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**VISIT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT TO MICROSOFT
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1999**

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November 16, 1999

Employees From Microsoft Give Gore an Icy Reception

Administration Took Company to Court

By KATHARINE Q. SEELYE

REDMOND, Wash. -- Vice President Al Gore stepped into the lion's den Monday, facing down hundreds of Microsoft employees smarting from the judicial finding that their company had bullied its rivals and stifled competition. And he told them just what they did not want to hear: that competition is fundamentally a good thing.

With 300 people packing an auditorium on the computer giant's campus, the vice president talked about "unfair use of market dominance in one sector to stifle innovation in another sector." He added, "If competition is valuable, which I think it is, then antitrust laws have a place in embodying the values of our country." And at another point, he said, "The values that are inherent in the antitrust laws are ones that are sound, in my opinion."

Gore was virtually echoing the heart of the federal government's case against Microsoft, and the atmosphere here in the company auditorium went icy at his words.

Gore trooped out to Microsoft as just another candidate for president. He was following in the footsteps of several of his rivals, including former Senator Bill Bradley of New Jersey, his sole Democratic challenger, and several Republicans, including Gov. George W. Bush of Texas and Senator John McCain of Arizona.



Associated Press

Vice President Al Gore tried to put the best face on his visit to Microsoft yesterday in the wake of an antitrust ruling against the company. In an ill-timed campaign stop, Gore talked about the virtues of competition.

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But Gore had the added burden of representing an administration that has ferociously pummeled Microsoft in court. Complicating his task as a candidate is the fact that, as one questioner pointed out, Gore is probably the most "technologically savvy" candidate ever to run for president.

And he had the misfortune to have had an earlier meeting here rescheduled so that today's visit came just 10 days after Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson of Federal District Court found in a devastating assessment that the company had monopoly control over PC operating systems and that it wielded that power in ways that hurt American consumers.

Gore tried at first to avoid commenting on the case. But he was relentlessly questioned about his views. Isn't government interference more of a threat to consumers than Microsoft? he was asked. Isn't it a dangerous invasion of privacy when the government can cull and regurgitate someone's e-mail messages to use against him in court?

Perhaps most pointedly, one employee told Gore that he shared his Democratic social values and wanted to vote for him but felt deeply conflicted because of the administration's "favorable reaction to a ruling that says we're harming consumers."

William Kovacic, a law professor specializing in antitrust cases at George Washington University, said afterward that Gore had put himself in "an extraordinarily difficult position." But, Kovacic said, "the issues the case raises are so fundamental to the future of the company and of innovation that it's perfectly reasonable for people to ask what his views are."

Gore has a precedent for commenting on such cases. When Boeing acquired McDonnell Douglas in 1997, Gore went to the home of Boeing in Seattle and said the United States would fight efforts by Europe to block the merger. Kovacic said Gore's stance in favor of Boeing's monopoly, and in favor of the American company's pre-eminence in the aircraft sector, stood in contrast to the administration's opposition in the case of Microsoft.

"Microsoft has a lot of domestic enemies, and a lot of them are in Silicon Valley, and they have thrown a lot of cash at both parties, but in particular to the Democrats," Kovacic said. "Microsoft has a legion of enemies who hold it in contempt. And that's a tricky issue for the White House. Do you attack the pre-eminent symbol of American information technology success or safeguard the interests of their Silicon Valley opponents?"

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His Doubters
(November 16, 1999)

Gore turned the conversation to one of values, mentioning support for research and development, dealing with inequality and then said: "And yet another value that I think is important in our country is competition. And competition can be stifled both by unwise and unhealthy government action and also by private action on the part

of companies that want to unfairly use market dominance in one sector to stifle innovation in another sector."

Despite this grim judgment, Gore has tried to portray himself as a friend of the high-tech industry, going so far earlier this year as to call himself the father of the Internet. He has promoted tax credits for research and development, and today he threw around terms like quantum computing and Moore's Law with abandon.

He also noted that one of his daughters, Karenna, had worked briefly at Slate, Microsoft's online magazine. And one of his former employees, Ginny Terzano, once Gore's press secretary, has just been hired by Microsoft to head its lobbying office in Washington, D.C.

But it is not clear what kind of affinity William H. Gates, the Microsoft chairman, may have for Gore. Gates was not on hand for today's visit, having a prior commitment at a conference.

There has been considerable debate over Gates's political leanings and speculation that he wants to drag out the lawsuit until a new president takes office and appoints a new chief of the Justice Department's antitrust division.

Microsoft gave \$1.3 million last year to candidates in both parties. Microsoft employees have been more generous to Republicans this year than to Democrats. They gave \$29,000 to Bush and \$13,000 to Gore.

Several employees who attended today's session with Gore reflected the computer industry's stance that electoral politics had little to do with their success. A cluster of employees, who declined to give their names, said they were more interested in Gore's views on education and on health care than on the antitrust case because, as one put it, "the administration doesn't have much say in the overall economic growth of the last 15 years."

But Gore's comments did not appear to win him many friends. "I appreciate him being honest," one employee said. "But I'm not encouraged. He was on the side of the government."

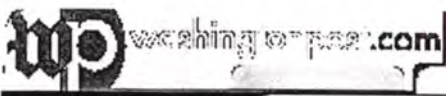


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Gore Spars With Microsoft Workers

By Ceci Connolly and Mike Allen
Washington Post Staff Writers
Tuesday, November 16, 1999; Page A2

REDMOND, Wash., Nov. 15—Vice President Gore faced down a crowded auditorium of frustrated Microsoft employees today, saying he believes that antitrust laws aimed at breaking up monopolies such as the software manufacturer "embody a fundamental American value."

Gore said he would not discuss a federal judge's recent ruling that Microsoft is a predatory monopolist that stifles competition, but he did adamantly defend the principles behind the government's lawsuit against the company.

"If dominance in one area is used to prevent competition in another area, that is wrong," Gore said, referring repeatedly to "unhealthy concentrations of power."

While the vice president defended the government's antitrust policy, across the country in New Hampshire a former Clinton Cabinet member snubbed Gore and endorsed Bill Bradley for the Democratic presidential nomination.



Vice President Al Gore shakes hands with Microsoft Corp. Vice President Jeff Raikes after taking some tough questions about the antitrust case from employees Monday. (AP)

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Robert Reich declared that Bradley was "strong and getting stronger," and said that even though he had been providing private advice about issues to Bradley, he had agonized over the decision to go public with his preference since he had worked so closely with Gore as labor secretary during President Clinton's first term.

In Redmond--just 10 days after U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson's first ruling in the government's antitrust lawsuit against the company--Gore had his hands full explaining to Microsoft employees why he should still have their support.

"The problem is I want to vote for you, but it just seems that I'm deeply conflicted," said one man who told Gore he began working at Microsoft as a 14-year-old intern. "I have these strong social values the Democratic Party also shares, but they also seem to accuse me and the rest of my

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Party also shares, but they also seem to accuse me and the rest of my company of trying to harm the American public. It doesn't add up."

Garde
(The W
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Until today, the vice president has remained silent on the lawsuit. But as several workers peppered him with questions, he spoke at length on the virtues of antitrust laws drafted in 1898 to break up railroad monopolies.

"If competition is valuable, which I think it is, then antitrust laws have a place in embodying the values of our country," Gore said. "You're naturally going to feel put upon if a judge looking at the antitrust laws and how they apply to a fact situation that involves your workplace decides in the findings of fact that the law's been crossed. I'm not going to comment on it but the values that are inherent in the antitrust laws are ones that are sound, in my opinion."

When one worker told Gore he worries every day about competition and believes Microsoft is the "underdog" in the battle against the Justice Department, Gore retorted: "So the competition is to make sure nothing else competes with it"

That did not sit well with another employee who rose from his chair and said: "So it sounds like you would characterize the software industry as having troubling competitive issues, that capitalism needs an assist from the greater wisdom of the government to sort of push innovation along"

"No, no, that's not what I said at all," Gore said, reiterating his support for "the basic principle of government protecting competition against unfair actions."

