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INSTAGRAM HIJACK: USER ACCOUNTS BEING HACKED IN 'RUSSIAN' CYBERATTACK WAVE

BY JASON MURDOCK ON 8/14/18 AT 10:38 AM



The Instagram application is seen on a phone screen August 3, 2017.

REUTERS/THOMAS WHITE

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INSTAGRAM

HACKED

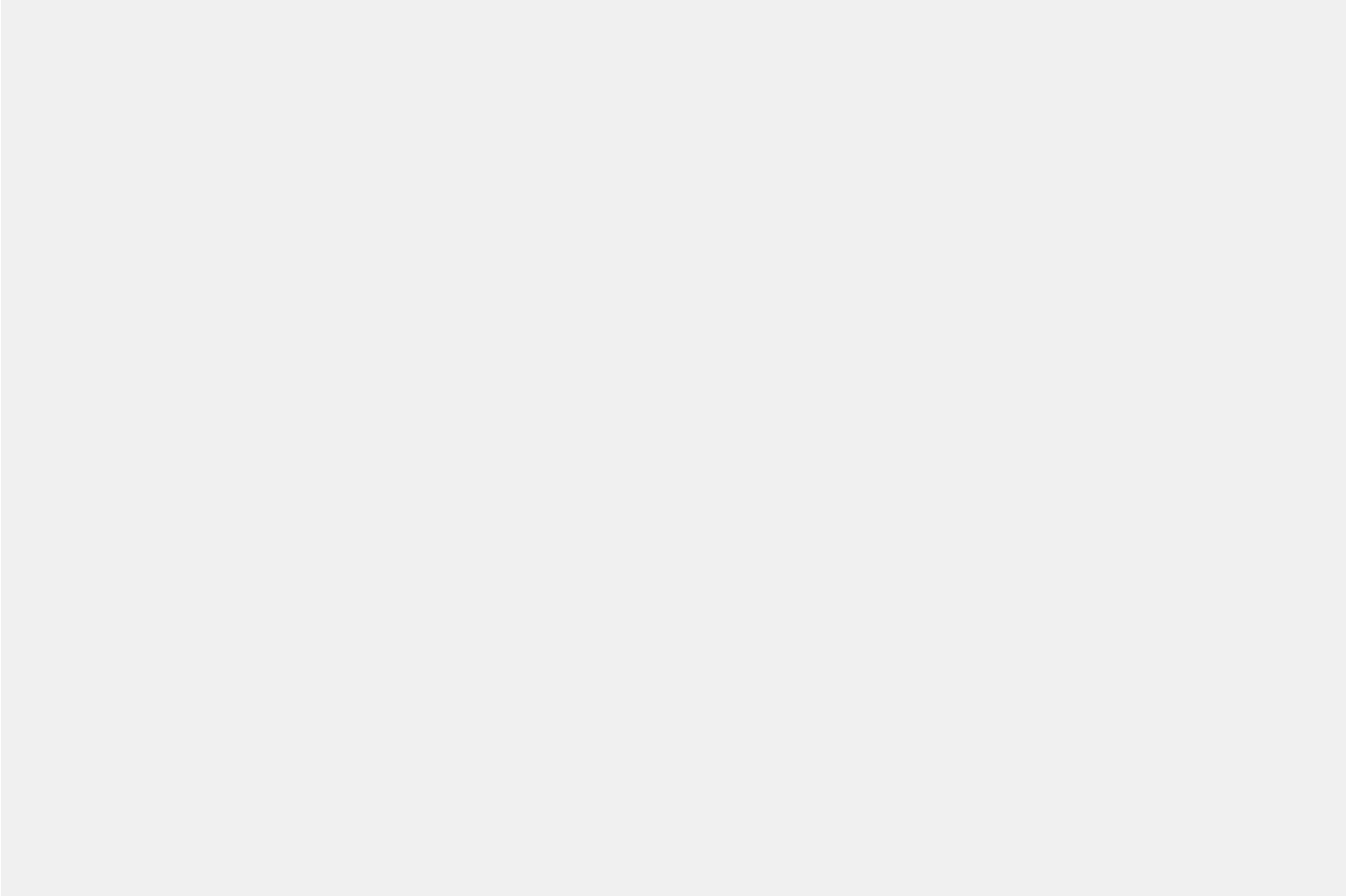
CYBERSECURITY

Hundreds of Instagram users are desperately attempting to contact the photo-sharing application to help regain access to hacked accounts. In a wave of fresh intrusions today, users complain that names, passwords and email addresses are being altered.

