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Title: Russian Hacking in 2016 presidential elections

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Introduction

In this paper, we will be discussing white Collar crime known as Russian hacking in 2016 president in which, the presidential campaign or Hillary Clinton was hacked by Russian hackers and released online which degraded her Campion, resulting in her loss in the election. Up until now, there hasn't been any confirmation on whether the Russian were truly behind the attack, however, it is clear that the major reason behind the election campaign hacking is to make sure that Hillary Clinton does not win the election. Since the crime did not contain any kind of violence, it will be considered as a white collar crime. The research study will highlight every important factor regarding Russian hacking in 2016 US elections along with the fact that why Hillary Clinton was targeted. It will explore all the possible elements of the crime and provide a detailed understanding of from different viewpoints to give the readers a better idea. The report will also talk about the latest development of the crime and how different people are associated with it while exploring their view on the hacking.

Discussion

As per the report by CNN, the democratic national committee (DNC) was cautioned by the FBI in September 2015 that at least one of the computer is compromised by the Russian hackers. The IT Department of the committee scanned the entire system but did not find anything suspicious(CNN). The FBI again contacted the DNC in November 2015 and warned them that their computers are delivering information to Russia, however, IT technicians couldn't find out that the system was breached. Reports also claimed that Russian hackers made repetitive attempts before the elections in order to get into different us Institutions including the state department and White House. The strategy simply included sending phishing emails and hoping that someone click that.In March 2016, the chairman of Hillary Clinton's campaign, John Podesta received such a suspicious email which was stated by the Google that another user is trying to access his account. The email contained a link through which we can change his password. Podesta shared the email with the technicians and campaigns' help desk, who replied with the typing error that "it is a legitimate email." This allowed him to follow the instructions and change his password which allowed the hackers to access all his emails(CNN).A few months later, the founder of WikiLeaks, Julian Assange said during an interview with British television that your website have gained access to a bunch of Clinton's email and will be publishing them. As per the report by Washington Post, Russian hackers gain access to the DNC computer system, stole important information regarding Hillary Clinton's campaign which included their research on Donald Trump along with chat exchanges and emails. However, the Russian government denied the allegations.

The cybersecurity company which was hired by the DNC also posted a public notice where they claimed that two Kremlin based Russian intelligence groups were behind the attack on their computer network known as Fancy Bear and Cozy bear. During that time, a blogger named Guccifer 2.0 claimed that he was responsible for conducting the hack and not the Russian which he proved by posting internal DNC memos along with research on Trump by the opposition. He also claimed that he said thousands of emails and files to the WikiLeaks. However, Donald Trump stated in an interview that DNC hacked themselves in order to distract from the email scandal of Clinton. Next week, WikiLeaks published around 20000 email from the DNC server which included notes where DNC chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz insulted staffers from Bernie Sanders campaign along with various messages which suggested that the organization was favouring the campaign of Hillary Clinton instead of being neutral. Debbie Schultz gave her resignation after the leaks(MATISHAK).

Following this, the FBI begin their Investigation on the DNC hack. The hackers again publishers various cell phone numbers along with personal email addresses for Nancy Pelosi along with other members of the DNC committee(Stark). The Russian President Vladimir Putin stated that they have no ties with the hacking and identification of the culprit is not as important as the content of the leaves which is extremely important for the voters(Stark).

Over the next few months, there were another 58000 messages leaked by WikiLeaks which was hacked from John Podesta's account. The office of national intelligence along with the Department of Homeland security issued a statement on election security which states that they are confident that the Russian government is responsible for the compromises of the emails as they have done it in past as well(CNN). According to German officials, it was a Russian hacking group who was responsible for the major attack in Berlin Parliament last year which included phishing emails(Stark). Furthermore, there is also evidence that the Russian cyber group also targeted the Christian democratic party of Angela Merkel(CNN).

As per many reports, CIA determined that the Russian hacking was implemented in order to boost the presidential campaign of Trump and hurt Clinton which was dismissed by the transition team of Trump. President Obama requested the intelligence agencies to further review the hacking along with other cyber-attacks on the political campaigns which dated back to 2008 and asked to deliver the findings before he leaves the office on January 20.However, due to the constant pressure, Putin made a statement in 2017 saying that the 2016 presidential election campaign hacking may have been executed by patriotic Russian citizens and the government has played no part in it. He also claimed that even a child could have easily hacked the presidential campaign.Up until now, everyone seems to be blaming the Russian government for the hacking but they have been no strong evidence which reflects to the fact that they certainly played a part in the hacking.

Did Russian hackers truly influence 2016 US elections?

There are many theories regarding the hack, however, there is no proof which can support that the Russian hackers were responsible for the crime(Mayer). Different theories include that Russia was behind the emails which were leaked to the WikiLeaks who published on, but as per the founder of WikiLeaks, the source was not from Russia and there is no obvious motive for Russia to leak the emails(Stark). According to Mayer, another theory included that Russian hackers were able to get into the voting machine and read the election, but then again, there is no absolute evidence for this claim. Furthermore, the voting machines are not connected with the internet, and thus, cannot be hacked until direct physical contact into machines(Diamond).