For years, the Palm Pilot-carrying, Web-surfing Gore has cultivated the technology industry. But the Microsoft case plunked him in the middle of a raging dispute between some of his most ardent friends. In Silicon Valley, where Gore routinely visits with venture capitalist John Doerr, Microsoft is viewed with contempt. But here in Washington state, where Bradley poses a serious threat in the Feb. 29 primary, the state's largest employer and its millionaire employees hold great sway.

Throughout the session, Gore attempted to defuse tension by making jokes, mentioning obscure scientific theories and repeatedly announcing his Web site address, algore2000.com. Invoking the term for rebooting a computer, Gore said, the choice in next year's election comes down to "who you would really like to have his fingers on the 'alt control delete' button."

Bradley began his day at the state Capitol in Concord, where he paid a \$1,000 fee and filed a one-page form to become the 19th candidate to declare for the Feb. 1 New Hampshire primary. Later at a student assembly at Saint Anselm College, Reich, who has become a harsh critic of Clinton, called Bradley "the leader for our time," and said that he had the will to make health insurance available to more people, and to improve the lives of hungry children. Reich said he also thought Bradley would do a better job on education and campaign finance reform.

Reich said he had phoned Gore on Sunday to inform him of his planned announcement, and said he had "a great deal of respect and admiration for the vice president."

"I also have absolutely no doubt that, were he elected, he would make an excellent president," Reich said. "But let me just say this: Given the challenges ahead, Bill Bradley's commitment and his dedication and his vision will make him, to my mind, an even better president."

As the two stood together, Reich, who is 4 foot 10, came about to the elbow of Bradley, who is 6 foot 5. Reich began by joking, "I met Bill Bradley years ago, when we played together on the Knicks."

Bradley told the students that Reich's endorsement made this one of the best days of the campaign. "He believes that you move toward the future with your mind, but also with your heart, and you move toward the future with an underlying set of values," Bradley said. "That's what I believe, and I'm glad we agree."

Stephen Hess, a governmental scholar at Brookings Institution, said Reich's endorsement reflected "a sorting-out of what's left of the left in Democratic politics."

Allen reported from Manchester, N.H.

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Microsoft Employees Barrage Gore on Antitrust Case

■ Politics: Vice president defends principle of maintaining competition. But he distances himself from Justice Department's decision to sue.

By MATEA GOLD, Times Staff Writer

REDMOND, Wash.--Impassioned Microsoft employees who said they were disillusioned and confused by the government's prosecution of the software giant pressed Vice President Al Gore to explain the administration's position Monday during a forum at the company campus.

Calm but forceful, Gore refused to comment on the antitrust case but defended the principle of maintaining competition in the high-tech industry.

"If competition is valuable, which I think it is, then antitrust laws have a place in embodying the values of our country," he said. "If dominance in one area is used to prevent that competition in another area, that's wrong."

On Nov. 5, a U.S. district judge ruled in a finding of fact that Microsoft uses its position as a monopoly to stifle competition.

The hourlong session Monday with about 200 Microsoft employees, one in a series of candidate forums hosted by the company, was dominated by workers quizzing Gore about the case, even as the vice president insisted he couldn't discuss it. Bill Gates, head of Microsoft, was absent; he was in Las Vegas at a technology convention.

"I want to vote for you, and I'm deeply conflicted," said one employee, who said he started interning at Microsoft when he was 14. "I have these strong social values the Democratic Party also shares, but they also seem to accuse me and my employer of trying to harm the American public. It doesn't add up."

At one point, after the employees continued to push him to talk about the case, an exasperated Gore asked: "How many of these [questions] are there?"

Almost everyone in the room raised a hand.

Gore said he could respect the employees' feelings. But he reiterated that preventing a monopoly from taking over an industry is an important American principle.

"I'm not going to say anything about this case," he said, but he added a few minutes later: "An entrepreneur or a company that wants to develop an application interface--just to pick a random example--and is not able to go into the marketplace and compete has a right to say, 'Hey, wait a minute, that violates a fundamental American value.'"

The exchange with the employees, punctuated by laughter and applause, was a friendly one overall. Nevertheless, the debate about Microsoft was intense, with many employees arguing that they saw themselves as struggling to stay ahead in a viciously competitive market--not dominating the industry with monopoly power.

"It sounds like you would characterize the software industry as having troubling competitive issues, that capitalism needs an assist from the greater wisdom of government to sort of push innovation along," one employee said.

Gore interrupted him: "No, that's not what I've said at all."

Beyond the debate about Microsoft, the audience applauded enthusiastically at Gore's policy positions on establishing a national hate-crimes law and more gun control. At the end, they gave him a standing ovation. Jeff Raikes, a Microsoft vice president and a member of Gore's national finance steering committee, presented him with a green fleece Microsoft vest.

"His credibility came through," said Rajeev Dujani, a software developer. "He didn't tell us what we wanted to hear. He told us how he felt. I thought his answers were appropriate."

Later, at a press conference, the vice president distanced himself from the decision to prosecute Microsoft, saying that the Justice Department makes those calls independently. "These are not political decisions," he said.

Gore also chose to use the forum to emphasize the importance of pursuing new technology, saying he supports creating permanent tax cuts for research and innovation and doubling the country's investment in information technology. He said he backs the use of privacy software and complemented the steps Microsoft has taken to give parents tools to monitor their children's computer use.

Meanwhile, Gore's Democratic challenger, Bill Bradley, appeared at a New Hampshire Catholic college Monday with former Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich, who endorsed the former New Jersey senator's presidential campaign.

Reich, a former Harvard professor, said he was torn over which Democrat to support but finally chose Bradley because of his stances on health care, child poverty and other domestic issues.

Chris Lehane, Gore's spokesman, said the endorsement came as no surprise because Reich has made it clear in the past that he disagrees with the Clinton-Gore administration's welfare policy.

Times staff writer Stephen Braun contributed to this story.



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Microsoft staff questions Gore on case

Tensions tarnish campaign stop

By Michael Kranish, Globe Staff, 11/16/99

R EDMOND, Wash. - Just ten days after a federal judge ruled that Microsoft is a predatory monopoly, Vice President Al Gore yesterday went trolling for votes on the home turf of the software giant.

It proved to be one of his more awkward moments on the campaign trail.

The audience of about 400 Microsoft employees had been warned not to grill Gore about the case, but one person after another bombarded the vice president with angry questions. Many seemed especially put out that Clinton administration lawyers seemed so delighted with the federal judge's ruling against the world's largest software firm.

"I saw Janet Reno wring her hands with glee," one Microsoft employee told Gore, referring to the US attorney general. "I was pretty mad and angry."

Gore finally threw up his hands and said: "I cannot talk about the antitrust case. OK? It's a problem we can get into theoretically but believe me it is awkward to talk in a theoretical level about a real case."

Microsoft chairman Bill Gates, who has been outspoken in his criticism of the government's case, was attending a trade show in Las Vegas and was not at the meeting. But the session was attended by many of those affected by the case, including programmers who designed the Windows operating system and Internet Explorer browser that are central to the government's case. One questioner said he had worked at Microsoft since he was 14 years old. The employees were told not to give their names to the press.

While Gore anticipated a potentially hostile audience, he went ahead with the long-planned visit because he is placing so much importance on high-tech issues - and contributions from high-tech workers - in his campaign. Gore presents himself as the most technologically adept person ever to seek the presidency, a claim that temporarily backfired when he became the butt of jokes for saying he helped invent the Internet.

Microsoft, which has had similar forums with five other presidential candidates, initially insisted that the meeting be closed as usual. But Gore thought that would look bad and pressured the company to allow

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Gore thought that would look bad and pressured the company to allow the press.

While Gore said that the Justice Department pursued the case on its own, he acknowledged at a later press conference that the White House might get involved at some point if there is a deal to settle the case.

