THE UNITED STATES PRESIDENTIAL CABINET

Committee: The United States Presidential Cabinet
Topic: Vulnerability and Insecurity of the Government on IT in the 21st Century
Moderator: Alejandra De la Fuente Montemayor
President: Diego Hernández Zuñiga
Assistant Director: Ariadne Gutiérrez Arreola
Assistant Director: Yolanda Ramírez Tamez
Assistant Director: Jessica Benavides García
Research Limit: October 2018

Fellow representatives,

It is an honor to welcome you to MUNterrey 2019. We are very excited to have you here with us in this simulation. We will make sure all of you have a great time, and we can guarantee you that during this simulation, you will learn skills that will help you throughout your life. You will get to know people with different opinions and perspectives on life, but you should try to keep an open mind, in order for you to find well-structured solutions.

Our goal is that after this simulation, you will have acquired a better knowledge of how the world works, and have a new perspective on life. We encourage you to do your best in these few days and most importantly, enjoy this experience. If you have any questions, don't hesitate on contacting us, we will do our best to help you. Change begins with you, and remember that as long as you prepare and commit, you'll be successful in both this debate and in your life. If you have any doubts, please contact us at uspc@munterrey.info and we'll gladly answer any question.

Thank you and good luck,

Moderator: Alejandra De la Fuente Montemayor
President: Diego Hernández Zuñiga
Assistant Director: Ariadne Gutiérrez Arreola
Assistant Director: Yolanda Ramírez Tamez
Assistant Director: Jessica Benavides García
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Committee Introduction

The United States Presidential Cabinet along with United States president make up the executive branch of the federal government. The authority for the creation of the United States Presidential Cabinet was conceded in Article II Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution. The article states that the president can request "the opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices." It gives the President authority to seek for external advisors. As advisors of the president, only the president of the United States can appoint the members inside the cabinet. Then, the members of the Senate confirm each member that is appointed in the cabinet.

The president meets regularly with the cabinet to discuss strategies that will resolve everything from financial crises to foreign affairs. The agenda for each cabinet meeting is developed by the White House Chief of Staff, who is the primary connection between the 15 executive departments and the White House. To prepare for each meeting, the Chief of Staff meets with the head of each executive department and their staffs to identify the main issues that require the attention of the whole cabinet. Emergency cabinet meetings can also be held if the president thinks it is essential. Cabinet meetings are private, and they are also the only time in which the president, vice president, and all executive officers are found in the same room. After formal cabinet meetings end, the press is invited in to take pictures and record the president's remarks on what was concluded.

Quorum

- **Administrator of the Small Business Administration / Linda E. McMahon:** Linda McMahon advocates for independent small businesses. This organism works as a federal agency that advocates on behalf of the 30 million small businesses in the United States.
- **Attorney General / Jeff Sessions:** The Attorney General is the director of the United States Department of Justice.

- **Director of National Intelligence / Daniel Coats:** Daniel Coats is the head of the security intelligence community, which oversees the implementation of the NI program and provides advice to the U.S. in the Security Council.

- **Director of the Central Intelligence Agency / Gina Haspel:** Gina Haspel serves as the president's chief intelligence advisor, meaning that she has to inform the president about foreign intelligence, so that decisions of national security are well taken.

- **Director of the Office of Management and Budget / Mick Mulvaney:** Mick Mulvey is in charge of administering and managing the budget for federal agencies and overseeing their performances.

- **Secretary of Agriculture / Sonny Perdue:** This secretary administers the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) executes and develops policies regarding farming, food and agricultural means. They promote the agricultural trade and production, protecting natural resources and ending hunger in America and abroad. The USDA also has an important role in overseas aid programs by providing food to developing countries.

- **Secretary of Commerce / Wilbur L. Ross, Jr.:** The Secretary's task is to improve Americans living standards by promoting technological innovation and economic development. The department ensures the effective use of scientific and technical resources and formulates telecommunications and technology policies.

- **Secretary of Defense / James Mattis:** The Secretary of Defense is the advisor to the president for the security policies both nationally and internationally. He has control over the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, as well as many agencies. It's his job to provide security in the US and to deter war by executing and developing policies that concern the national security and military affairs of the nation.

- **Secretary of Education / Elisabeth Prince DeVos:** This secretary is an advocate for the Department of Education. Its mission is to promote student achievement and prepare the nation for competition in a global economy by ensuring equal access to educational opportunity. They collect data on America's schools to improve education quality.

