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Subject: Re: [PATCH 1/7][QUOTA] Move sysctl management code under ifdef CONFIG\_SYSCTL

Posted by [ebiederm](#) on Tue, 04 Dec 2007 11:40:26 GMT

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Andrew Morton <[akpm@linux-foundation.org](mailto:akpm@linux-foundation.org)> writes:

> On Tue, 04 Dec 2007 12:31:37 +0300 Pavel Emelyanov <[xemul@openvz.org](mailto:xemul@openvz.org)> wrote:

>  
>> Andrew Morton wrote:  
>> > On Tue, 04 Dec 2007 11:58:30 +0300 Pavel Emelyanov <[xemul@openvz.org](mailto:xemul@openvz.org)> wrote:

>> >  
>> >>> #ifdef CONFIG\_SYSCTL  
>> >>> register\_sysctl\_table(sys\_table);  
>> >>> #endif  
>> >>>  
>> >>> dquot\_cacheop = kmem\_cache\_create("dquot",  
>> >>> sizeof(struct dquot), sizeof(unsigned long) \* 4,  
>> >>> We should avoid the ifdefs around the register\_sysctl\_table() call.

>> >>>  
>> >>> At present the !CONFIG\_SYSCTL implementation of register\_sysctl\_table() is  
>> >>> a non-inlined NULL-returning stub. All we have to do is to inline that  
> stub

>> >>> then these ifdefs can go away.  
>> >> What if some code checks for the return value to be not-NULL? In case  
>> >> CONFIG\_SYSCTL=n this code will always think, that the registration failed.

>> >  
>> > The stub function should return success?

>>  
>> Well, I think yes. If some functionality is turned off, then the  
>> caller should think that everything is going fine (or he should  
>> explicitly removes the call to it with some other ifdef).

>>  
>> At least this is true for stubs that return the error code, not  
>> the pointer. E.g. copy\_semundo() always returns success if SYSVIPC  
>> is off, or namespaces cloning routines act in a similar way.

>>  
>> Thus I though, that routines, that return pointers should better  
>> report that everything is OK (somehow) to reduce the number of  
>> "helpers" in the outer code. No?

>>  
>  
> Dunno. Returning NULL should be OK. If anyone is dereferencing that  
> pointer with CONFIG\_SYSCTL=n then they might need some attention?

We do have some current code in the network stack that fails miserably when register\_sysctl\_table returns NULL, and there are explicit checks for that.

Grr.

I had forgotten about that.

I expect the right answer is to simply have code ignore the fact that `register_sysctl_xxxx` returns `NULL`, and not error on it.

The alternative is to get fancy and have everyone check the return code and make the return type an `IS_ERR` thing. That seems a lot more trouble than it is worth.

We can probably define it as `register_sysctl_xxxx` always returns a token that must be passed to `unregister_sysctl`, and no errors will be reported except to `dmesg`. That at sounds simple sane and supportable from where we are now.

Eric

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