So Gore did his best to present himself as a sort of kindred spirit to the employees who gathered for the meeting of Microsoft's political action committee. He displayed his technological literacy on topics ranging from "Moore's law" about microprocessor speed to the use of the "control-alt-delete" keys, which are used to reboot a computer - often when a Microsoft program refuses to cooperate.

But the questioners kept returning to the antitrust case. One Microsoft employee asked Gore whether it was fair for the government to subpoena a person's e-mail and "then some smart lawyers can cut and paste" it to prove a case.

"I've seen that movie, too," Gore said. He then explained that a federal archive law prevents him from deleting any of his voluminous e-mail.

"In the White House, all e-mail - you can't even delete it," Gore said. "So I'm very sympathetic."

Gore seemed in geek heaven during the rest of his tour of Microsoft, visiting a gadget-filled Home of the Future and then touring the office of Slate, an on-line publication that employed his daughter, Karenn, for a year.

While visiting Slate, Gore sat down before a computer to compose a column for the magazine about his day at Microsoft. But after 15 minutes, Gore had written only two paragraphs and promised to e-mail the rest to editor Michael Kinsley. Then Gore headed out of the building, where he was greeted by 300 more employees. He shook dozens of hands and asked, good-naturedly: "Everybody got stock options?"

This story ran on page A07 of the Boston Globe on 11/16/99.
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SILICON VALLEY NEWS **IN-DEPTH NEWS**

Posted at 9:47 p.m. PST Monday, November 15, 1999

Gore faces a tough crowd at Microsoft

Antitrust case: Workers angry at the way U.S. has depicted company.

BY HALLYE JORDAN

Mercury News Sacramento Bureau

SEATTLE -- Vice President Al Gore traveled into enemy territory Monday, but in the end received a warm reception from about 200 Microsoft employees -- many of whom lashed out at him over the Clinton administration's portrayal of the company as monopolistic and greedy.

U.S. District Judge Thomas P. Jackson's preliminary ruling Nov. 5 that the software behemoth has monopoly control over PC operating systems and that it had used that power to intimidate its competitors was clearly foremost on the minds of the Microsoft audience.

"The reason we come into work every day is because we think we can make people's lives better," said

one employee. The company asked employees not to give their names. "When I read what the government has said about Microsoft, it describes a very different sort of company -- not the one I work for."

"The problem is I want to vote for you, but I'm deeply conflicted," said another employee, adding that the administration has basically "accused me of trying to harm the country."

Gore fielded the barrage of questions about the lawsuit, avoiding talking specifically about the case, but defending antitrust laws as valuable.

"I'm not going to comment on it," Gore said about the judge's findings. "But the values that are inherent in the antitrust laws are ones that are sound, in my opinion."

"Competition can be stifled both by unwise and unhealthy government action and also by private actions on the part of companies that want to unfairly use market dominance in one sector to stifle innovation in another sector," Gore said. "If competition is valuable, then antitrust laws have a place in the values of our country."

Gore was the sixth presidential candidate this year to visit the sprawling 302-acre Redmond campus, home to 17,429 Microsoft employees. Unlike the previous forums with Texas Gov. George W. Bush, former Red Cross President Elizabeth Dole, former Sen. Bill Bradley, Arizona Sen. John McCain and Ohio Congressman John Kasich, Monday's session was open to the media at Gore's insistence.

At a media briefing after the meeting, Gore told reporters he believed it was important to avoid appearing behind closed doors with Microsoft employees so soon after the federal court ruling in the long-running antitrust case. Microsoft spokesman Rick Miller said an e-mail invitation was sent late last week to 2,000 Microsoft employees who are eligible to participate in the company's political action campaign. The 200 slots were filled on a first-come basis by middle- and senior-level employees.

Microsoft founder Bill Gates was in Las Vegas at the Comdex computer trade show, where he gave the keynote address Sunday. Miller said Gates' busy schedule forced him to miss all but two of the candidate forums this year. "If he's on campus, he'll meet with them. If not, he didn't. It's that simple," Miller said.

Wearing a green open-necked shirt, brown sweater, khakis and black cowboy boots, Gore was a bit more formal than many of the jeans- and sweatshirt-clad Microsoft employees in the audience.

The vice president fielded questions about Internet privacy, encryption, hate crimes and education. He avoided criticizing President Clinton for capping overseas abortion funds as part of a budget pact, but said he understands that compromises must be made in budget negotiations.

"I do not favor bargaining away any critical aspect affecting a woman's right to choose," he said, later adding the agreement "is not one I like, but it's understandable to me why he made the decision he did."

He stood relaxed during the hourlong exchange, his left hand in his pocket, gesturing with his right. His jokes went over well: When railing against Republicans for their stance against abortion, he told the audience that GOP leaders were seen leaving closed-door meetings with the Rev. Jerry Falwell and other conservative figures.

"That's a simple form of encryption -- it's not hard to break that code," Gore said. "If you value a woman's right to choose, you should vote Democratic. It's not a complicated thing."

Asked whether he thought it was fair to ask Bush to name the leaders of critical foreign countries, Gore said, "I'll tell you this: I'm prepared to name the CEO of software companies in any hot spots in the world."

Turning serious, Gore agreed it was an unfair test. But, he added, "it troubles me that a candidate for

president doesn't know that a military coup overthrowing democracy is not good news for the United States of America," referring to Bush's support for a recent military takeover in Pakistan.

The vice president, who has touted his backing for the information economy, tried out some new one-liners for the technology-savvy crowd. "Who do you really like to have his finger on the Alt-Control-Delete button?" he asked. The audience laughed even though Gore switched the usual order of those keys.

When questioned by one employee to comment on the ability of the government to subpoena e-mail, and then "cut and snip it to construct whatever story they want," Gore responded: "I think I saw that movie, too."

He added that threats to privacy "should give us pause," but that the Fourth Amendment ensures protection against unauthorized government snooping.

Bill Bliss, a 12-year employee and the general manager of the Microsoft Network search engine team, said he had yet to decide whom he'll support. "I'm pro-choice and pro-gun control, so that kind of narrows my choices," the 35-year-old Kirkland resident said. "I'm here to see the vice president, that's pretty cool. But I'm still kind of trying to gather the facts."

After the event, Bliss said he was impressed with Gore's frankness. "I think he did pretty well," Bliss said. "But I think that we wasted our time by asking questions that he couldn't answer."

After the forum with employees, Gore toured a futuristic home, controlled by a central computer called the "Taj Mahal." The vice president then made a quick stop at Microsoft's Slate, which he declared was his favorite online magazine and where his daughter Karennia worked for a year.

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Antitrust laws "sound," Gore says in Microsoft visit
By Reuters

Special to CNET News.com

November 15, 1999, 5:45 p.m. PT

REDMOND, Washington--Vice President Al Gore defended the nation's antitrust laws Monday during a visit to Microsoft headquarters but declined to discuss the software giant's case despite intense questioning from employees.

Gore at first tried to avoid the issue of a judge finding Microsoft to be "a monopolist" company that has stifled competition, saying that it was inappropriate for him to comment on pending litigation. But when several Microsoft employees pressed the issue, saying they were unhappy with the judge's ruling and with the Justice Department's pursuit of the company, he said he supported the nation's antitrust laws and that the laws applied to software companies as well as other industries.

"The values that are inherent in the antitrust laws are ones that are sound in my opinion," Gore, the front-runner for the Democratic presidential nomination, said. "If dominance in one area is used to prevent competition in another area, that is wrong," he added.

He also told a press conference after the visit that neither he nor President Bill Clinton had anything to do with the Justice Department's pursuit of Microsoft. "These are not political decisions," he said of the Justice Department's efforts.

But he added that he expected that the White House would get involved in any settlement talks between the company and the Justice Department when antitrust remedies get discussed.

