

WHY DIDN'T THE GOVERNMENT MAKE A BIGGER DEAL ABOUT IRANIANS HACKING SHELDON ADELSON?

As I keep explaining to gobsmacked security experts, according to the DHS, not only are motion picture studios like Sony considered Critical Infrastructure the security establishment must protect, but so are casinos (and campgrounds!) as part of the "Commercial Facilities Sector."

The Commercial Facilities Sector consists of eight subsectors:

- Public Assembly (e.g., arenas, stadiums, aquariums, zoos, museums, convention centers).
- Sports Leagues (e.g., professional sports leagues and federations).
- Gaming (e.g., casinos).
- Lodging (e.g., hotels, motels, conference centers).
- Outdoor Events (e.g., theme and amusement parks, fairs, campgrounds, parades).
- Entertainment and Media (e.g., motion picture studios, broadcast media).

- Real Estate (e.g., office and apartment buildings, condominiums, mixed use facilities, self-storage).
- Retail (e.g., retail centers and districts, shopping malls).

Which is why I find it interesting that along with noting that hackers might start altering – rather than just zeroing out – the entries in software, in his Global Threats testimony James Clapper asserted that “Iranian actors have been implicated” in hacking Sheldon Adelson’s casino.

Iran very likely values its cyber program as one of many tools for carrying out asymmetric but proportional retaliation against political foes, as well as a sophisticated means of collecting intelligence. Iranian actors have been implicated in the 2012-13 DDOS attacks against US financial institutions and in the February 2014 cyber attack on the Las Vegas Sands casino company.

A number of outlets reported that Iran, rather than Iranian actors, did the hack.

Bloomberg reported that Iranians were behind the hack in December.

I can think of a number of reasons why the US didn’t make a bigger deal out of Iranians hacking our critical infrastructure Sheldon Adelson’s casinos. Because they couldn’t prove the tie between the actors and the Iranian state, because fighting to protect Adelson’s corruption is less palatable than fighting to protect Hollywood, because it would have focused on Adelson’s threats to bomb Iran, and because

they're trying to craft a peace deal.

And that's probably just a start.

Still, I'm surprised others – such as Bibi Netanyahu – haven't made a bigger issue out of Iranian actors' successful attack on one of the people funding the anti-Iranian lobby.