Puzzle for March 4, 2002

Saul Alinsky illustrated another of his rules of tactics for an organizer with the following example:

> The basic tactic in warfare against the Haves is a mass political jujitsu: the Have-Nots do not rigidly oppose the Haves, but yield in such planned and skilled ways that the superior strength of the Haves become their own undoing. For example, since the Haves publicly pose as the custodians of responsibility, morality, law, and justice (which are frequently strangers to each other), they can be constantly pushed to live up to their own book of morality and regulations. No organization, including organized religion, can live up to the letter of its own book. You can club them to death with their "book" of rules and regulations. This is what the great revolutionary, Paul of Tarsus, knew when he wrote to the Corinthians: "Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth."
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> Let us take, for example, the case of the civil rights demonstrations of 1963 in Birmingham, when thousands of Negro children stayed out of school to participate in the street demonstrations. The Birmingham Board of Education dusted off its book of regulations and threatened to expel all the children absent for that reason. Here the civil rights leaders erred (as they did on other vital tactics) by backing off instead of rushing in with more demonstrations and pressing the Birmingham Board of Education between the pages of their book of regulations by forcing them to live up to the letter of their regulations and statements. The Board and the City of Birmingham would have been in an impossible situation with every Negro child expelled and loose on the streets—if they didn't reverse themselves before they acted, they would have reversed themselves one day later.[1]

What does this have to do with computer security?

1. Saul Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals*, Random House, Inc., New York, NY (1972) pp. 152–153.