

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,