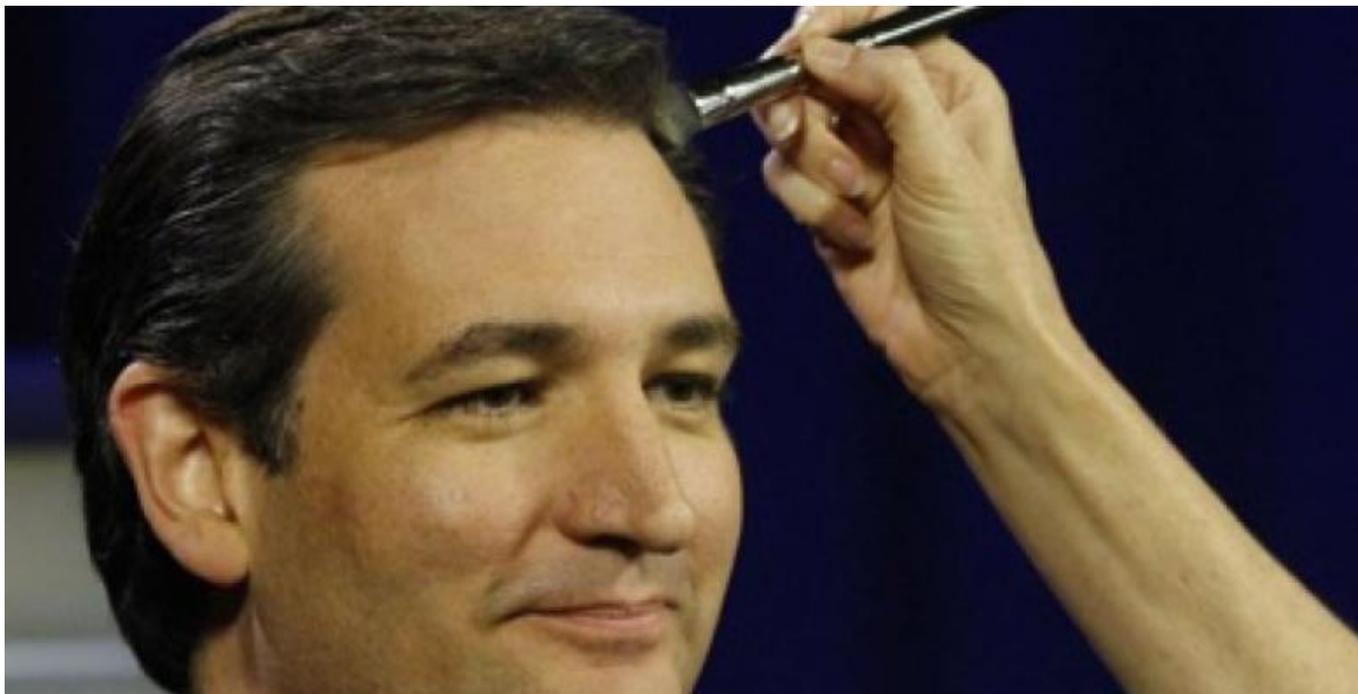


Ted Cruz PsyOp

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For the first time in History, a team specialised in psychological operations is attempting to fabricate a candidate for the US Presidential elections and win him a home in the White House. His victory, if they succeed, would prove that it is possible to falsify the electoral process itself. It would also call into question the power of the military on civil institutions.

“Psychological Operations » (Psy Ops) are « tricks of war », like the Trojan Horse. Under the influence of General Edward Lansdale, the United States equipped their armies and the CIA with these special Psy Ops units, first of all in the Philippines, in Vietnam and against Cuba, then as permanent fixtures.

Psychological Operations are far more complex than propaganda, which is aimed only at deforming the perception of reality. For example, during the war against Syria in 2011, allied propaganda consisted of convincing the population that President el-Assad was going to abdicate, as President Ben Ali of Tunisia had done earlier. The Syrians therefore had to prepare themselves for a new régime. But in early 2012, a psychological operation planned on substituting false programmes on national TV channels which purported to show the fall of the Syrian Arab Republic, so that the population would offer no resistance.

Just as today, there exist mercenary armies like Blackwater-Academi, DynCorp or CACI, there also exist private companies specialised in psychological operations, like the British company SCL (Strategic Communications Laboratories) and its US subsidiary Cambridge Analytica. In the strictest secret, they have helped the CIA to organise the « colour revolutions » and are now branching out into the manipulation of the electoral public. Since 2005, they have been participating in the British Defense Systems & Equipment International (DSEI) exhibition, and sell their services to the highest bidder. Concerning Syria, SCL worked in early 2011 in Lebanon, where it studied the the possibilities of manipulating the population community by community.

Psychological Operations and the electorate

In modern societies, the political authorities are chosen by election. That may range from a simple choice between pre-selected candidates – according to their personal qualities – to the designation of personalities who are offering a specific political project. In any case, the candidates have to rely on their militants or their employees in order to wage their campaign. We know that the winner is always the person who is able to gather the greatest number of militants. It is therefore necessary not only to fabricate a candidate, but also a party or a movement to support them. However, today's electors hesitate to subscribe to an organisation, and employees are expensive. SCL came up with the idea of using behavioural techniques in order to fabricate a political party which would sweep its client to power. Its psychologists define the profile-type of the sincere and manipulable militant, then collect the data from the target population, determine who best corresponds to their profile, and design the most efficient messages to convince them to support their client.

For the first time, this stratagem has just been implemented on a huge scale – in the United States, with Ted Cruz.

### Financing the operation

Robert Mercer, one of the principle donors to US public life, has indirectly paid more than 15 million dollars to SCL-Cambridge Analytica for them to handle Ted Cruz's campaign.

Inventor of a vocal recognition software product, Mercer is today the boss of Renaissance, one of the top investment companies in the world. Between 1989 and 2006, his famous Medaillon fund made an average of 35 % profit per year, at the same time as designing a tax-evasion system for his clients.

Robert Mercer has never made any comment about his political opinions, and the US commentators don't really know how to classify this « Republican ». No-one knows, for example, his position on social problems such as the right to abortion or gay marriage. At best, we know that he does not believe that climate change is caused by human activity, that he clearly opposes Hillary Clinton and his friend Donald Trump, and is close to John Bolton.

### The collection of personal data

In order to select citizens susceptible of becoming militants, SCL/Cambridge Analytica has secretly gathered documentation of millions of electors.

Doctor Aleksandr Kogan bought the data from Amazon, the US on-line sales giant, then paid approximately 1 extra dollar per client for a questionnaire to be sent to them via Mechanical Turk (MTurk). By accepting to identify themselves on Facebook, the internaut allowed MTurk access to his or her personal data – MTurk then compiled this data with Amazon's information and transmitted them to SCL via Kogan's company, Global Science Research (GSR). Despite the fact that Dr. Kogan assured The Guardian that he worked only on scientific research, and used only anonymous data, they are nonetheless today in the possession of SCL.

Within a few months, SCL had at its disposition a detailed data base on more than 40 million electors US - without their knowledge.

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