

Memorandum on Action by Federal Agencies To Safeguard Against Internet Attacks

March 3, 2000

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Action by Federal Agencies to Safeguard Against Internet Attacks

America and the world have benefited tremendously from the amazing advances we have seen with the Internet and computer technology. But with every new technological advance there are new challenges, and we must meet them—both Government and the private sector—in partnership.

Following recent Internet disruptions, I met with experts and leaders of the information technology industry so we could work together to maximize the promise of the Internet, while minimizing the risks. These Internet disruptions highlight how important computer networks have become to our daily lives; and how

vulnerabilities can create risks for all—including the Federal Government.

Accordingly, I ask that each Cabinet Secretary and agency head renew their efforts to safeguard their department or agency's computer systems against denial-of-service attacks on the Internet. Within legal and administrative limits, attention should also be paid to contractors providing services. The Federal Computer Incident Response Center (FEDCirc) and the National Infrastructure Protection Center (NIPC) have available software tools to assist you in these efforts.

I have asked my Chief of Staff, John Podesta, to coordinate a review of Federal Government vulnerabilities in this regard and to report back to me by April 1.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Exchange With Reporters in San Jose

March 3, 2000

2000 Presidential Election

Q. Mr. President, what do you think of the idea of a Gore-Feinstein ticket?

The President. I think very highly of it. And I think she is immensely talented and would be good at anything. But this is a decision that the Vice President should make after he wins the nomination. And it's not done yet. So I would recommend that all these questions be deferred until after we know for sure that he's the nominee, and then you should ask him.

Q. How would you assess the Republican strategy using you to tarnish their Presidential candidates? How do you assess it?

The President. I don't know. You know, they've got to do what they've got to do. I wish—when I saw the Vice President and Senator Bradley in their last debate, I know that the conventional wisdom was, it wasn't very interesting because they agreed on too much. But what I thought is, how fortunate we are to have people that know that much and care that much

about things that will actually affect people's lives, instead of grab the day's headlines.

And I thought there was quite a remarkable contrast between the substantive level of knowledge and discussion in that debate and the one I heard last night. That's the only observation I want to make. I shouldn't—they can run their own campaigns. They don't need to have me commenting. I shouldn't get in the way of the Republicans or the Democrats right now. I'm not running. I'm enjoying watching it.

Q. But is this a campaign—[inaudible].

The President. Well, time will tell, won't it? The voters are in charge in this deal, not me.

Maine Initiative on the Digital Divide

Q. Can I clarify? The seventh graders who are going to get the laptops, can you tell me more about—

The President. Oh, yes. That's Maine. It's a great story. Angus King in Maine, it's great,

he's got a system to give every seventh grader in the State—[inaudible].

NOTE: The exchange began at 12:30 p.m. at the Novell Headquarters. In his remarks, the Presi-

dent referred to Senator Dianne Feinstein; former Senator Bill Bradley; and Gov. Angus S. King, Jr., of Maine. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in San Francisco, California

March 3, 2000

Thank you very much. The first thing I would like to say to all of you, after thank you for the warm welcome, is that this is not the first time I have come here to campaign for Senator Feinstein's reelection. In fact, I'm an old hand at this. I came here in '94 to campaign for Senator Feinstein's reelection, and she stayed in Washington. I had to do it all by myself. [Laughter] So it's nice to be here with the evidence of my argument. I thank you very much.

I also want to thank Senator Barbara Boxer and Stu for being here, and Representative Barbara Lee, who is also off to a very fast start. The women from California in the Senate and the House have defied all of the preconceptions about how long it takes to become effective in the Congress. It could have something to do with that practical instinct of worrying more about what you're doing than where you're sitting. And they have really, really done a good job.

I thank the McCarthys for chairing this event. And as you said, I can't remember anybody who ever got more done in her first term in the Senate than Dianne Feinstein. And I want you to know, I'm here for many reasons—and I'm not running for anything—[laughter]—and on most days I'm okay with it. [Laughter] But I care a great deal about not whether we're going to change but how we're going to change and where we're going from here.

And one of the things that I always admired about Dianne Feinstein and her husband, Dick—who's been giving me training in how to be a Senate spouse—[laughter]—Stu Boxer and Dick and I decided that we would start right now planning for next year. We're looking for a fourth—[laughter]—for golf, for tea, for whatever; we're open. [Laughter] Life's funny, isn't it? I mean, really, it's great. [Laughter]

Let me say, one of the things that I really admire, maybe the thing I admire most about Dianne Feinstein is, first of all, she cares about a lot of things. How many conversations have we had about China, about Tibet, about different parts of the world; about saving the California redwoods, which meant a lot to me, too; about setting aside the desert—now we have two national parks—it's meant a lot to me, too; about taking on this gun issue, which I started to try to do with the Brady bill concept as Governor more than 16 years ago, and I backed off, to my everlasting regret. When I became President, I promised myself as long as I was standing I would do it. And she's been a great ally, and I thank her for that.

But one thing that Dianne does that sometimes politicians in both parties, especially when you get in Washington and you get all caught up in this atmosphere, you know, and you spend all your time watching talk shows—[laughter]—do you realize that if you've got a halfway good cable selection, you don't ever have to watch anything but talk shows anymore? [Laughter] And do you realize, to get on one, all you have to do is take a firm position and never change your mind, and it's better if you don't know anything. [Laughter] Actually, if you have any evidence, any background, any real policy knowledge, it's a terrific encumbrance because you're supposed to be shouting to great effect on these programs. [Laughter] Now, we're all laughing, but you know it's pretty close to the truth. [Laughter]

And Dianne, you know, she's like me. We're still under the illusion that when you elect us to these things, they're actually jobs, and we're supposed to get up and go to work every day. And like your job, it yields to effort. I mean, it really makes a difference if you pass a few