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From:
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To:
Letter to the Editor
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After the recent committee hearings involving Microsoft and Bill Gates, it should finally be obvious to all who the bad guys are and what course of action we should take. The bad guys are the competitors of Microsoft who, through political pull and manipulation, have begun an inquisition against a great man. The proper course of action is to boycott their products.

CEOs Scott McNealy, of Sun Microsystems, and Jim Barksdale, of Netscape, want us to believe that Microsoft is guilty of “unfair” competition. By “unfair,” do they mean that Bill Gates earned his way by being competent and innovative as opposed to destroying his competitors with the help of the government?

Barksdale reveals exactly what he means when he insists that Microsoft is guilty of intimidating PC companies to use their products over his. Just how were they “intimidated?” Did Bill Gates turn a government committee against *them*? What Barksdale cannot accept is that in any competition there are both winners and losers. By “unfair” competition, he means one that he has lost. It is like a child losing a foot race and yelling “no fair! You were faster!”

Microsoft’s rivals claim that it has too much power and is forcing out the competition. What they fail to recognize is the distinct difference between economic power and political power. Economic power comes from being productive and efficient, while political power involves a monopoly on the use force.

In a free market, economic power can only come by appealing to the interests of the people. That is, each individual decides whether he will buy a product or not. If he does not want to buy a product, he is free to walk away. However, Microsoft’s competitors want to take away that choice. As evidenced by the fact that 90% of all PCs run on Microsoft Windows, most of the people chose to buy Microsoft. What gives the competition and the government the right to decide otherwise?

This shows us that antitrust laws are an absolute violation of the rights of every individual to choose whom he wishes to deal with. As Ayn Rand reveals to us in her book, *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal*, America’s persecuted minority is in fact big business. Antitrust laws punish the productive, the competent, and the efficient for being just that. What they are now asking us to do is punish a man who has provided more jobs

and life enhancing products than anyone else in his industry, while we reward those who did not.

We should all respond by casting our votes in the free market once again. Let us all band together to boycott those who resort to the most unfair of all business practices—relying on the government for handouts. If they thought that our choice of buy Microsoft was hurting them before, wait until they see just how much power the free market can really yield.

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