Gore's visit to Microsoft's suburban Seattle corporate campus was scheduled months ago but became politically sensitive following a federal judge's ruling November 5 in the government antitrust suit against the company.

Originally Microsoft said Gore's discussions with invited employees would take place behind closed doors, as have campaign visits by other presidential candidates including Texas Gov. George W. Bush, the Republican front-runner. But after Gore threatened to cancel the visit entirely over the press policy, creating a public relations problem for Microsoft, the company relented and said it would allow reporters into the meeting.

Gore, the leading candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, has not made public his views on the antitrust case brought last year by the Clinton administration's Justice Department and 20 states, saying that it would be inappropriate for him to comment on pending litigation.

The vice president was escorted on the visit by Microsoft Vice President Jeff Raikes, a Democratic activist who serves on Gore's national finance steering committee.

Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates and other top company executives are in Las Vegas for the annual Comdex computer industry trade show.

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Pointed questions for Gore from Microsoft managers

By David Ammons, Associated Press, 11/15/99



Vice President Al Gore defended U.S. anti-trust laws today before an audience of Microsoft managers at the company's headquarters in Redmond, Wash. (Reuters photo)

REDMOND, Wash. -- Vice President Al Gore faced tough questioning Monday from Microsoft Corp. managers, many of whom recalled the Justice Department's celebration after a federal judge declared the computer software company a monopoly.

Gore himself raised the antitrust issue, although he did not comment on the Justice Department lawsuit against Microsoft or the Nov. 5 decision by U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson that Microsoft had unfairly stifled competition.

Although the audience of about 300 mid- and upper-level managers mostly cheered Gore's early comments in support of gun control laws, abortion rights and a national hate crimes law, the atmosphere turned chilly when the topic turned

to antitrust.

Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates, who had spoken the night before at the Comdex computer and software convention in Las Vegas, was not present.

"I was pretty upset and angry when I read about what they said about this company," one manager told the vice president, who is campaigning against former Sen. Bill Bradley to become the Democratic Party's candidate for president next year.

Gore said it is not "a wild, crazy notion that the antitrust laws would apply to the software industry." He stressed, however, that he was not specifically referring to Microsoft and its market power.

Microsoft dominates the market for personal computer operating systems with its Windows software.

Within hours after the judge's decision, Attorney General Janet Reno and Justice Department antitrust attorney Joel Klein hailed the ruling as a victory for consumers.

"I am deeply conflicted to see an administration having a favorable reaction" to the judge's ruling, one of Gore's questioners said. "The problem is I want to vote for you, but I

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feel deeply conflicted."

Gore asked how many other employees had similar questions, and a majority of the hands shot up.

"Boy, am I glad I opened this to the press," Gore said, referring to his threat to cancel the appearance after Microsoft initially refused to let reporters cover it.

Gore told the employees that "I respect your feelings." But he also said antitrust laws must be enforced when competition is unfairly stifled.

"The marketplace ought to accommodate a chance to compete," he said. "When dominance in one area is used to prevent competition in another area, that's wrong."

Gore later told reporters that the Justice Department's decision to go after Microsoft was made without any consultation with the White House. The department operates independently in such cases, he said, adding, "That has been a tradition of Democratic and Republican administrations and is written into law."

Gore was introduced by Jeff Raikes, Microsoft's group vice president for worldwide sales and support, and a member of Gore's national finance committee.

While on the Microsoft campus, Gore also toured the company's online political magazine, Slate, where his daughter Karenna once worked.

He also visited a senior citizens' center and was to headline a fund-raiser Monday night at the Newcastle Golf Club, founded by former Microsoft executive Scott Oki.

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Microsoft bosses take Gore to task on antitrust ruling

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

By **JOEL CONNELLY** ✉
SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER
NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT

The managers of Microsoft yesterday greeted Vice President Al Gore with a mental workout that was the equal in intensity to the physical exertions he underwent while climbing Mount Rainier last July.

Angry that their company would be accused of harming American consumers, employees in Redmond told Gore the software industry is intensely competitive, and voiced offense at the Justice Department's celebration of a federal judge's antitrust ruling 10 days ago.

Gore refused to talk about specifics of the case against Microsoft. But he delivered a plain-spoken defense of antitrust laws, underscoring many of the underlying arguments that the administration used against the company.

"If competition is valuable, which I think it is, then antitrust laws have a place in embodying the values of our country," said Gore, the Clinton administration's self-described point man on technology issues.

In answer to another question, Gore added: "Competition can be stifled both by unwise and unhealthy government action, but also by companies that want to use innovation in one sector to stifle competition in another."

Gore has looked out at friendly faces and heard only the occasional heckler during 11 previous previous visits to the Puget Sound area since the 1996 election.

Yesterday, he drew big crowds -- 300 packed into an auditorium at Microsoft's campus and 500 people at the Northshore Senior Center -- but faced tough, knowledgeable questions on antitrust, abortion and trade.

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trade.

He heard genuine anguish at Microsoft. One questioner, who began working for the software company when he was 14, said he was a Democrat because of the party's stands on social issues.

"The problem is I want to vote for you but I feel deeply conflicted," the questioner told Gore, noting that the vice president is the No. 2 man in an administration "that accuses us of harming the American public."

"Look, I respect your feeling and thank you for the underlying values that motivate it," replied Gore.

Again straying close to a comment on the Microsoft case, the vice president added: "The values that are inherent in our antitrust laws are ones that are sound, in my opinion."

Gore received a warm greeting at the senior center, and a few hot questions. A woman named Toni Potter voiced fears of the World Trade Organization that the new world economic order might bring about disappearance of the world's forests.

"I strongly believe we must integrate labor and environmental concerns into trade negotiations," said Gore, echoing a position he unveiled during a July speech in Seattle. He challenged Potter on how she would change trade negotiations.

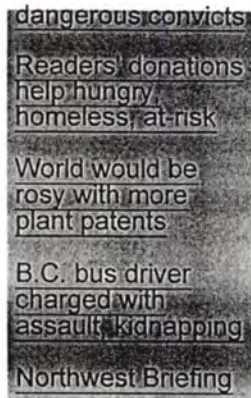
"I think it should be done in public," Potter replied.

Gore started to put down his questioner, citing the fact that juries work in private. He pulled up, however, and said: "I think it should be a little more open."

Protest organizers have vowed they will put 50,000 demonstrators on the streets of Seattle for an anti-World Trade Organization protest on Nov. 30, as trade ministers from around the world convene in Seattle. Yesterday, however, they mustered only nine protesters outside the Northshore Senior Center.

At Microsoft, the vice president reveled in the Clinton administration's successful conclusion of a trade agreement that, he said, "virtually assures" that China will join the World Trade Organization. The vice president predicted the accord will "open up Chinese markets to a lot of our goods and services."

But Gore appeared to distance himself deliberately from a deal struck over the weekend between the



White House and House Republicans. In exchange for money that will cover the United States' back dues to the United Nations, the administration agreed to a ban on U.S. money going to international organizations that support abortion.

Gore was asked about the deal during his appearance before Microsoft employees.

"I do not favor bargaining away any critical policy aspect of a woman's right to choose," he replied. Afterward, the vice president made clear that he was not part of negotiating the deal, and said he has not talked to President Clinton about it.

As he runs for president, Gore -- who was hit by a thunderstorm on Mount Rainier in July -- has become a lightning rod on such global issues as the World Trade Organization and Northwest-oriented issues such as prevention of oil spills in the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

The vice president has been an occasional bearer of popular news, announcing Friday that a Navy rescue tug will be put at Neah Bay starting in mid-December, providing immediate response to marine mishaps during the darkest, stormiest months of the year.

Asked yesterday how long the tug will be stationed at the mouth of the Strait, Gore replied: "As long as it's needed."

Gore was also serving as a financial drawing card yesterday. He adjourned to Newcastle Country Club last night, dining with about 20 big donors at a fund-raising event that took in an estimated \$225,000 for the Democratic National Committee.

