

From: Joe Reed
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/27/02 11:56pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To whom it may concern,

As an advocate of individual rights and capitalism, I am deeply disturbed by the DOJ's attack on Microsoft in the name of consumer protection. I do not believe the government has the right to dictate how Microsoft builds and markets its products, nor do I believe the government has the right to tell me what software I have on my computer. Microsoft has committed no crime, and I as a consumer need no such protection from the government.

Microsoft reached its current market position through years of extensive research and development, innovation, and careful marketing (not to mention a lot of hard work). Microsoft never forced anyone to buy their products, and in fact has no legal power to do so. Microsoft's sales were the result of voluntary agreements that were reached by the mutual consent of both parties, into which the government has no right to interve. Millions of customers, myself included, have made a voluntary conscious decision to purchase Microsoft products because of the values they provide (e.g., features, compatibility, upgradeability, stability, etc.), not because we were coerced or threatened.

Microsoft has the right to do whatever it wants with its products, including adding features it determines will enhance the value of its products, selling or licensing its products to whomever it chooses on whatever terms are agreed to by both sides, and revealing or concealing design details as it sees fit. Microsoft's products are not public property to be designed or dispensed at the whim of its competitors or the government.

In addition, this case is further flawed in that it was brought about as a result of complaints by Microsoft's competitors, not by an outcry from consumers. And the proposed "solutions" will do nothing but prop up Microsoft's unsuccessful competitors who have chosen to compete in the courtroom rather than in the market.

The government's number one job is to protect individual rights. In this case, the government has not only miserably failed to do so, but is in fact become the biggest threat to individual rights. This case should be thrown out, and all anti-trust regulations should be immediately repealed.

Sincerely,

Joe Reed
Friendswood, Texas