195 N. Harbor Drive # 2003
Chicago, IL 60601

January 23, 2002

Attorney General John Ashcroft
US Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

I would like to offer some thoughts on the Microsoft antitrust case. I believe that there was merit behind the complaints that brought about the original lawsuits, but that was three years and countless dollars ago. Microsoft has made an antitrust precedent in the concessions it has agreed to, and protocol has been proposed under your settlement to deal with future problems. I do not see any benefit from future federal action against Microsoft, and hope that this matter will soon be behind us.

There will always be those lining up to take as much market share from Microsoft as they can, and as long as you allow this case to proceed, there is nothing to stop them. Microsoft has already agreed to grant broad new rights to software engineers and computer makers. It has even allowed them to configure Windows so as to promote non-Microsoft programs that compete with the programs already included within Windows. Although it may seem unreasonable to allow your own successful product to be used as a springboard to launch the competitions' products, Microsoft has agreed in an effort to settle this issue sooner, rather than later. Would it seem as reasonable if Microsoft was involved in a more traditional industry? Imagine if Burger King could not penetrate McDonald's market share. Would we mandate that McDonald's allow its customers to order a Burger King Whopper at its own restaurants?

We must recognize that Microsoft has shot itself in the foot, be it a small hole, in an effort to end this witch-hunt. I see no reason that we can't allow the IT industry and the economy to move forward. I hope you will use your position to do what is right, and ensure that our country maintains its position as the world technology leader.

Sincerely,

Michael Holan

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