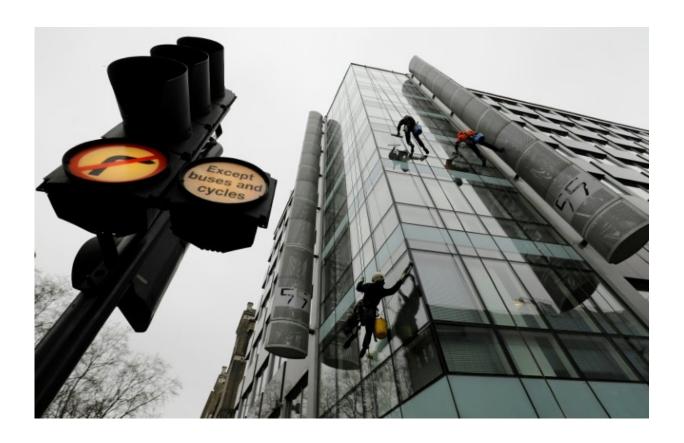# Cambridge Analytica says it is 'no Bond villain'

April 24 2018, by Robin Millard

Cambridge Analytica insists it did not use the data during Trump's 2016 campaign and did not support the pro-Brexit side in Britain's referendum

Cambridge Analytica claimed Tuesday it was "no Bond villain" as it vehemently denied exploiting Facebook users' data for the election campaign of US President Donald Trump.

The marketing analytics firm stressed it had deleted data about Facebook users obtained in breach of the social network's terms of service.

The information had been gathered via a personality prediction app developed by academic Aleksandr Kogan's research firm Global Science Research (GSR).

Cambridge Analytica (CA) insisted it did not use the data during Trump's 2016 campaign and did not support the pro-Brexit side in Britain's referendum on its European Union membership that same year.

Spokesman Clarence Mitchell claimed the company had been portrayed like the enemy in a James Bond film.

"Cambridge Analytica is no Bond villain," he said.

"While no laws were broken, we have acknowledged where mistakes have been made."

He convened a press conference in London "to counter some of the unfounded allegations and, frankly, the torrent of ill-informed and inaccurate speculation".

CA suspended chief executive Alexander Nix on March 20 after recordings emerged of him boasting that the firm played an expansive role in the Trump campaign, doing all of its research, analytics as well as digital and television campaigns.

In undercover filming captured by Channel 4 television, he is also seen boasting about entrapping politicians and secretly operating in elections around the world through shadowy front companies.

Speaking of Nix, Mitchell said: "At worst he's guilty of over-zealous

salesmanship in an attempt to apparently win a contract.

"Staff that saw that were horrified and did not recognise the Cambridge Analytica they worked for."

He said the data CA acquired from GSR was for up to 30 million respondents in the United States only, irrespective of how many GSR was able to get information on.

The data that Kogan managed to collect through the app was tested in 2014 and 2015, before Facebook complained about it, and was "shown to be virtually useless in that it was only just above random guessing, in statistical terms," said Mitchell.

"Cambridge Analytica did not use the data further. The firm did work for Donald Trump for five months."

But, Mitchell insisted: "Any suggestion that the GSR Kogan data was used in that campaign is utterly incorrect. Its effective uselessness had already been identified by then."

Mitchell said CA was "extremely sorry" that it ended up in the possession of data that breached Facebook's terms of service.

On the Brexit referendum, he said CA pitched to Leave.EU, before it lost out on becoming the officially designated Leave campaign, but its bids to them, and to other referendum campaigns, were unsuccessful.

He said an independent investigation into the company, being carried out by a senior lawyer, was close to conclusion.

Kogan, who teaches at Cambridge University, told a British parliamentary committee Tuesday that criticism of his work by

Facebook showed the US social media giant was in "PR crisis mode".

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