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OpenBSD loses funding due to anti-war statements

By Online Staff
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The US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) has stopped providing funding for a project which involves OpenBSD, apparently because OpenBSD lead developer Theo de Raadt made statements which could be considered anti-war to a Canadian newspaper.

OpenBSD is one of a number of free Unices which are increasingly being used on servers due to their reputation for security. NetBSD and FreeBSD are two others; they all have a common base in a project which began at the University of California in Berkeley and had the name Berkeley Sofwtare Distribution.

A good part of the $US2.3 million grant from DARPA, the research and development arm of the US military who in 1970 set up what evolved into the internet, has already been used by de Raadt even though he was not very happy about the source.

Canada's Globe and Mail quoted him as saying: "I actually am fairly uncomfortable about it, even if our firm stipulation was that they cannot tell us what to do. We are simply doing what we do anyways - securing software - and they have no say in the matter. I try to convince myself that our grant means a half of a cruise missile doesn't get built."

The money was provided to the Portable Open-Source Security Enhancements project run at the University of Pennsylvania.

De Raadt told Infoworld that two days before the funding was stopped, he received a call from Jonathan Smith, the University of Pennsylvania computer science professor in charge of the project there.

Smith told de Raadt that several people at the university and DARPA were uncomfortable with de Raadt's anti-war comments.

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DARPA still claims it is only reviewing funding to the project. De Raadt now says he will depend on donations as he was doing before the grant was provided. OpenBSD has been released every six months and version 3.3 is due for release in May.

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