January 27, 2002

From: Steven White
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about: Microsoft settlement

I am sending this in a way that verifies its authenticity (hand writing) because it is regarding a company that has been reported to have commissioned "spontaneous" letter writing campaigns to state attorneys general which, in one case, included letters from two dead people. I want to report that I am alive and strongly opposed to any leniency toward Microsoft. Three courts have declared that they have broken the law. They should pay the price of their freely-chosen actions.

I would like to address one point that I hope has not escaped your notice. This is a company famous for its willingness and ability to squirm around restrictions and whatever it can to win at any cost. They have squashed or stolen innovative ideas from others, driven companies out of business, and finally been convicted of illegal tactics, and they not only show no pentence, but, based on their public statements, seem to be convinced they are in the right.

If you make a settlement that has any imaginable loophole, they will be through it the day it goes into effect. If you say that programming interfaces to Windows must be made public, they will move the interfaces to some layer of "middleware" and declare that they are not part of Windows. They will behave as they did when ordered to release Windows 95 without Internet Explorer; they released a version that didn't work. They will "comply," but, as one journalist phrased it, "with middle finger extended."

For the sake of the future of the computer industry, Microsoft's anti-competitive grip must be broken.

Sincerely yours,

Steven White