- **Secretary of Energy / James Richard Perry:** This department ensures that energy helps the security in America and that new energy technology is used on public places. He administers the Department of Energy (DOE), which has the mission to advance the national, economic, and energy security of the United States.
- **Secretary of Health and Human Services / Alex Azar:** The Secretary of Health and Human Services is in charge of all the policies related to health. The department provides essential human services, especially for those who don't have a lot of resources.
- **Secretary of Homeland Security / Kirstjen Nielsen:** The secretary is an agent of security for the people inside the country and enforces immigration laws. The mission of the department is to prevent and disrupt terrorist attacks and recover from disturbances that occur.
- **Secretary of Housing and Urban Development / Dr. Benjamin S. Carson:** This secretary advises the president on the security and issues regarding housing and cities. The department is responsible for programs and national policies that develop and improve the nation's communities.
- **Secretary of the Interior / Ryan Zinke:** This secretary is responsible to protect the natural resources of the US as well as native-americans and their cultural heritage. He is the head of the Department of the Interior, which is the nation's principal conservation agency.
- **Secretary of Labor / Alexander Acosta:** This secretary, who is head of the Department of Labor, seeks the welfare of the U.S citizens on their workplace and salary. They oversee programs that addresses job training and safe working conditions, for ensuring a strong American workforce.
- **Secretary of State / Michael R. Pompeo:** The secretary of state is the President's principal foreign policy advisor and conducts negotiations with foreign affairs. Its main responsibilities consist of countering international crime, foreign assistance, representation abroad, and foreign military training programs.
- **Secretary of Transportation / Elaine L. Chao:** This secretary oversees that the US borders and highways are secure and functioning. The department looks to enhance the quality of life of the American people by having a convenient and accessible transportation system.

- **Secretary of the Treasury / Steven T. Mnuchin:** This secretary is in charge of the economic politics and the administration of the country's financials. It's Mnuchin's job to keep national security by solving economic threats.
- **Secretary of Veterans Affairs / Robert Wilkie:** Responsible for administering programs that help veterans, their families and survivors. These include life insurance, rehabilitation, medical care, education, survivor support, and more benefits.
- **Vice President / Michael R. Pence:** The Vice President serves as the president's top advisor, and his main responsibility is to be ready to assume the Presidency if the President is unable or unfit to execute his duties. He also serves as the President of the United States Senate, where he or she has the power to have the deciding vote in case of a tie.

Topic Introduction

Nowadays, there has been an increase in the IT development, implementation, and usage in society, government, environment, among others. IT is defined as the study, design, support or maintenance of computer-based information systems. These systems have become essential in peoples' daily activities, and have an important role within organizations, companies, and even the government. Due to the increment of IT around the world, communication, and technology in health, education, business, home and leisure, government and environment has improved. However, this has led to the government becoming more vulnerable in aspects of security and privacy since there are people and organizations that make secondary usage of the information with intrusion, surveillance and uncontrolled information. The government of the United States of America, one of the strongest countries, is constantly being targeted. New, strong protocols for privacy protection need to be developed since countries such as Russia have been trying to hack databases and the Pentagon.

Over the years the cyber attacks have been increasing constantly, leaving the government in a state of vulnerability. Attacks have been done with a variety of techniques such as cracking, vulnerability scanner, the use of malware, among others. These cyber-attacks put the government at risk as important and confidential

information can be leaked or exposed to the public. Throughout recent years, there have been reports of information leaks, system hacking, and the stealing of personal data, mainly targeting highly sensitive information in the government database. Whether the purpose is to show private information of the media and cause controversy, sell information, or use it against the government, cyber attacks are increasing rapidly and becoming a critical threat to modern society.

The US government has experience fighting against these type of affairs and therefore, has established teams within the country to fight cyber-attacks. As well they have trained people and also, purchased cyber insurance for an efficient way to predict and be ready for attacks. Regardless of their efforts, the attacks involving the IT are still happening severely and, with technology advancing every day, a wide range of issues arise, making it harder for the government to control the situation and entering a state of vulnerability.

Topic Background

Randy Seuss and Ward Christiansen, created the first personal computer bulletin board system in 1978, which still operates nowadays. Moreover, by 1980, hacking was becoming more serious, since the personal computer was announced by IBM (they carried CPU, software, memory, storage, etc), there was a massive increase of computer units over the 80's at the USA, by 1986 there were 30 million units.

The first edition of 2600 "The hacker quarterly" is published 1984, and two years later, the "Computer Fraud and Abuse Act",which its purpose is to protect computers operated by the US government, passed in the USA and Robert Morris was the first convicted by this act because of the development of first computer worms. In 1990, LOD and MOD were still on an online warfare, trespassing computers, jamming phone lines, monitoring calls, etc, until both of the member groups were sent to jail and ended this warfare era.