Frustrated Instagrammers are messaging the official Twitter account to ask for assistance. Each case appears to show the same type of cyberattack, with email information being changed to show Russian domains. On Reddit, threads are surfacing with identical complaints.

Instagram did not immediately respond to a request for comment. One impacted user called Keri told *Newsweek* that the trouble started on August 12 when she was logged out without warning. “When I tried to log back in it said my password was wrong,” Keri explained Tuesday.

“When I requested the email link to reset my password Instagram told me that there was no account associated with my username, email, or phone number,” she added. “With the help of a friend I later found out that someone had changed my username, email, and phone number on my account, but they had not deleted any of my posts nor had they created any new posts.



A visitor takes a picture of the Instagram application logo at the Young Entrepreneurs fair in Paris, France, February 7, 2018.

REUTERS/CHARLES PLATIAU

Keri continued: “The email address that is now in use for my account, I know it ends in .ru. They also changed my profile picture and deleted my biography.”

Asked about the response, she said: “I haven’t heard a word from Instagram. I even made [a new account] to report my old account and I haven’t heard anything from them about that either.” Keri's report was almost identical to hundreds of other victims, with social media awash with such stories. The issues—which started in early August—were first reported by Mashable.

Instagram’s official Twitter account has not responded to the mounting tweets.

It says on its help page that users can report hacked accounts via the application’s menu—but users are noting that its automated systems are non-responsive, slow or unreachable.

“All your advice online is for once I’m within the account,” one victim tweeted. “What happens when you’re hacked and can’t get into it anymore?” Another victim wrote on Tuesday: “How

can I get my account back? Please help...your support team are not responding to messages!"

Typically, anyone concerned about such intrusions would be advised to enable two-factor authentication. However, in this instance Mashable discovered that some users who had it turned on were also impacted. It remains unknown how the hackers are breaking into accounts.

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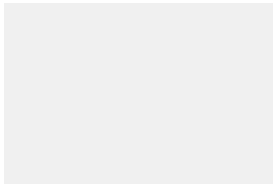


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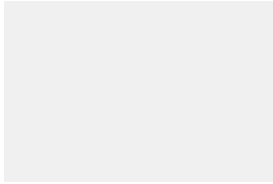
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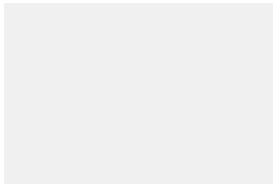
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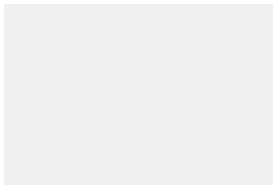


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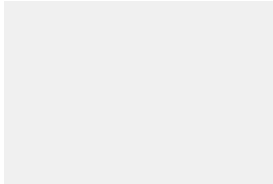