The vice president seemed charged up by his session at Microsoft, which came just 10 days after U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson found that the company has stifled competition to the detriment of American consumers.

Gore won a healthy round of applause by asking if he could come back. He was the sixth presidential candidate to visit the Microsoft campus, which has also hosted GOP front-runners, Texas Gov. George W. Bush and Arizona Sen. John McCain, as well as former New Jersey Sen. Bill Bradley, Gore's fast-rising competitor for the Democratic nomination.

Nor has Microsoft severed relations with Gore. The software giant has just hired the vice president's former press secretary and longtime Democratic

spokesperson, Ginny Terzano, to head its Washington, D.C., lobbying operations.

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Wired NEWS

Gore: Antitrust Laws Fundamental

Reuters

3:00 a.m. 16.Nov.1999 PST

Vice President Al Gore defended US antitrust laws Monday in a visit to Microsoft headquarters, where he was peppered with questions about the government case against the software giant.

Gore's meeting with about 250 mid- and senior-level Microsoft executives came just 10 days after a preliminary ruling against the company in the long-running antitrust case and was nearly canceled over Microsoft's closed-door press policy.

Read more in [Executive Summary](#)
Read ongoing [US v. Microsoft](#) coverage

After a flurry of negotiations last week, Microsoft relented and agreed to allow reporters into the session, where a series of increasingly testy questioners challenged Gore over the Justice Department's pursuit of their employer.

At first, Gore tried to avoid the issue entirely, saying it was inappropriate for him to comment on pending litigation.

But employees pressed Gore on the issue, with one saying he wanted to vote for the Democratic presidential front-runner but felt "deeply conflicted" over the administration's role in suing the company.

Finally Gore tried to put the issue in the context of national values, saying he would not comment on the case specifically but declaring that antitrust laws protect the "fundamental American value" of fair competition.

"Competition can be stifled both by unwise and unhealthy government action and also by private actions on the part of companies that want to unfairly use market dominance in one sector to stifle innovation in another sector," Gore said.

Gore specifically raised the theoretical issue of an entrepreneur who was prevented from competing because of a problem involving what he called the "application interface."

He apparently was referring to application programming interfaces, hooks that allow a program to connect with an operating system such as Windows, and have been very much an issue in the Microsoft case.

Gore said that if a software company was unable to compete because it could not create such an interface, "that violates a fundamental American value."

In a press conference later, Gore said that neither he nor President Clinton had anything to do with the antitrust case.

"The Justice Department in matters like this operates independently," he said. "These are not political decisions."

But he added that he expected that the White House would get involved in any settlement talks between the company and the Justice Department if antitrust remedies were discussed.

After his hour-long meeting with Microsoft employees in a company auditorium, Gore got a quick tour of Microsoft's prototypical home of the future and visited the offices of Slate, an online magazine where one of his daughters formerly worked.

Among the Microsoft employees in the audience for the town hall-style meeting was Bill Neukom, the company's senior vice president for law and chief legal strategist.

"I learned a lot about his values," Neukom dryly commented afterward. "It was very informative."

Also in the audience was Laura Ruderman, a Microsoft marketing manager who is a Democratic Washington state representative.

She said US District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson's 5 November ruling was a topic of conversation for a couple of days but had receded into the background.

"People are back heads down, trying to ship the next product they're working on," she said.

Gore was the sixth major-party presidential candidate to visit Microsoft's suburban Seattle headquarters campus in the current campaign.

He was escorted by Microsoft group vice president Jeff Raikes, a Democratic activist who serves on Gore's national finance steering committee.

Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates and other top company executives were in Las Vegas for the annual Comdex computer industry trade show.

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From the Hotline, November 16, 1999

2 GORE: Flavored Microsoft Serve

Managers with Microsoft, upset over DoJ's anti-trust suit against their company, put Al Gore through the paces during his visit yesterday to the Microsoft campus in Redmond, WA. Gore "refused to talk about specifics" of the case, but offered a "plainspoken defense" of anti-trust laws. Gore: "If competition is valuable, which I think it is, then anti-trust laws have a place in embodying the values of our country." Gore heard "genuine anguish" from the 300 people who came to see him. One questioner: "The problem is, I want to vote for you but I feel deeply conflicted" because Gore is VP in a WH "that accuses us of harming the American public." Gore: "Look, I respect your feeling and thank you for the underlying values that motivate it. ... The values that are inherent in our anti-trust laws are ones that are sound, in my opinion" (Connelly, Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 11/16). More Gore: "I cannot talk about the anti-trust case." More Gore: "An entrepreneur or a company ... who is not able to go into the marketplace and compete has the right to say, 'Hey wait a minute. That violates a fundamental American value'" (Mult., 11/15). As Gore spoke, "the atmosphere ... went icy at his words." Gore also noted that his daughter Karenn had worked at Microsoft's Slate for a short time and that his former press sec. Ginny Terzano has been hired to head Microsoft's DC lobbying effort. Gore's visit followed past stops by other WH 2000ers, including Bill Bradley, George W. Bush and John McCain (Seelye, New York Times, 11/16).

The crowd "mostly cheered" his comments on gun control, abortion, hate crimes and school safety, but the "atmosphere turned chilly" when he discussed the anti-trust issue. Gore "threw away an upbeat and diplomatic prepared speech" and instead "gave a ringing endorsement" of anti-trust laws (Ammons, AP, 11/16). While Gore "refused to play to the crowd" on the DoJ case, he received a standing ovation from employees as he left. Several said his performance impressed them. Gore did not meet with Microsoft chair Bill Gates, who was in Las Vegas for a computer trade show (Wilke, Wall Street Journal, 11/16). Gore's talk with employees, "punctuated by laughter and applause, was a friendly one overall" (Matea, Los Angeles Times, 11/16). Gore's visit "proved to be one of his more awkward moments on the campaign trail." (Kranish, Boston Globe, 11/16). Gore tried to use humor to lighten the atmosphere throughout the talk, once telling the audience that WH 2000 comes down to "who you would really like to have his fingers on the 'alt control delete button'" (Connolly/Allen, Washington Post, 11/16).

CNN's Darrow: "Despite the fact that his government is suing this company, Al Gore seemed very comfortable in this crowd. He does, after all, speak their language. He presents himself as the most Internet-savvy and forward-thinking of all the candidates. ... Gore did his best to focus on the issues and stay away from the fact that his government is suing this company ... but the anti-trust issues did come up after a number of questions" ("IP," CNN, 11/15).

FNC's Centanni: "Gore walked a political tight-rope, courting the Microsoft vote with a visit to company headquarters, but getting hammered with questions about the Justice Department's anti-trust lawsuit against the company. ... When pressed, Gore did defend the anti-trust laws without mentioning any specifics. It was a tough crowd, but one no presidential candidate can afford to ignore" ("Special Report," FNC, 11/15).

Reviews Own Visit To Microsoft For Microsoft Mag

After his talk with Microsoft employees, Gore wrote an op-ed for Slate during his visit to the online mag's office. Gore offers a review of his talk at the company. Gore recognizes the "tension in the air," but concludes: "All told, it was a wonderful visit. The entire Microsoft campus is just bubbling with energy and ideas. I certainly hope to spend even more time in the Seattle area. And who knows? If I work at it, I might even be able to pick up some endorsements from members of the Sonics" (11/15).

Way Down In The Valley

Under the header "Where's Tech Support When You Need It?", Wired's Breslau reports on Gore's finding himself "in a scramble for marketshare" with other WH 2000ers for support in Silicon Valley. Breslau: "In many ways, Gore confronts the classic first mover's nightmare. He courted the geeks long before it was politically fashionable or profitable; now he must find a way to distinguish himself as fast followers swarm his once pristine domain." Even Netscape's Marc Andreessen, who defended Gore after his Internet gaffe, "is not putting anything on the line." Andreessen: "I think that Bush would be fine, I think that Gore would be good. I think Bradley would probably do a good job, McCain would do a good job. ... The nice thing about this is, it's not like it has to be Gore or this industry is just hosed. Or that Gore is the only one who understands any of this or is going to do an effective job. he's just into it more than the rest of them are -- he's into it more than anyone else has ever been at that level" (12/99 issue).

