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Subject: Re: namespace support requires network modules to say "GPL"

Posted by [ebiederm](#) on Sat, 01 Dec 2007 19:54:52 GMT

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Stephen Hemminger <[shemminger@linux-foundation.org](mailto:shemminger@linux-foundation.org)> writes:

> On Sat, 01 Dec 2007 08:10:17 -0500

> Mark Lord <[lkml@rtr.ca](mailto:lkml@rtr.ca)> wrote:

>

>> > Now that we have network namespace support merged it is time to  
>> > revisit the sysfs support so we can remove the dependency on !SYSFS.

>> ...

>>

>> Now that the namespace updates are part of 2.6.24,  
>> there is a major inconsistency in network EXPORT\_SYMBOLs.

>>

>> It used to be that an external network module could get away without  
>> having to add a MODULE\_LICENSE("GPL\*") line to the source.

>>

>> In support of that, common networking functions (still) use EXPORT\_SYMBOL()  
>> rather than the more restrictive EXPORT\_SYMBOL\_GPL().

>>

>> Eg. register\_netdev(), sk\_alloc(), \_\_dev\_get\_by\_name().

>>

>> But now, none of those three are actually usable by default,  
>> because they all require "init\_net", which is EXPORT\_SYMBOL\_GPL().

Which alternative kernel does the above comment apply to?

> Then init\_net needs to be not GPL limited. Sorry, we need to allow  
> non GPL network drivers.

For the record network drivers should not be affected. As a practical measure that just gets unmaintainable and it is unnecessary.

There are specific exceptions where network drivers mess with the userspace interfaces where I do have some impact. However if you are messing with our userspace interface especially with network namespaces in place I don't see how it is possible for you to be anything other than a derivative work, and something we need in tree to keep maintenance a manageable thing.

It should just be the core of the network stack that struct net has some effect on.

> There is a fine line between keeping the  
> binary seething masses from accessing random kernel functions, and allowing  
> reasonable (but still non GPL) things like ndiswrapper to use network  
> device interface.

Does ndiswrapper break? If so what dubious and unsupportable thing is it doing?

Eric

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Containers mailing list

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<https://lists.linux-foundation.org/mailman/listinfo/containers>

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