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# Political hackers hit 300 sites

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More than 300 Web sites fell victim to a politically motivated hack this weekend, marking what might be one of the largest mass home page takeovers ever.

The hackers, who are part of groups called "Milworm" and "Ashtray Lumberjacks," reportedly broke into the database of a British Web page hosting company called **EasySpace** [<http://www.easyspace.com>]. The perpetrators then hijacked the sites listed in the ISP's database and redirected users to their **protest page** [<http://www.antionline.com/SpecialReports/masshack/archive>], which contains a strong antinuclear message along with an image of a nuclear mushroom butt and a Milworm graphic. The hack was first reported by Wired News.

"The world governments



[\[http://www.cnet.com/News/Item/0,4,18717,00.html\]](http://www.cnet.com/News/Item/0,4,18717,00.html) and Law Enforcement agencies are trying to find us...WHY?" read prophetic the Milworm page. "All we are

doing is putting forward a message that you people are taking yourselves [sic] and your countries along the path to SELF-DESTRUCTION."

The hackers were not specific about which sites they targeted, focusing on scope rather than targeting specific sites, said John Vranesevich, who runs hacker news site **Antionline** [<http://www.antionline.com>] and was informed of the attack by Milworm shortly after it happened. Web hosting companies such as EasySpace and ISPs use a handful of servers to manage their member Web pages.

While most hackers infiltrate systems and networks to expose security flaws, Vranesevich said this past weekend's mass attack was more unique because it was politically motivated.

"It's the end result that they were worried about, not the means to accomplish it," he said. "I think this is more an example of a different type of hack group, and this highlights the type we don't see most often. They're the equivalent to the World Trade Center bombings; [they] want to get their story told and bring attention to themselves."

Sites affected by the hack were transformed into the Milworm message, were not accessible, or were replaced with an EasySpace page. EasySpace could not be reached for comment.

According to Antionline, the hack is not the first time that Milworm has made the news. In a spree of antinuclear hacks last month, the group managed to hack into the internal servers of the Bhabha Atomic Research Center and downloaded 5 MB of information in a protest against India's nuclear testing. Milworm also hacked into a Turkish nuclear facility and stole internal email messages, memos, and correspondence between researchers and scientists.

Antionline, which has been in contact with the group since the India hack, has since posted a **profile** [<http://www.antionline.com/SpecialReports/milworm/members.html>] of the Milworm hackers. According to the profile, the hackers are teenagers that reside in the United States, England, New Zealand, and Holland.

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