Will WH Abortion Compromise Benefit Bradley?

Abortion rights activists said Gore's bid could be damaged if he fails to criticize Pres. Clinton's decision to compromise during budget talks with cong. conservatives' demands to limit family planning efforts abroad. Planned Parenthood Action Fund pres. Gloria Feldt: "This will be a campaign issue no matter what. If (Gore) doesn't speak up, his silence will be eloquent and be noted." Bill Bradley "stood firm against" the WH deal saying 11/14 that Clinton could have done more early in budget talks to block the GOP effort. In polls, Gore has "eroded" George W. Bush's lead with women since 9/99, but he lacks the 16-point gender gap that Clinton enjoyed in '96 (Kellman, AP, 11/16).

Tipper Gore joined a group of 40 women yesterday at Gore's IA HQ to "dash off a few postcards and put a public emphasis on political organization," which Gore's campaign views as its "firewall" against Bradley's surge. Gore IA mgr Steve Hildebrand on the postcard effort: "It's nothing new, it's just a lot of one-on-one stuff, women contacting women." Tipper also spent the day mtg with "high-profile women activists," like IA first-lady Christie Vilsack (Glover, AP, 11/16).

Donna Fly Now

Washington Post's Givhan profiles Gore mgr Donna Brazile, writing, "If Al Gore speaks in modulated, cautious sentences, then his campaign manager provides the fervor that he lacks. The jaw-grinding intensity is jarring because in this campaign, with its middle-of-the-road messages, it is hard to understand precisely what is so captivating about her candidate and her party." Brazile: "I left my home in Washington, D.C., for Al Gore because I know he'll stand up for my family. I know he's a decent and honorable man. You have to like the person because your entire life becomes that person's campaign" (11/16).

I'm Going Back To Cali

Gore on the bumped-up CA primary: "California is our largest state. It is always crucial when our country makes a choice about the future. And now that California has moved way up in the calendar, its role can scarcely be exaggerated. It's extremely important" ("IP," CNN, 11/15).

CA Gov. Gray Davis (D): "George Bush, whatever his skills and accomplishments, will not carry California. You can take that to the bank" ("IP," CNN, 11/15).

Environmental Agenda

Gore laid out a \$2B, 10-year plan to create new parklands and open spaces if elected POTUS. Gore said he would spend \$1B for tax cuts to landowners who move property to conservation and send another \$1B to cities and states to create local parks. Gore, speaking at the base of the Santa Monica Mountains in CA: "We will turn minerals we already own into new parklands and protection of open spaces and smart growth initiatives" (Gold, Los Angeles Times, 11/15).

A Life On Tape

Newsweek's Howard Fineman, on jokes over Gore's TN/D.C upbringing: "He did live several years back in Tennessee, was a reporter. That's not on videotape, though. All of Bill Bradley's 'other life' -- convincing other life -- is on tape" ("Hardball," MSNBC, 11/15).

A Klain English Initiative

CNN's Press, asking ex-Gore CoS Ron Klain about the Gore campaign: "When you look at the operation, I mean, look, Mark Penn is in, then Mark Penn is out. Right? Craig Smith is in, then Craig Smith is out. Bob Squier's in, Bob Squier's out. Kiki Moore's in, Kiki Moore's out. Ron Klain is in, Ron Klain's out. I mean, if he can't manage his -- he knew he was going to be running for president for seven years. Don't you think he could have gotten it right the first time around?"

Klain: "My own departure is for personal reasons and really doesn't belong on that list. But ... I think he's running a good campaign. And most importantly, I think the American people could care less about Ron Klain or Craig Smith or Kiki Moore or Bob Squier or any of these people. They want to see Al Gore and Bill Bradley debate the issues" ("Crossfire," CNN, 11/15).

Klain, on the New Yorker article describing Gore's feelings toward Clinton as "a perpetual state of mad": "I didn't see the Vice President in a 'perpetual state of mad' when I worked with him. I saw a man who was mad about what the President had done, mad about the President's untruthfulness about it, but a Vice-President who's been part of a very successful team" ("Crossfire," CNN, 11/15).

It Takes iVillage

The web site iVillage.com, which markets itself as a site for women, is holding a series of online "Town Hall Tuesdays," starting today with Gore. Gore will be online for a chat forum at 5 p.m. (iVillage.com e-mail, 11/13).

Erratum

In yesterday's Hotline, WH press sec. Joe Lockhart was referring to Wolf Blitzer, not Naomi Wolf, when he said "I think the best way to say that is those are probably the same close friends who told Wolf that the president was going to resign last year. That didn't happen despite all the reporting."

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My Visit to Microsoft

By: Al Gore

Posted **Monday, Nov. 15, 1999, at 9:20 p.m.**

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I've just walked into the *Slate* offices after an hour-long free-form discussion with about 200 Microsoft employees. I loved the discussion. There was obviously tension in the air, because my visit--though long-scheduled--came on the heels of the "Findings of Fact" by the judge presiding over the antitrust case brought against Microsoft by the Justice Department.

Even though the Justice Department makes its own independent decisions in such matters without input from the White House, its leaders--including Joel Klein--are appointees of the current administration. For that reason, I couldn't comment on the decision that was clearly on many people's minds on the Microsoft campus today. I did make clear that there is a fundamental American value in making sure that neither heavy-handed government nor unfair business practices stamp out competition.

But then the meeting moved on to other topics, and I wasn't surprised to find that, as much as Microsoft's employees are interested in technology and the Internet, they are also interested in the same issues as all hard-working Americans--how they can give their children the best education; how we can make our schools and streets safer; and how we can reach across our divisions to bring this nation together.

And even though national security policy didn't come up, I suggested that one crucial issue for voters to ponder is this: whose finger do you want on the ALT-CONTROL-DELETE button?

The issue of payment of our U.N. dues came up (in the context of the group's feeling that no inappropriate compromise on the issue of choice should be accepted), but no other foreign policy issues arose. So I obviously spent too much time in advance preparing for a pop quiz about CEO's of software companies from hot spots around the world.

But in truth, the questions were wide-ranging. One person asked me my position on hate crimes legislation. And to me, in a year when Matthew Shepard was crucified on a split rail fence because of his sexual orientation; when James Byrd was dragged to his death because of his skin color; and both a Filipino-American and a Korean graduate student were murdered because of the shape of their eyes--I cannot comprehend how some can argue that hate crimes are no different from all other crimes. That is why we need tougher laws to prevent and punish them.

Another person asked me how we can make our schools safer in the aftermath of tragedies such as Columbine. I said that I believe the solutions range from tough measures to get guns away from kids and criminals, to more discipline and values in our schools, to more self-restraint in the use of gratuitous violence in the entertainment media, to more parental involvement in the lives of our children - which of course means we need to give working parents more help in balancing work and family.

I was certainly impressed by the discussion, and the quality and range of the questions. I could see right away that Microsoft was home to a great deal of talent and creative drive. That may be why, according to certain projections, Bill Gates may be worth a trillion dollars some day. Of course, I feel it's important to point out to America's young people: if Bill had not dropped out of college, he'd have a chance at being worth *two* trillion dollars.

After the discussion, I got a chance to visit Microsoft's Home of the Future--where I got a chance to see technology that was definitely impressive. My favorites were features of Windows 2000: magnification for the vision-impaired, and a voice that reads the screen to the blind.

Finally, I stopped over here at the offices of *Slate*, where my daughter Karenna worked in '96 and '97. Actually, while I started this piece at *Slate*, I am finishing it in Seattle and e-mailing it. (And all this time, I thought you actually had to be physically present at *Slate.com* in order to write for it.) It was terrific to meet some of her friends and former colleagues--and also to try my hand at journalism for the first time in almost a quarter of a century.

