

Democracy in Peril: Russian Hackers Target Conservative Political Groups

Russian hackers are targeting conservative political groups and even the U.S. Senate in the run-up to the midterm elections.

Microsoft announced Tuesday that groups tied to the Russian government created fake internet sites for the Hudson Institute and the International Republican Institute. Other pages mimicked the U.S. Senate.

“This activity is most fundamentally focused on disrupting democracy,” Microsoft President Brad Smith said.

It’s not clear if anyone visited the fake sites, but clicking on the pages could have exposed users to surveillance and possible data theft.

National Security Adviser John Bolton said it’s crucial the U.S. go on the offensive to counter cyberthreats to protect not only our democracy, but critical infrastructure like power utilities.

“I think you need to establish structures of deterrence so that our adversaries who have conducted cyberoperations against us or who are contemplating it come to understand they will pay a much higher price if they do that than if they simply refrain,” Bolton said.

Last week, President Trump scrapped an Obama-era directive that limited America’s ability to conduct cyberwarfare. {eoa}

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