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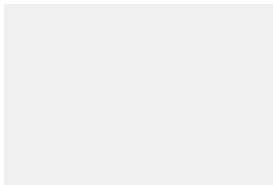
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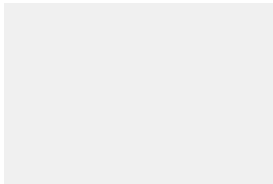
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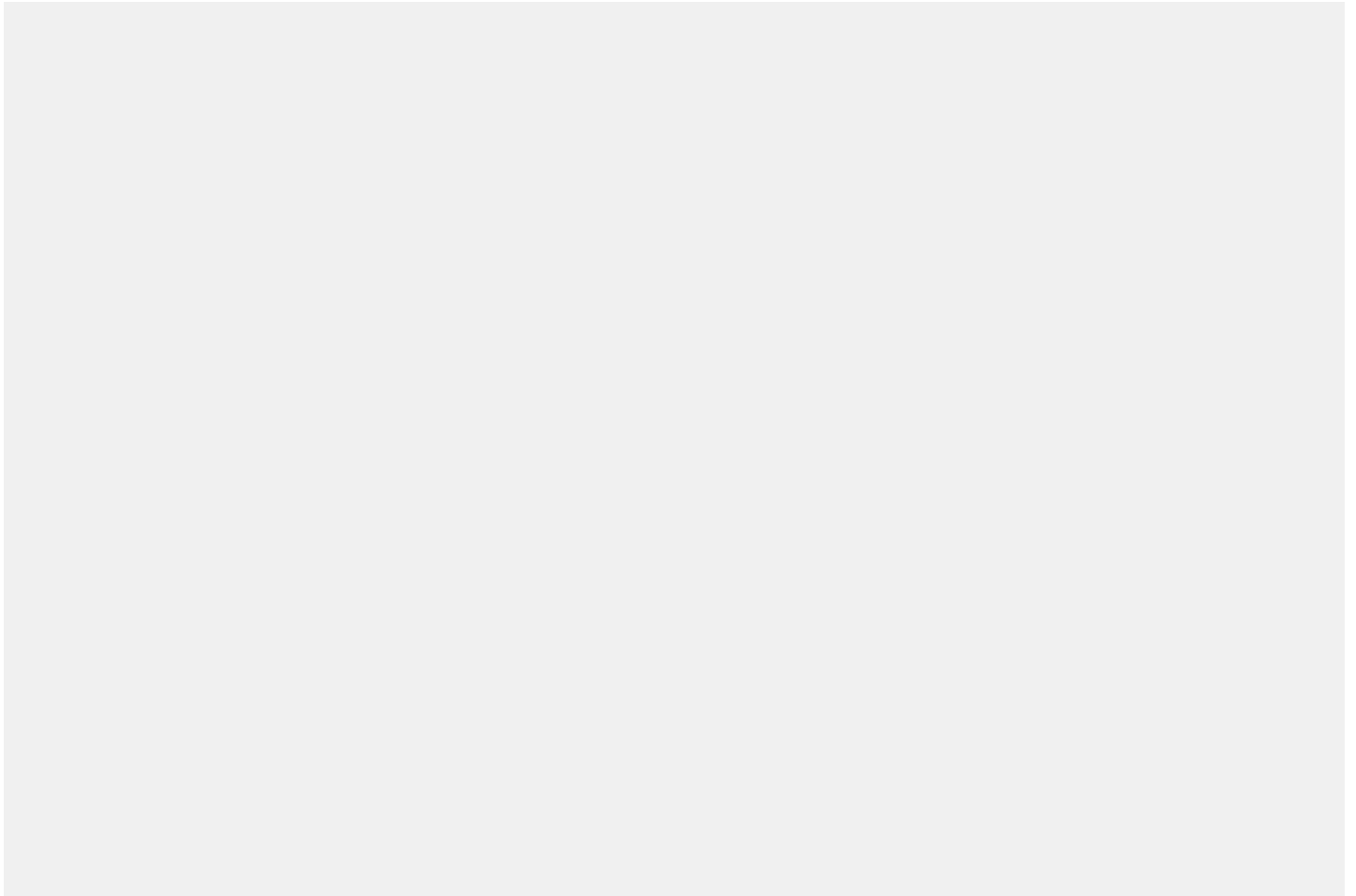


