PFIR Radio

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People For Internet Responsibility (PFIR, <http://www.pfir.org>) was founded in 1999 by two highly respected and experienced Internet professionals, Lauren Weinstein and Peter G. Neumann, creators and moderators of the PRIVACY Forum <http://www.vortex.com/privacy> and the RISKS Forum <http://catless.ncl.ac.uk/Risks>, respectively.

PFIR focuses on difficult decisions affecting "domain name policy, spam, security, encryption, freedom of speech issues, privacy, content rating and filtering" and others to come. The moderators are voices of reason in an ocean of ill-considered babble.

The interesting and provocative position papers offered from their home page include the following:

* Terrorism, Civil Liberties, and the Internet (23-September-2001)
* Top-Level Domain "Ghettoization" Proposals (9-Mar-2001)
* The Coming Electoral Blackout? (20-Jan-2001)
* Proposal for a Representative Global Internet Policy Organization (6-Dec-2000)
* Government Interception of Internet Data (7-Sep-2000)
* Internet Hoaxes and Misinformation (28-Aug-2000)
* Electronic Signatures and Documents (updated 1-Jul-2000)

Recently, PFIR announced a Fact Squad <http://www.pfir.org/factsquad-announce> "to cut through hype, spin, misinformation, and propaganda regarding technological issues and their effects upon society." They have now begun a multimedia component: the "Fact Squad Radio" service <http://www.factsquad.org/radio>. These one-minute features focus on "a single relevant topic of importance" and are suitable even for non-technical listeners.

I listened to the first item <http://www.factsquad.org/radio>, which deals with national ID cards. Lauren Weinstein, sometimes heard on National Public Radio, has an excellent delivery and speaks so naturally that he's fun to listen to. I found the number of sound ideas he managed to present in a single minute to be amazing.

I hope that Weinstein and Neumann will consider posting even longer items -- perhaps as discussions between the two of them or as interviews of other luminaries.

I think that network managers and everyone else concerned with the direction of technology policy in the United States (and indeed, the world) should look at the PFIR site and sample the rich wares on offer there.

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To subscribe to the PFIR newsletter, send the command "subscribe" or "unsubscribe"
respectively (without the quotation marks) in the body of an e-mail to <mailto: pfir-request@pfir.org>
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