, Melissa’s tools included Google Earth, architectural programs, a keen eye for details in pictures published by Pyongyang, and a robust knowledge of the history of North Korea’s actions on the WMD front, all mixed together with a dash of intuition and some advice from a trucker cousin. Using photographs of the new generation of missiles as they were carried on Chinese trucks, and knowing the measurements of those trucks, Melissa was able to carefully estimate the exact length of the missile, and thus know how tall a building would need to be to house such a missile if it were raised on the back of the launch truck. Based on these calculations and some other pictures, Melissa was able to (we know now) accurately determine the architectural design of the building that houses these missiles, including the use of casters (thanks to that

*(continued next column)*

trucker cousin) to maximize the storage capacity for the trucks and missiles within the building.

Sure enough, when a close inspection using Google Earth revealed just such a unique building in an area known for being a closed military zone, Melissa and her team at MIIS knew they had solved the mystery. That such a tightly held state secret could be revealed by researchers using only publicly available sources is remarkable, and a true testament to the power of the information revolution.

Melissa’s actions have earned the wrath of the North Korean regime, which routinely tries to hack into her accounts and others at MIIS. Sherlock Holmes would be proud!

*By Glenn Robinson*

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### Did You Know?

The World Affairs Councils of America (our umbrella organization) has a worldwide travel program. Run by WAC of Philadelphia, the program offers a plethora of opportunities for you to travel to all the corners of the world, learn from experts, meet people who are making a difference in their communities, and see some truly amazing sights.

There are still some spaces available for trips in 2018, including to Ireland, the south of France, Botswana, and Cuba. In addition, the 2019 schedule is up and offers some absolutely incredible tours. Here’s just a taste: Antarctica, Hamilton’s Caribbean, southern Africa by rail, Mongolia during the Naadam Festival, Vietnam, Morocco, and a private jet tour that will take you to 14 UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

The world is waiting! Want to learn more?

<https://www.wacphila.org/travel/>

**RESERVATION FORM**  
*Reservations due May 10 for May 17 presentation*

**Registration 11:30 am**  
**Luncheon 11:50 am**  
**Program 1 pm**

Mail form & check or credit information to:  
WACMB-P.O. Box 83, Monterey, CA 93942  
or fax reservation form to (831) 643-1846.

**Members @ \$29 ea.** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Guests @ \$35 ea.** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Credit card charge \$2 ea.**  
**Total** \_\_\_\_\_

***Why Iran Remains a Challenge for US Foreign Policy***

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**Questions? Call the office at 831-643-1855**

**World Affairs Council  
Monterey Peninsula College  
Discussion Group**

The next MPC Discussion Group meeting will focus on *Free Trade: Boom, Bane, or Somewhere in Between?* Participants will discuss the positives and negatives of free trade agreements, and where we are now in terms of international trade agreements and tariffs.

This timely discussion will be held on Monday, May 14 at 4:00 pm in the Social Science Building, Room 101, Monterey Peninsula College, 980 Fremont Street, Monterey, CA 93940. Parking is available in Lot D for \$3.00; parking permits are available for attendees.

Come join the discussion!

**LUNCHEON MENU**

- Asian Salad
- Teriyaki Salmon
- Roasted Red Potatoes and Vegetables
- Chef's Choice Dessert
- Regular and Decaf Coffee

**Vegetarian Option:**  
Vegetable Stir Fry



# The Passport May 2018

*This is the monthly newsletter of the World Affairs Council of the Monterey Bay Area (WACMB). Founded in 1951, the Council is a non-profit, non-partisan organization established to promote the presentation, discussion and study of international affairs. WACMB is a tax exempt 501(c)(3) organization, EIN-770301206. Contributions are tax deductible as permitted by law. WACMB sponsors monthly luncheons, discussion groups and student scholarships..*

**World Affairs Council  
P.O. Box 83  
Monterey, CA 93942  
wacmb@redshift.com**

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**WACMB Office: 479 Pacific St., 5A, Monterey, CA  
Mail: P.O. Box 83, Monterey, CA 93942  
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