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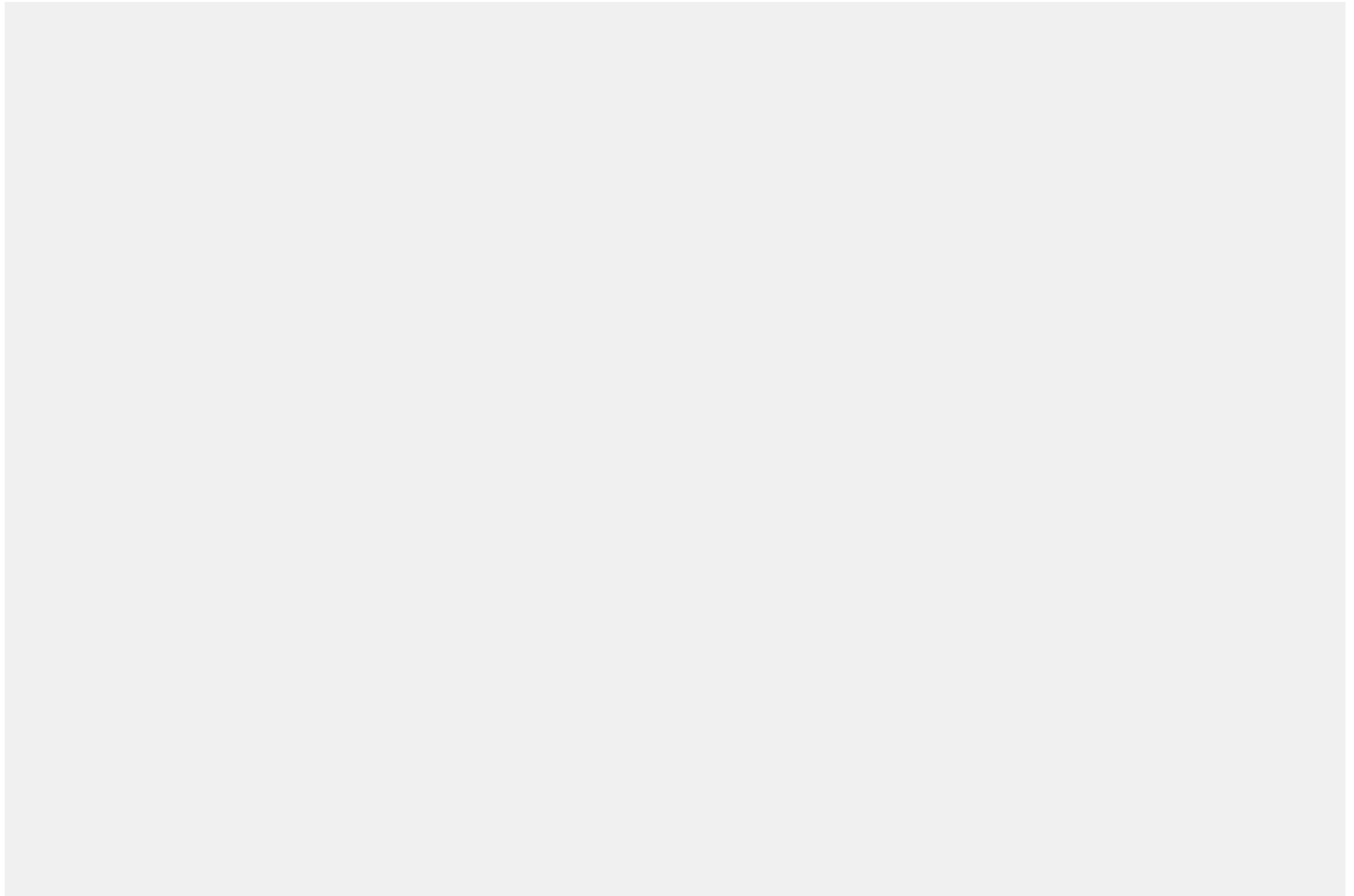


