

“Covert Ops” on Social Networks. Great Britain Creates a Cyber Brigade to Manipulate Public Opinion

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With each passing day Great Britain is losing its reputation as a proud international power since becoming widely recognized for what it is – an obedient servant of Washington that is losing credibility at a record pace. Therefore, British authorities have been seeking ways to “achieve greatness.” At the same time, they realize perfectly well, given the deepening economic and social crisis in the United Kingdom, it could hardly aspire to achieve success in the reconstruction of its image as a great industrial power, a champion of naval warfare or a flourishing cultural center. No wonder then, that over the last decade Britain’s focus has been devoted to purely destructive activities, such as establishing conditions for new conflicts around the globe and providing “assistance” to the White House in its quest for military and political interventions in the Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Hong Kong, and the list goes on.

It’s no coincidence then that the White House advised London to establish a special unit within its military structure – the British Cyber Command, transferring up to 1500 officers under its command just “for starters”. One must note that Washington has already created its own special unit for cyberwarfare back in 2009. This unit goes under the name of United States Cyber Command, with its headquarters being located at Fort Meade ([Maryland](#)).

According to [The Guardian](#), the 77th brigade will formally come into being in April. The brigade will be carrying out covert operations on social networks exclusively, in an effort to spread disinformation and manipulate the population of certain countries, which should create “favorable conditions” for applying political pressure or the executing of regime change in strategically important regions of the world. Its headquarters will be located to the west of London in Newbury (Berkshire) while it’s official insignia will be the famous symbol of Chindits (a mythical god-like lion guarding temples in Myanmar and other countries in South-East Asia), that was used by a British India ‘Special Force’ which participated in the suppression of guerrilla Japanese troops deep in the forests of Southeast Asia.

The use of social networks to overthrow unwanted regimes has been Washington’s modus operandi for decades now. This led to the creation of a [whole industry](#) of disinformation and the manipulation of public opinion. The events surrounding the Arab Spring, countless other color revolutions and the latest events in Ukraine can serve as a perfect example of how an unstable sociopolitical and economic situation in a country can be exploited by Western intelligence agencies to achieve a radical change in the sovereign governments of other states .

In Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, Algeria, Jordan, Syria, Ukraine, and Hong Kong along with a number of other countries, social networks have been used to coordinate the movement of protest groups, which allowed the gathering of a considerable number of protesters in designated areas. Back in 2011 the The Guardian reported the US Department of Defense was developing special software designed solely for manipulating social network users into buying pro-American propaganda. This operation was codenamed [Operation Earnest Voice](#). This software has been put to “good use” in Britain, the United States and other Western countries during the Ukraine crisis for mass distribution of misleading information about Russia. This operation went as far as attempting to rewrite the history of World War II, with the active participation of Polish and Baltic politicians.

The news on the creation of the 77th Brigade came short after the announcement made by Lieutenant General Marshall Webb the Commander, NATO Special Operations Forces HQ on the need to improve counter-information efforts against the Islamic State, as well as Russian and alternative media’s coverage of the true causes of the ongoing events in Ukraine, and the large scale extermination of the civilian population by Kiev military units. These concerns, along with the recent events in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, were the reason behind the assembly of a British cyber squad.

This new unit is hardly the UK’s first foray into cyberspace, as it has been using IT to achieve its goals for years. Back in 2007, under the secret project codenamed Prism, NSA and Britain’s GCHQ (Government Communications Headquarters), established a link with a number of international IT giants such as Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk , AOL, Skype, YouTube, and Apple. Under this project security agencies were allowed to collect and exchange private information, along with using social networks to spread disinformation. From that moment on, secret services could read private e-mails and keep track of file transfers in the global information space, which allowed them to control the activities of the leaders of different countries, along with business representatives and foreign diplomats

While attempting to provide British authorities with an excuse to establish a national cyberwarfare squad, The Guardian notes that such units are being used extensively in the armies of the United States and Israel, where they are responsible for providing “informational support” for the policies that are being pursued by their respective governments. Israel can be considered a pioneer in modern cyberwarfare since Tzahal units have been using social networks to propagate aggressive propaganda during operations in the Gaza Strip as far back as 2008-2009. Today Tzahal is operating on more than 30 social platforms, including Twitter, Facebook, Youtube and Instagram, to oppose Palestinian Hamas, Iran and other countries, including those outside the Middle Eastern region.

American and a number of other Western intelligence agencies are spending billions of dollars and Euros annually to keep secret programs in cyberspace up and running, while justifying this under the convenient guise of the “war on terror”, which is not only an assault upon the rights of Americans themselves, but also corroding democratic values in Europe and well [beyond](#).

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