From: Michael Watson
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 2:04am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

"Surgeons must be very careful
When they take the knife!
Underneath their fine incisions
Stirs the culprit,--Life!"

Emily Dickinson wrote that.

Or, more bluntly, Robert X. Cringley wrote in a recent article for PBS.org [1]:

"If this deal goes through as it is written, Microsoft will emerge from the case not just unscathed, but stronger than before."

In this sense, it is not Microsoft who will die over a matter of a slip of the knife, so to speak, but everyone who chooses to offer serious alternatives to anything Microsoft develops and releases.

Easily implementable MPEG (a type of audio and video format) decoding standards for DVD video and audio could be trampled to death if Microsoft is easily and freely able to push its more proprietary formats on the DVD industry [2]. For example, owners of non-Windows laptops with DVD players could be seriously affected in the long term. (What if I can't play some DVD I want because there's some obscure incompatibility in my DVD player? This is just one important question that can be posed.)

What may be the worst issue of all is demonstrated by visiting the following URL:

<http://www.microsoft.com/library/shared/deeptree/bot/bot.asp?xmlsrc=/technet/library/1033/toc/tnlib/tnlib6586_.xml>

What you're looking at is a list of just _some_ of the major, KNOWN security issues with Microsoft's software. You'll notice I pulled this link from Microsoft.com itself. The dominance of Windows in the United States is becoming a national security threat [3], and will inevitably become worse as they're left more loopholes in court rulings and established case law.

Their seedier actions are rooted in the loose and often downright retarded language in legal precedents, and if they aren't provided with precedents that are solid and thought-out, they will, as Mr Cringley wrote, continue obfuscating the intent of courts in which they argue and rulings to which they're told to adhere.

I would have little problem continuing on and on, but I am aware of the

almost uncountable amount of communication you must be receiving on this subject, and understand that an extremely long-winded, rambling rant would not be in the best interests of anyone but those about whom I seek to write.

Best regards,

-/-
Michael Watson
http://www.mikey-san.net/

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[1] The article referenced and quoted can be found at: <http://www.pbs.org/cringely/pulpit/pulpit20011206.html>.

[2] An article <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=01/12/12/1357232&mode=thread> at Slashdot.org is a good example of what is being referenced here. The pushing of Microsoft's software in such areas could be very bad for the consumer electronics industry if left free to roam unattended. Subsequently, a search on Slashdot.org for the text "Microsoft" will yield a mountain of articles that discuss similar issues.

[3] An article <https://www.latimes.com/business/la-000003463jan14.story?coll=la-headlines-business-manual> published by The LA Times discusses an FBI warning--and even notes the inquiry of Rep Rick Boucher--regarding security holes in Microsoft software such as the wildly publicized Windows XP operating system. This is bad, regardless of what Microsoft's publicity team will have you believe about their future intentions regarding security issues with Windows and related Microsoft products.