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OPEN SOURCE SOLUTIONS, Inc.  
*International Public Information Clearinghouse*

23 August 1994

Mr. Marty Harris  
Assistant Director for Systems Security  
Department of the Treasury  
Room 3090, Treasury Annex  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Mr. Harris,

It was a privilege to testify to the NII Security Committee, and I appreciate very much your inclusion of our non-profit educational corporation on the agenda.

When I completed my testimony, a member of the Committee, Ms. Esther Dawson, noted my recommendation that one billion dollars a year be realigned from the existing budget, for what I call "electronic rear area security", and asked me to inform the Committee about specific recommended obligations. I did not have the details with me at the time, but am pleased to provide the Committee with the attached cross-walk of three experts' written proposals, all of which are attached as supporting documentation.

I have subsequently adopted Mr. Winn Schwartau's recommendations as my own baseline but believe that both of the other experts have important insights to contribute. I believe very strongly that legislation is not a panacea for bad engineering, and that the government must establish high security standards for the entire communications and computing industry, and then hold to those standards--as "FOUO" puts it, no bail-outs.

During my keynote speech on 13 August 1994 to just over 1,400 hackers associated with *2600: The Hacker Quarterly* and/or *Hac-tic* (its European counterpart), I suggested that they write the book on C4 vulnerability, and provide the government with chapter and verse on where each specific communications and computing system is vulnerable. As a former member of the Information Handling Committee of the intelligence community, as well as a member of the Advanced Information Processing and Analysis Steering Group of the Intelligence Research & Development Council, I am not satisfied that we have a good understanding of the totality of our

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vulnerability. We are also politically handicapped because those that do understand these matters generally conceal their losses and/or hide behind a classified compartment. As one of those testifying to the Committee noted (I believe he was a former National Security Agency officer), it is both a political and an economic mistake to classify the C4 threat, for it prevents public and legislative understanding of the magnitude of the threat, and the urgent need for concerted action across both government and private sector lines.

When Tom Clancy is so bold as to write about the electronic melt-down of Wall Street (my friend Winn Schwartau's novel *Terminal Compromise* may well have provided Clancy with his ideas), we have a problem that needs Presidential leadership. It is time for us to shed some light on the fact that we have a house built over a sinkhole, and resting on nothing more than an egg-shell of badly engineered systems (including the planned NII backbone).

Information warfare (and information defense) is not my primary area of interest, although I keep getting pulled into it because of my good relations with the three major hacker communities, each of which I find intellectually stimulating. Most of my attention is devoted to articulating the need for a national information strategy, and to the reinvention of intelligence. Should you have any additional questions regarding these security recommendations, I urge you and the Committee to communicate directly with the three experts who kindly provided me with the benefit of their combined wisdom.

Warm regards,



Robert D. Steele  
President

Copy to:

Mr. Leon Fuerth  
Ms. Sally Katzen  
Dr. Michael Nelson  
Mr. Emmett Paige, Jr.  
Mr. Anthony Wu  
Mr. Kirk McConnell  
"FOUO"  
Mr. Winn Schwartau  
Dr. William Caelli

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