

Palantir manifesto described as ramblings of a supervillain amid UK contract fears

Alarm caused by posts of Alex Karp, tech firm's CEO, championing US military dominance and of AI weapons

Aisha Down and Robert Booth

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The US spy tech company **Palantir** published a manifesto extolling the benefits of American power and implying some cultures are inferior to others – in what MPs have called “a parody of a RoboCop film” and “the ramblings of a supervillain”.

“Some cultures have produced vital advances; others remain dysfunctional and regressive,” wrote Palantir in a 22-point **post** on X over the weekend, which also called for an end to the “postwar neutering” of Germany and Japan.

The post exhorted the US to reinstate a military draft, saying that “free and democratic societies” need “hard power” in order to prevail.

It also predicted a future dominated by autonomous weapons: “The question is not whether A.I. weapons will be built; it is who will build them and for what purpose. Our adversaries will not pause to indulge in theatrical debates about the merits of developing technologies with critical military and national security applications. They will proceed.”

The pronouncement is the most recent of a number of high-profile statements from Palantir and its chief executive, Alex Karp, which appear to indicate that Karp views himself as not simply the head of a software company, but a pundit with important insights into the future of civilisation. It led to criticism from several MPs, who said that it raised yet more questions about the UK's portfolio of contracts with the company. Palantir

has built up more than £500m in contracts in Britain, including a £330m contract with the NHS, as well as deals with the police and **Ministry of Defence**. These deals have come in for increasing criticism.

“Palantir’s manifesto, which embraces AI state surveillance of citizens along with national service in the USA, is either a parody of a RoboCop film, or a disturbing narcissistic rant from an arrogant organisation,” said Martin Wrigley, a Liberal Democrat MP who is a member of the commons science and technology select committee.

“Either way it shows that the company’s ethos is entirely unsuited to working on UK government projects involving citizens’ most sensitive private data.”

It is unclear what inspired Palantir to publish the manifesto, which appears to reprise Karp’s book, *The Technological Republic*, published last year. That book **laments** a widespread “complacency” among “engineers and founders” who build photo-sharing apps as opposed to collaborating with governments to secure “the West’s dominant place in the geopolitical order”.

In an interview with CNBC in early March, Karp **suggested** that AI would “disrupt” the power of “highly educated, often female voters who vote mostly Democrat”, and instead empower “vocationally trained, working-class, often male, working-class voters”.

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Palantir has a £330m contract with the NHS, as well as deals with the police and Ministry of Defence. Photograph: NurPhoto/Getty Images

Rachael Maskell, a Labour MP, former NHS worker and critic of Palantir's £330m **contract** to help run NHS England's federated data platform, told the Guardian: "To post this is quite disturbing and in trying to ascertain Palantir's commercial pitch from this, they are clearly seeking to place themselves at the heart of the defence revolution in the technological age. They are far more than a tech solutions company if they are trying to direct policy, politics and investment choices."

"It is time that the government seriously understands the culture and ideology of Palantir, and how it will exit from its contracts at the earliest opportunity."

Last month, the Guardian reported that Palantir was to be given access to highly sensitive UK financial regulation data, after the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) awarded the company a contract to **investigate its internal intelligence data**. MPs **urged the government to stop this deal**.

In a debate last week, MPs also demanded that the government scrap its NHS **contract**.

“There’s no shortage of bizarre and disturbing quotes from Palantir’s leadership,” said Tim Squirrell, the head of strategy at the campaign group Foxglove.

“This latest round of incoherent, comic-book villain worthy statements from Alex Karp demonstrates just how deeply embedded Palantir is in the Trump-Big Tech axis, fixated on US dominance and utterly unsuited to being anywhere near our public services.”

“Palantir’s ‘manifesto’ sounds like the ramblings of a supervillain,” said Victoria Collins, a Liberal Democrat MP. “A company that has such naked ideological motivations and lack of respect for democratic rule of law should be nowhere near our public services.”

A Palantir spokesperson said: “Palantir software is helping to increase **NHS** operations, reduce the time it takes to diagnose cancer, keep Royal Navy ships at sea for longer, and protect women and children from domestic violence.

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Palantir logo

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