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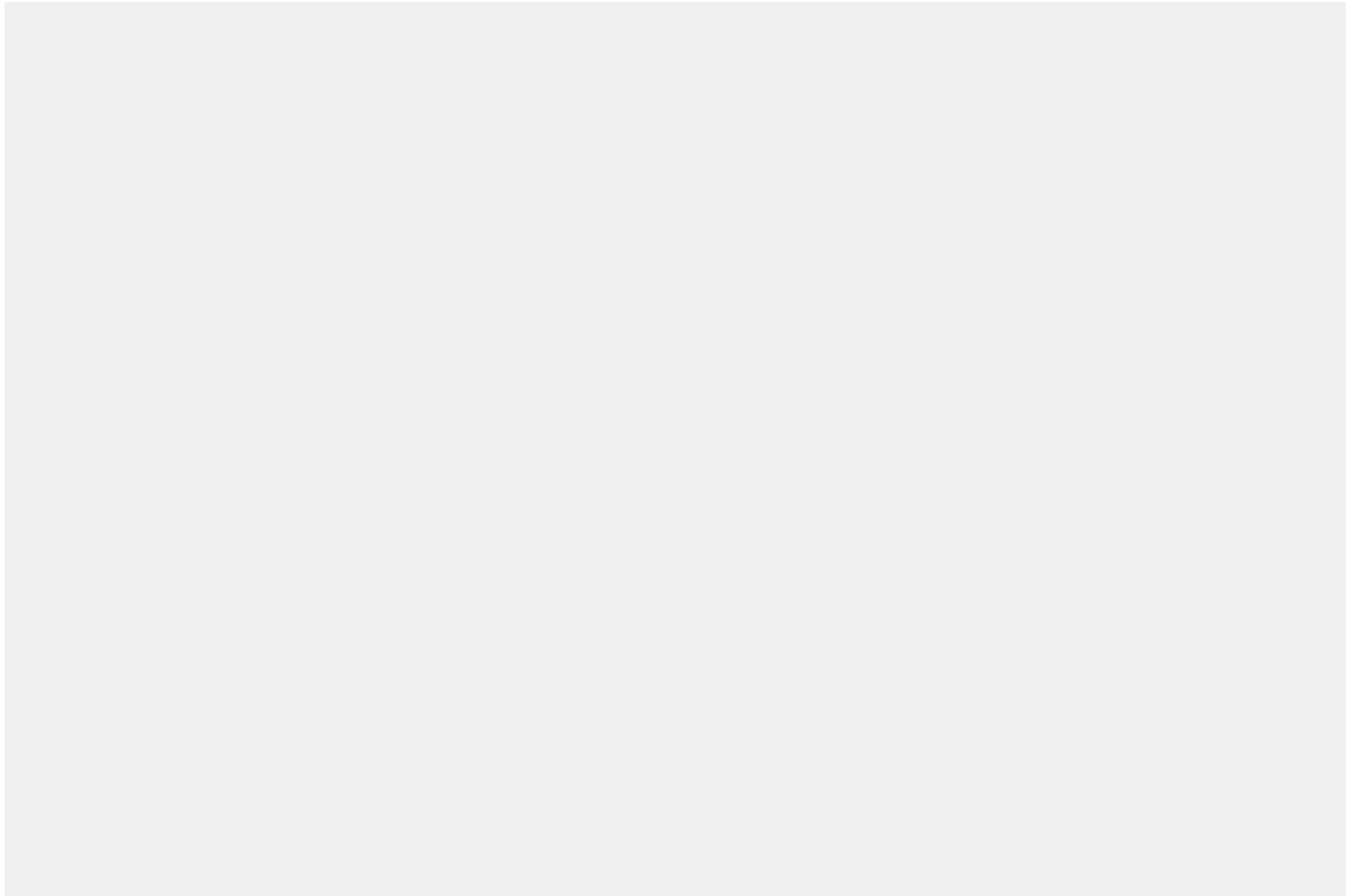
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