

THE TWO TALES OF RUSSIA HACKING NYT

Yesterday, CNN posted this “first on CNN” story:

Hackers thought to be working for Russian intelligence have carried out a series of cyber breaches targeting reporters at The New York Times and other US news organizations, according to US officials briefed on the matter.

The intrusions, detected in recent months, are under investigation by the FBI and other US security agencies. Investigators so far believe that Russian intelligence is likely behind the attacks and that Russian hackers are targeting news organizations as part of a broader series of hacks that also have focused on Democratic Party organizations, the officials said.

Here’s what the NYT’s own account of the hacking (attempt) is:

The New York Times’s Moscow bureau was the target of an attempted cyberattack this month. But so far, there is no evidence that the hackers, believed to be Russian, were successful.

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[snip]

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So CNN tells an alarming story about specific reporters being targeted that fits into a larger narrative, citing both the FBI (in which Evan Perez has very good sources) and “other US security agencies,” which presumably means the NSA. NYT tells an entirely different story, stating that an attack on its bureau in Russia was targeted unsuccessfully, relying solely on official sources as the FBI. One wonders why the NYT story required Nicole Perloth *and* David Sanger, and also why David Sanger didn’t cite any of his extensive sources at NSA, where these allegations appear to derive.

It’s quite possible both of these stories are misleading. But they do raise questions about why the spooks want to sensationalize these Russian hacks while NYT chooses to downplay them.