In the year 2001, Gary McKinnon hacked 97 seven military and Nasa Computers, modifying and deleting data, encouraging other people such as Adrian Lomo to hack The New York Times website. Since, the competition between hackers, and Jason Smather,

who stole 92 million customers information and sold it to spammers, causing 7 billion email spams.
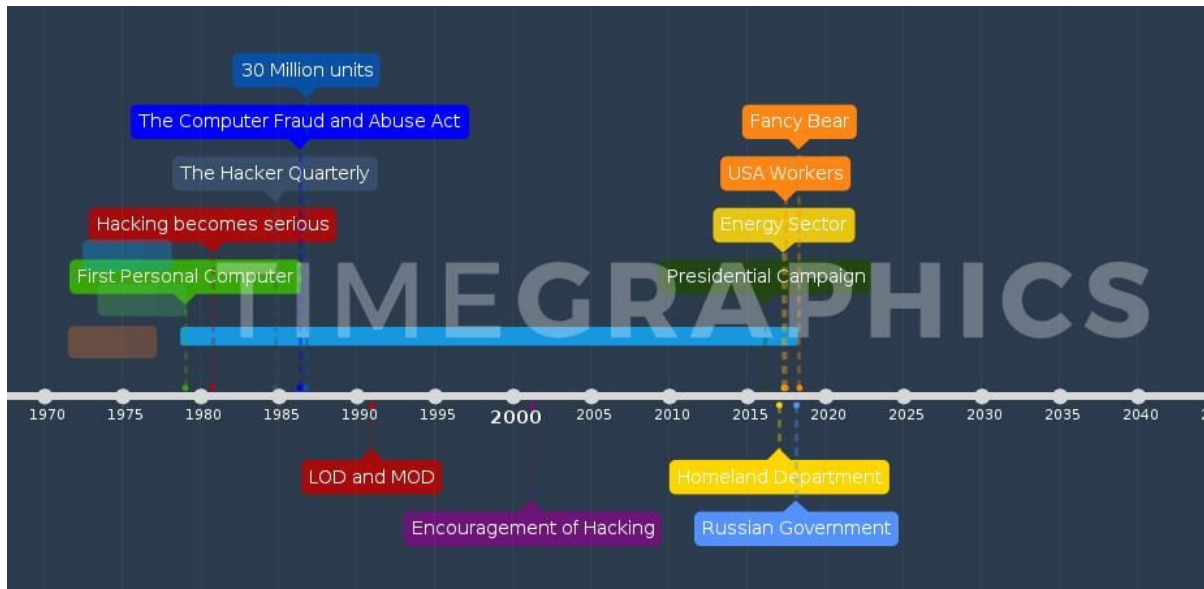
USPC Actions

The United States Presidential Cabinet on the past has decided to invest in research to develop more IT and maintain it inside the government's intelligence. The current office has placed more effective defenses against the updated Information Technology that radical groups have been creating, to enter the government. Furthermore, cybercrime and systematic hacking have been two of the main struggles for the USPC, evidently, actions like security barriers, isolated networks, and schedule password change have been implemented into governmental facilities inside the united states and in its embassies. Equally important, the authenticity of workers inside the facilities, public areas and border patrols have been a case that the USPC has been taking into consideration since it there have been attacks because of the lack of authenticity and security barriers on IT and its workers. Consequently, the government decided to add more security filters that are involved with the old fashioned way, meaning having manual security filters.

Current Situation

1. In 2017 hackers attacked in the energy sector by damaging companies that service the bigger corporations that are in charge of energy supply.

2. The Department of Homeland Security and FBI said that the hackers attack energy companies by a multi-stage intrusion, planting malware and launching spear-phishing campaigns to steal employees, credentials online to have hackers into bigger companies. And Senator John McCain claims that "the Kremlin has been trying to map the U.S telecoms infrastructure" and by saying these he believes that the telecoms infrastructure is at risk of hacking.

3. The Russian hacker group known as Fancy Bear attacked the computers of the Democratic National Committee, publicly exposing research on the opposition, private emails of Democratic politicians and internal memos. Furthermore, the CIA confirmed that these DNC hacks were done to help Trump to win the presidency, and affect the electoral system accuracy and confidence.

4. In the first months of 2018, the scanning and probing of the registration databases were confirmed to had taken place and originated from the Russian government by the Secretary of Homeland Security; in states such as Alaska, California, Illinois, and Texas.

5. 87 U.S. defense workers' email was hacked by the same group regarding the political campaigns, these people were involved in work on missiles, drones, rockets, fighter jets, cloud-computing platforms or other sensitive activities, according to the Associated Press, and their emails could potentially have exposed some of the U.S. military's most advanced defense programs, and compromising the national security.

6. Fancy Bear appeared to step up hack attempts on U.S. government computers. Also attributed to the group is an attack targeting members of the U.S. Senate, using spear-phishing techniques to target users directly with personal details. Part of the attack involved setting up fake websites that mimicked the U.S. Senate email system in an attempt to capture users' credentials.

Guiding Questions

- In which ways is your department involved in this ongoing issue?
- What has your department done to contribute to the solution of this topic?
- Have there been any improvements regarding the topic? If so, which ones?
- In which ways is this issue affecting the country?
- How has your department contributed to the security of IT?
- How has your department been affected by the topic?
- Which are the main vulnerabilities that your department has faced regarding IT?
- In what areas should the Cabinet focus to resolve these problems?

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