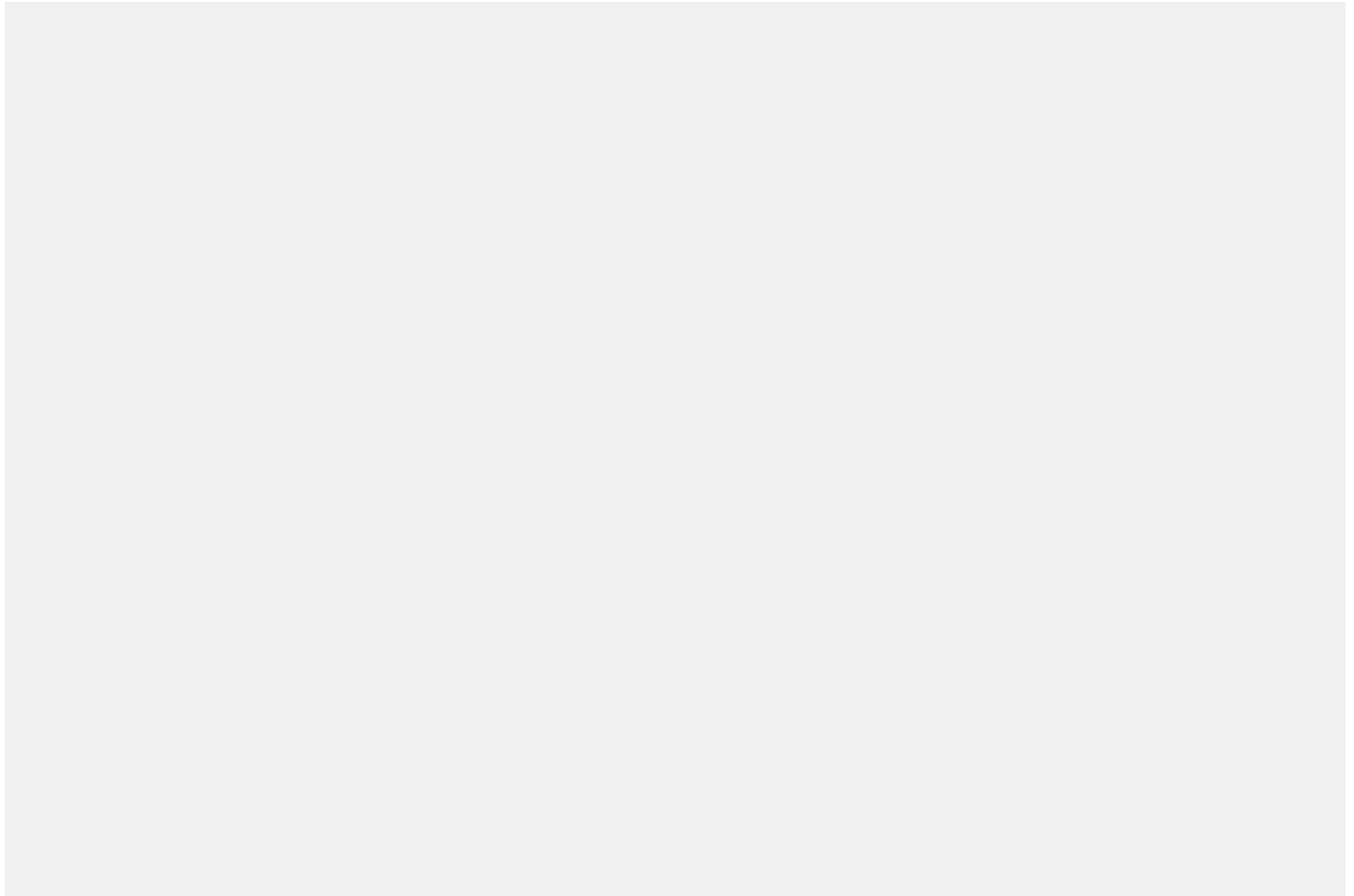
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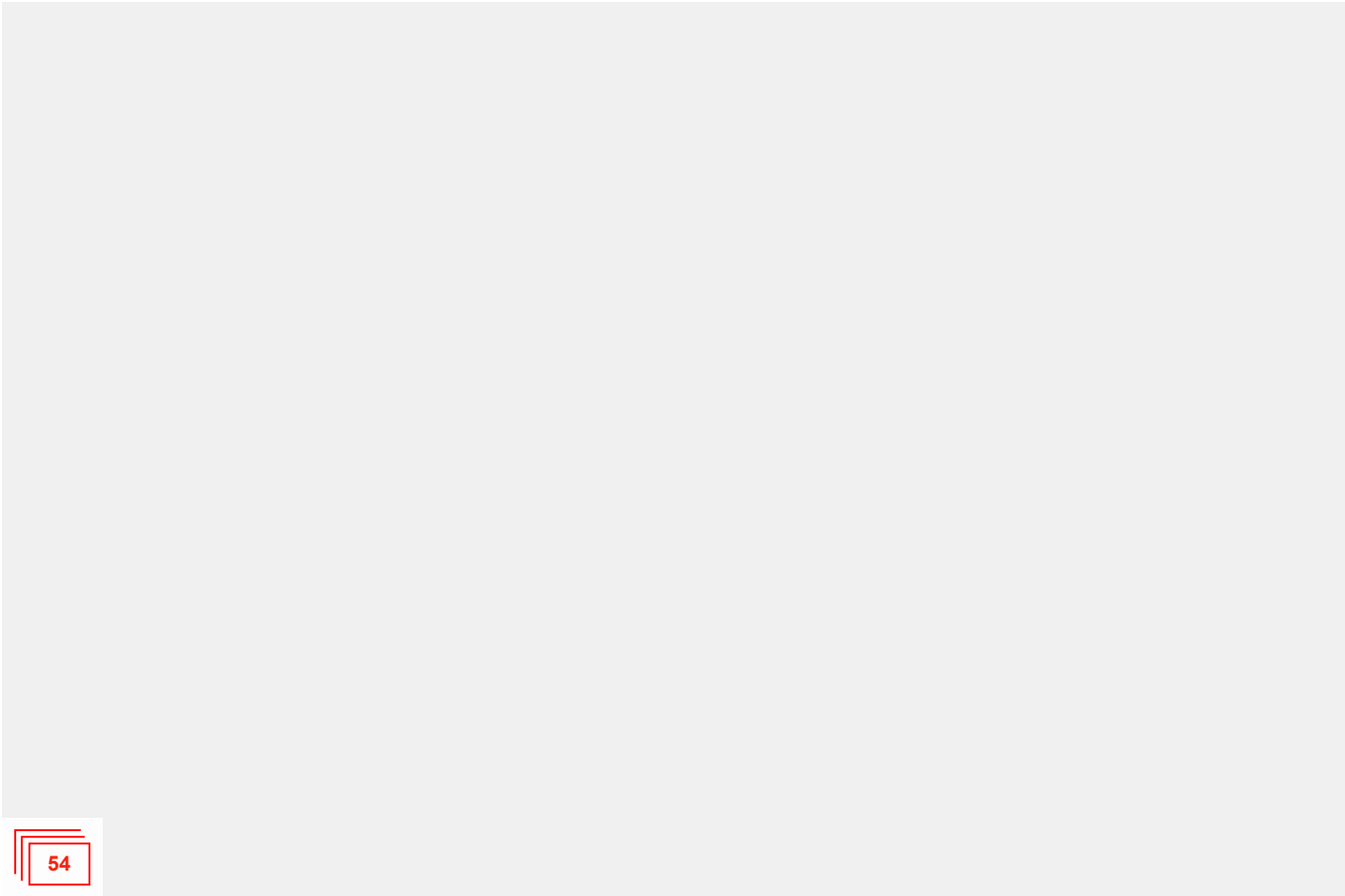