There were many other reports that contribute to the fact that Russians were actually behind the attack which included the fact that Russian President Vladimir Putin didn't like Hillary Clinton who was responsible for the doomed attempt to reset the relationship between Moscow and Washington(MATISHAK). In the year 2011-12, many Russians protested against the decision of putting to become president for the third time, which didn't go well with Putin who believed that Clinton was behind the protest in order to push him from the power.Another reason why Putin disliked Clinton due to the fact that she stood up to him and therefore, preferred Donald Trump due to his negotiation skills in hotel deals(Mayer). Having Trump victorious will allow directions to make various cosy deals with him which will strengthen the relationship between the Russian money and oil industry.In various other reports, it is believed that Russians developed thousands of fake Twitter and Facebook profiles in order to spread lies in order to degrade Hillary Clinton campaign such as she sold uranium to Russia and also running of pedophile ring, Barack Obama sold weapons to the terrorists and Pope Francis and dozed Donald Trump(Mayer).Although, all this was just circumstantial evidence which certainly did not have enough weight to prove that the Russians were truly behind 2016 us elections hacking.

Did the Russian interference the main reason behind Hillary Clinton's loss in 2016 elections?

After the hacking, anything didn't go well for Hillary Clinton campaign for the election who lost the election to Donald Trump(Diamond). According to the special counsel Robert Mueller, Russians utilised on number of shady strategies in order to discourage people from voting for Hillary Clinton and motivate them to vote for Trump(MATISHAK). What probably cost Clinton the 2016 election was the letter sent by the former FBI director James Comey to the Congress on October 28, 2016. The letter was the biggest news event in the last two weeks of the campaign.

Furthermore, Donald Trump only had 38% of favourable rating on the Election Dayand still manage to win the election(Diamond). The main reason behind that was there were various voters who disliked both Trump and Clinton, however after the leaks of the emails, they favoured Trump as they were not willing to give Clinton the benefit of doubt(MATISHAK). This is too early because of the fact that Clinton was expressed as untrustworthy and dishonest, which is certainly the kind of message which the Russian campaign wanted to cultivate. Similarly, trump was also cultivating the same message and after the hacking, the media also covered the exact same theme(Diamond).

Trump's reaction on Russian hacking

Since taking office after winning the election, Donald Trump has implemented various contradictory positions, however, there is one point where he has been unwavering that Russian didn't influence the 2016 US elections in any way and was not responsible for putting him in the oval office(MATISHAK). He called the entire Russian interference in the elections to be completely made up and the Ridiculous hoax(Stark). He also believes the entire subject to be threatening to his legitimacy and also called the entire efforts of Investigation of the Russian attack on the American democracy a witch hunt and claimed that Russians did not have any impact on the voters. As mentioned by Diamond, his candidature also claimed that Hillary Clinton performed weekly as a candidate as there were many technical errors in her campaign which resulted in her loss. And in order to gain sympathy, they have put the entire blame on Russia and also focused the possibility of Trump colluded with the Russia in order to execute the crime.In September 2016, during the presidential debate with Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump also questioned if the DNC cyber-attack was carried out by a group sponsored by state or alone hacker(CNN). He stated that it could be Russia but could it can also be China or anyone.In July 2018, during the Press Conference with Bloody Mary Putin in Helsinki, Trump said that president of Russia is quite powerful and strong in his denial that the government interfere with the American presidential election 2016 and concluded that he doesn't see any reason why Russia would do it. He later clarified his statement saying that he doesn't see any reason why it can't be Russia(Harding).

What is Obama’s take on Russian hacking of 2016 presidential elections?

Former US President Barack Obama said that he will take action against Russia and mentioned that Putin is aware of his feelings about the hacking as he spoke to him directly. "There shouldn't be any doubt that if any foreign government attempt to impact the integrity of us election, then we are determined to take necessary actions at a time and place of our choosing," said Obama(Harding). He also issued an order that sanctions against Russia which included the name of 6 individuals from Russia who took part in the presidential campaign hacking. Furthermore, he also ordered 35 Russian diplomats to leave the United States within 72 hours. Obama also ordered the intelligence agencies of America to provide a complete review of the hacking before his term and Donald Trump is sworn in his place as Trump can choose the rivers any sanction or punishment which will be imposed on Russia(Harding).

Conclusion

From the above discussion, it is clear that whether Russia was responsible for the US presidential campaign hacking or if Donald Trump had any role in it, the entire crime was performed in order to hurt and damage the presidential campaign of Hillary Clinton, which concluded to her losing the elections(Stark). Both Russia and Donald Trump would benefit from her loss, and therefore, it is also not entirely evident that they were not associated in any way in the cyber-crime.This becomes more evident after repetitive statements which contradicts their previous one. However, one fact which is entirely true in the entire case is that Hilary Clinton suffered from it. And that is why it will be regarded as a white collar crime where even though no violence took place, it certainly resulted from criminal activities which were committed for the purpose of financial or equivalent gain through deceit and fraud.It is also possible that many more developments may appear in future regarding the entire offense, but until then, one can only blame different people on the basis of various theories and myths and cannot charge a person for the crime.It is also possible that new investigation can be launched into the Russian hacking by the Congress which can reveal many more sides of the case.

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