Instead of my trusty old typewriter from my days at the *Nashville Tennessean*, I did get to write this article on a state-of-the-art, ergonomic keyboard. And, true to my old profession, as I write this I'm crashing to meet the deadline I was assigned by editor Michael Kinsley.

All told, it was a wonderful visit. The entire Microsoft

campus is just bubbling with energy and ideas. I certainly hope to spend even more time in the Seattle area. And who knows? If I work at it, I might even be able to pick up some endorsements from members of the Sonics...

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TOP STORIES

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Gore offers no aid and comfort to Microsoft

Vice president refuses to get drawn into antitrust case at Redmond forum

Cynthia Flash; The News Tribune

Al Gore didn't tell Microsoft employees what they wanted to hear Monday.

Gore, appearing at a "town meeting" forum at Microsoft's Redmond headquarters in his role as a presidential candidate, repeatedly tried to duck questions about the Justice Department's antitrust lawsuit against the software maker.

He told the employees - about 250 middle and top-level managers - that he couldn't talk about the lawsuit because he's the vice president and the litigation is pending.

"I haven't expressed a view. I have been careful not to comment on it," he said of the lawsuit.

Gore, however, said nothing to make it appear he would be Microsoft's knight in shining armor if he becomes president.

Instead he defended the government's ability to file antitrust lawsuits against "private companies that unfairly use market dominance in one sector to stifle competition in another sector."

Gore's comments came 10 days after a federal judge ruled that Microsoft is a predatory monopolist that has used its dominance over the Windows operating system to harm consumers and competitors.

The antitrust lawsuit was filed during the Clinton/Gore administration. As a result, some who attended the Microsoft meeting questioned why they should vote for Democrats who favor such antitrust policies.

"You're naturally going to feel put upon if a judge ... decides that the law has been crossed," Gore told the Microsoft crowd. "But the values in antitrust laws I favor."

While Gore said he didn't want to talk about the Microsoft case in particular, he did not back away from the antitrust questions altogether.

He talked openly with a Microsoft employee who argued that Microsoft is not a monopoly, and instead is an underdog in some Internet technologies and is fighting to stay ahead.

"We're trying to innovate to beat the competition," said the employee, who did not give his name. "In some cases we're the underdog. It's a big race we're trying to win and compete in. We believe the Internet is an open playing field. To say we should be hampered by not being able to compete makes us upset.

"I want to vote for you, but it seems like I'm deeply conflicted," the employee said.

Not everyone in the room felt that way, however. Gore was introduced by Jeff Raikes, Microsoft's vice president in charge of sales, who has declared himself publicly as an avid Gore supporter.

After the town meeting, Gore repeated to reporters that he has no problems with the nation's antitrust laws. And he stressed that the Justice Department is independent of the administration.

However, an administration official has said that it may be necessary for the Clinton administration to step into the Microsoft case in the future, when the judge decides how to punish Microsoft.

Gore said it was too early to talk about that.

"I haven't analyzed the legal questions. Let's see how that develops," he said.

Gore was one of six presidential candidates who have held town meetings with employees on the Microsoft campus.

The difference between Gore's meeting and the others, however, was that it was open to the press. In fact, Gore canceled the meeting for a short time Friday when Microsoft refused to let reporters in. He rescheduled it after Microsoft agreed to allow reporters.

Gore said he wanted the meeting open in the aftermath of the antitrust ruling.

Had the meeting been closed, Gore said, "it would have changed the appearance of the meeting. It would have been different. It was better all around to have a fully open forum."

* Staff writer [Cynthia Flash](mailto:cynthia.flash@mail.tribnet.com) covers technology. Reach her at 206-467-9844 or cynthia.flash@mail.tribnet.com.

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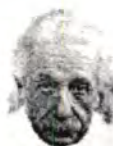
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Gore: White House May Get Involved in MS Settlement Talks

Posted by [Roblimo](#) on Tuesday

November 16, @03:59AM

from the be-nice-to-big-campaign-donors dept.

Amigan writes "C|Net news.com is

reporting on VP Al Gore's visit to

Microsoft's campus today includes a statement from the

Vice President that "...he expected that the White House

would get involved in any settlement talks between the

company and the Justice Department when antitrust

remedies get discussed. Why would the White House need

to be involved?"



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Why get involved? (Score:1)

by [blowdart](#) ([blowdart@hotmail.com](#)) on Tuesday November 16, @04:01AM EST (#1)

(User Info)

Why would any politican get involved? Political brownie points and to garner votes.

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- [Re:Why get involved?](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @04:29AM EST
- [Re:Why get involved?](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @04:37AM EST
 - [Re:Why get involved?](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @08:06AM EST
 - [Re:Why get involved?](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @08:55AM EST
 - [Re:Why get involved?](#) by MessiahXI (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @09:16AM EST
 - [Re:Why get involved?](#) by Flower (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:39AM EST
- [This is so pathetic...](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @09:02AM EST

Gates and Gore having invented the Internet... (Score:3, Funny)

by [Oms](#) ([oms at inasan dot rssi dot ru](#)) on Tuesday November 16, @04:02AM EST (#2)

(User Info)

...as well as all the other significant advances of modern computing, it's only logical that they should stick up for each other!

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- [What a hero, Al Gore](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @07:57AM EST

great whats next.. has sex with gates wife? (Score:0, Interesting)
by Anonymous Coward on Tuesday November 16, @04:05AM EST (#3)

come on.. the white house is getting involved with microsoft? isnt this like a violation of judicial proceedings? they should stay the heck out of it and somebody should hack microsoft into seperate companies and enjoy the prosperity that comes from that.. my 2 cents

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- [Re:great whats next.. has sex with gates wife?](#) by Oms (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @06:37AM EST
 - [Re:great whats next.. has sex with gates wife?](#) by Oms Tuesday November 16, @06:41AM EST
 - [so --- sorry](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @06:53AM EST
- [/. people lacking in general awareness](#) by Nexus7 (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @09:07AM EST
 - [Slashdot Usenet](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @09:22AM EST
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Gore (Score:3, Insightful)

by [Fuhrer](#) (aliebrah_n o s p a m_@iname.com) on Tuesday November 16, @04:09AM EST (#5)
(User Info)

Gore needs public exposure. Everyone thinks he has no brain, and from the things he says it certainly seems like it sometimes.

In any case, for him to be SEEN as doing something (whether he actually does is another matter) will make him look good, taking a tough line on the "evil Microsoft empire" will rake at least some votes for him. He *needs* it cause he needs all the support he can get.

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- [Re:Gore](#) by RoninM (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @05:16AM EST
 - [Re:Gore](#) by PD (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @06:12AM EST
 - [Re:Gore](#) by Ralph Bearpark Tuesday November 16, @06:18AM EST
 - [Re:Gore](#) by Shanoyu (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @06:21AM EST
 - [Off Topic - But Provoked](#) by Ralph Bearpark (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @07:09AM EST
 - [by Anonymous Coward](#) Tuesday November 16, @07:09AM EST
 - [Pedantry](#) by Ralph Bearpark (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @07:23AM EST
 - [6502](#) by angelo (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @06:58AM EST
 - [Re:Gore](#) by zigzag (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @07:40AM EST
 - [Thinks he has no brain?](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @07:44AM EST
 - [Re:Thinks he has no brain?](#) by 3waygeek (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:14AM EST
 - [The other irony](#) by Anonymous Coward (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @07:51AM EST
 - [Re:The other irony](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @09:20AM EST

Signifying nothing (Score:3, Insightful)

by Daffy Duck on Tuesday November 16, @04:12AM EST (#6)
(User Info) <http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/5945/bgb/press01.html>

Oh yes, Microsoft employees, although these are not political decisions, the White House will definitely be involved. Don't worry. Vote Democrat.