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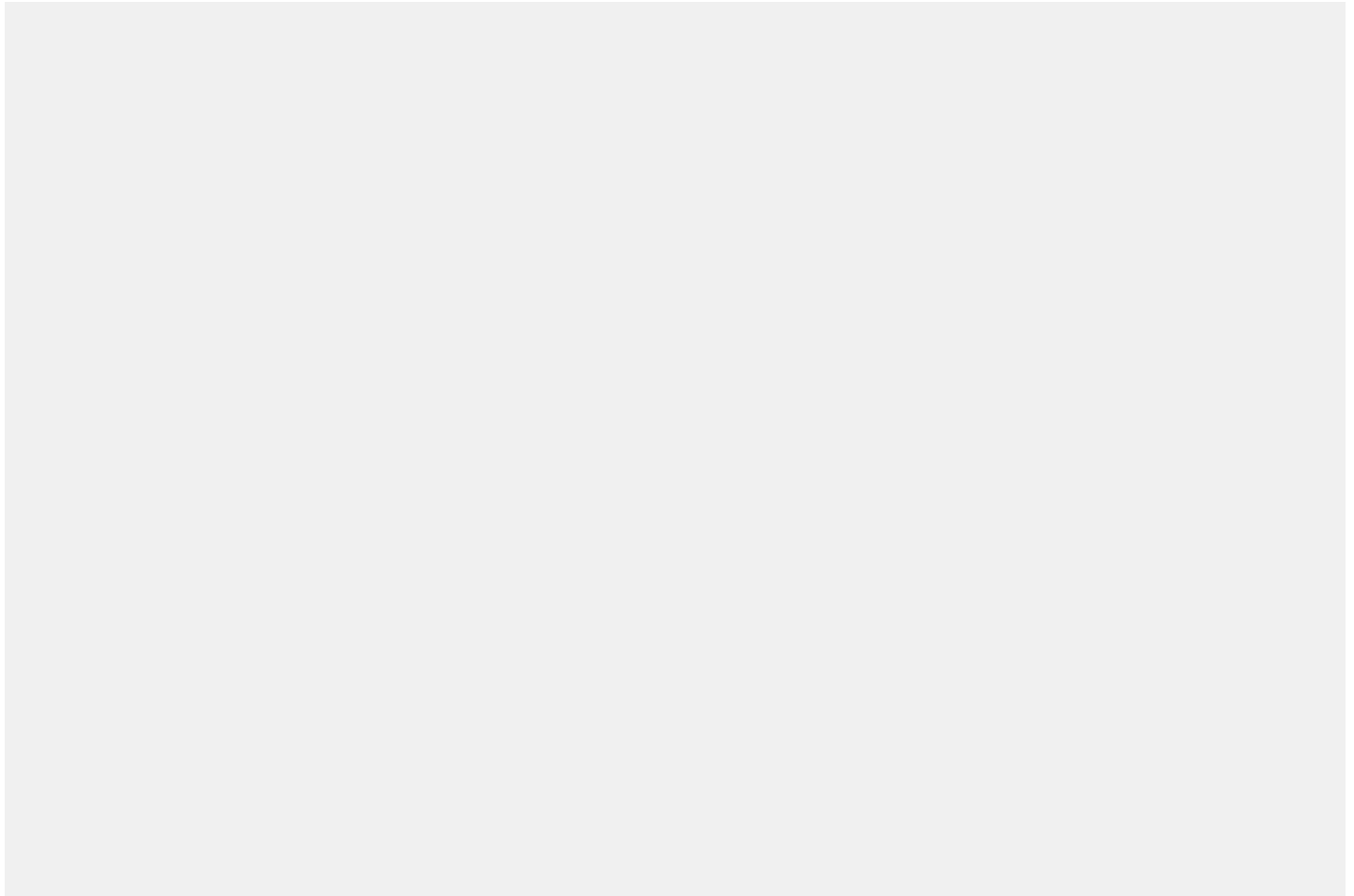
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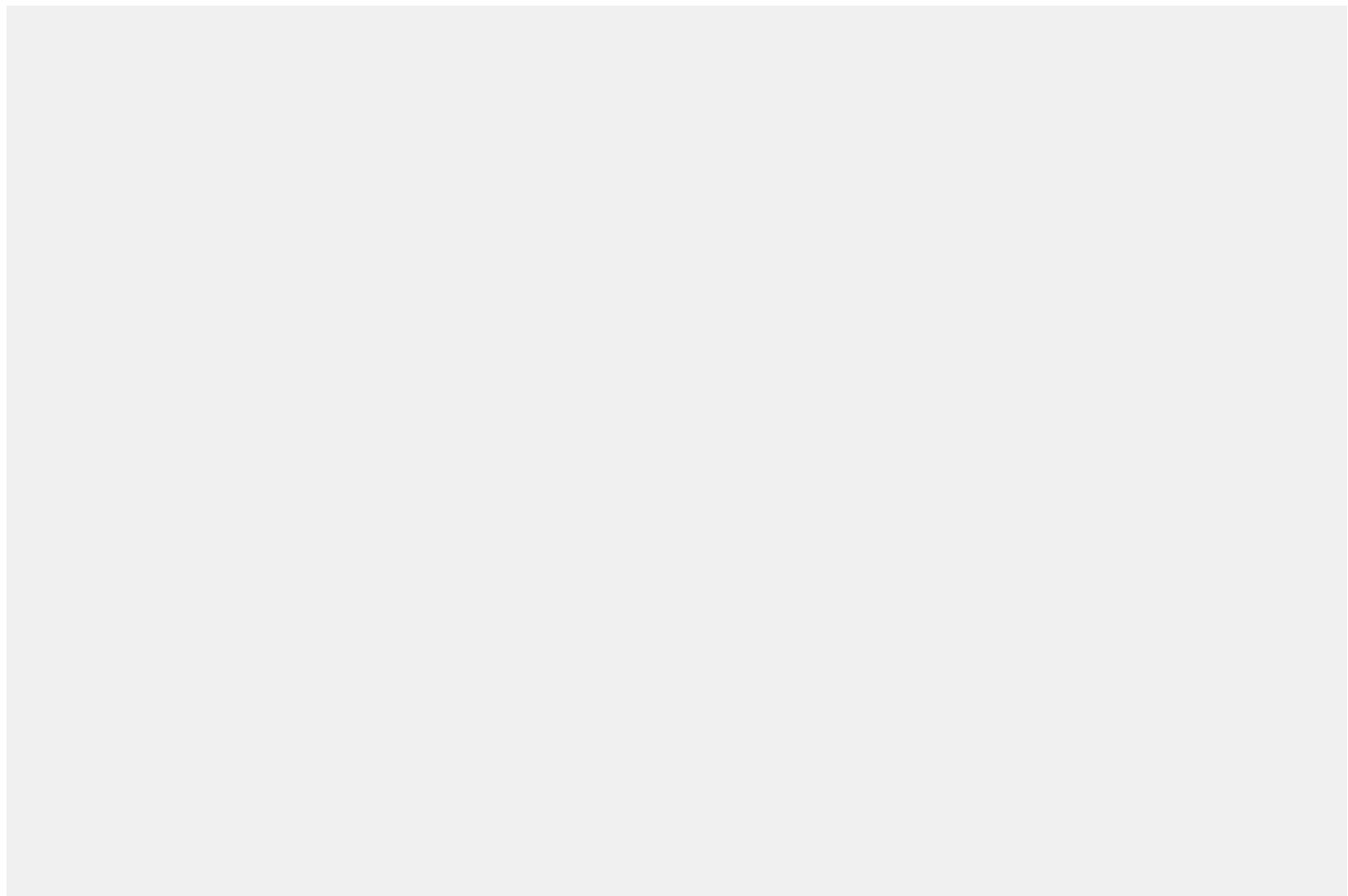
The U.S. alleged that Syria and Russia used tear gas in a "false flag" attack that came one day before border patrol used the substance at the border.



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