This is meaningless tell-them-what-they-want-to-hear bullshit. Gore won't want to be anywhere near the settlement talks (if there are any settlement talks), because there's no way to gain political advantage from it. He can't very well back his own administration's prosecution of Microsoft AND go to bat for them in settlement talks without the press shredding him for it. Gore's not *so* hard up for money that he needs Microsoft's support. He just wanted to be seen hanging out with high tech types to show how in tune he is with the new millennium.

Of course, all he said was that the White House would be involved. He didn't say which way. Nice, bland, noncommittal, non-responsive response. Perfect candidate.

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- Re:Signifying nothing by Ancipital (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @04:24AM EST
 - Re:Signifying nothing - Unseen hand by idic (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @04:43AM EST
 - Re:Signifying nothing - Unseen hand by jsm2 (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @05:03AM EST
 - Re:Signifying nothing - Unseen hand by john_gault (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @07:55AM EST
 - Re:Signifying nothing - Unseen hand by CodeShark (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @09:29AM EST
- Re:Signifying nothing by cicatrix (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @04:44AM EST
- Are you kidding? Re:Signifying nothing by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @08:39AM EST
- I can clear all this up right now. by re-geeked (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @09:25AM EST

Its always about politics, never about justice (Score:1)
by seichert on Tuesday November 16, @04:17AM EST (#8)
(User Info) <http://www.stwing.upenn.edu/~seichert>

Of course, Al Gore will have something to say about this ruling. He will have to do some simple math to figure out what to say. Basically if he says that this ruling is a miscarriage of justice, you can be ensured that political contributions from the Microsoft camp will increase. If he says that this ruling and the subsequent remedies are just you can be ensured of increased contributions from various Valley firms. Common citizens will still be puzzled why the Justice department went after a company for selling its product the way it saw fit.

The mistake the Valley firms have made is inviting the federal government to regulate their industry. Now there is legal precedent for the government to come in at any point in the future and limit the competitive practices of the market participants. The Valley firms, Sun in particular, have now agreed to play a game whereby they will bid for the political favor of various powerful politicians, instead of spending their time and money on creating better products and marketing strategies. This can only lead to the weakening of many a great firm.

Stuart Eichert
U. of PENN student/FreeBSD hacker

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- Re:Its always about politics, never about justice by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @04:24AM EST
 - IBM sort of did, by Shanoyu (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @06:25AM EST
 - Re:IBM sort of did, by Anonymous Colin (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:36AM EST
- Re:Its always about politics, never about justice by medcalf (Score:1) Tuesday

November 16, @07:05AM EST

Money (Score:1)

by okie on Tuesday November 16, @04:18AM EST (#9)
(User Info)

I wonder how much Bill Gates gave him? This could get bad for other OS's if politicians get involved.

It will be interesting to see which Willy is slicker.

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- It'd have to be disclosed by Greyfox (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @08:28AM EST

Not unnatural (Score:2, Interesting)

by Lettuce B. Qrious on Tuesday November 16, @04:19AM EST (#10)
(User Info)

It doesn't seem that far-fetched that the White House should need to be informed about the proceedings of a case involving the justice department plucking apart the company that comprises the world's ninth largest economy. I find that the statements delivered by Gore on this occasion, despite the obvious shortcomings of some of his statements on other occasions, are sound and fair.

However, Bill Gates' wallet makes him/M\$ a "viable force" in American politics; adjusted for some technicalities in language, American politicians ARE for sale. It isn't that far fetched to think that the Microsoft antitrust trial could become "an issue" in the upcoming election...

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- Re:Not unnatural by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @08:10AM EST
- "EXECUTIVE" Branch not involved interpreting law by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @08:27AM EST

Gore - father of the internet. (Score:1)

by arcade (ar-RemoveThis-cade@kvinesdal.com) on Tuesday November 16, @04:23AM EST (#11)
(User Info) <http://arcade.kvinesdal.com>

Well, Gore is, as we all know, the father of the internet. How could y2k be a problem, in a country that has both MicroSoft and Intel ..

ohwell, no wonder. Gore probably [try] to make sure that MicroSoft stays in one piece.

--

"Rune Kristian Viken" - arcade@kvine-nospam.sdal.com - arcade@efnet

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I know why Al is helping(silly, kinda) (Score:1)

by Odinon (nneewwhhaallll at mindspring dot com) on Tuesday November 16, @04:26AM EST (#14)
(User Info) <http://flat.lilug.org/~odinon/>

Al Gore needs to get involved because this is all his fault. I think he feels bad.

Microsoft didn't have as many chances to abuse their monopoly power ten years ago. But then Al, in his infinite wisdom, invented the internet.

Microsoft would have never done those things to try to help the internet work better had Al never inventeted it. So it's really his fault.

I'm sure tomorrow he will tell the judge that it isn't really Bill G's fault and how he will do better next time.

Then again I bet big brother baby George B, is already trying to help. So big brother Bill G may not bother big brother Al G.

*I know the story dosen't read like that, but I don't trust Al. How many any rockers remeber his wife's censorship trip at the head of the PMRC? Could you picture Tipper Gore as president^D^D^D^D^D^D^D^D^D err I mean first lady?

M. Newhall

"Your next goal in life, will be to prove all of this to my satisfaction."

Judge Fang in response to a torturee's explanation for his crimes.

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- [Re:I know why Al is helping\(silly, kinda\)](#) by Tet (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @05:10AM EST

About as surprising as a shark eating fish. (Score:1)
by idic (idic@idic.org) on Tuesday November 16, @04:26AM EST (#15)
(User Info) <http://idic.org>

That VP Gore should wish to be involved is no surprise at all. He can play either add his bat to those wielded by the government enforcers or (if Microsoft can meet his price) he can call them off and instruct them to agree to a lesser punishment more agreeable to Microsoft. Sounds like an example of good cop/bad cop to me.

What more does the average voter expect from a Demopublican with no principles?

Maybe next time voters will vote Libertarian and endorse a society where people's right to buy (or not to buy) software of their choice is respected.

First cigarettes, now software, what next?

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- [Re:About as surprising as a shark eating fish.](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @06:32AM EST
- [Re:About as surprising as a shark eating fish.](#) by TheHornedOne (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @06:56AM EST
 - [Re:About as surprising as a shark eating fish.](#) by phil reed (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @07:24AM EST
- [Abuse of power seems to be contagious](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @08:30AM EST

Some possible reasons (Score:1)
by stevelinton (sal@dcs.st-and.ac.uk) on Tuesday November 16, @04:26AM EST (#16)
(User Info) <http://www-theory.dcs.st-and.ac.uk/~sal>

I don't pretend to understand US government properly, but the WH is head of the executive isn't it? So I can imagine two possible reasons for WH involvement:

1. As the DoJ's bosses -- this is a big issue, so is dealt with at the highest level
2. Because many possible remedies would involve some part of the executive supervising M\$'s future behaviour and there needs to be input on what would be feasible and who would be the right people to do it.

In the UK I would certainly expect something like this to go up to cabinet level, which is the nearest equivalent.

Steve

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- [Re:Some possible reasons](#) by Rendus (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @05:30AM EST
 - [Re:Some possible reasons](#) by fwr (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @06:59AM EST
 - [Re:Some possible reasons](#) by loudici (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @07:53AM EST
 - [Re:Some possible reasons](#) by orcris (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:00AM EST
 - [Re:Some possible reasons](#) by orcris (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:12AM EST
- [Re:Some possible reasons](#) by rking (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @07:58AM EST

It's called a money-grubbing, corrupt government. (Score:1)
by acecool on Tuesday November 16, @04:26AM EST (#17)
(User Info)

We all know that in today's disgusting political system what counts isn't your so-called "vote," but the amount of money you are willing to use to grease the palms of today's politicians. MS is just doing what's natural for a company in their position- attempt to use any resources at it's disposal (money- they got plenty of it...) to get their asses out of this mess. And we have a walking piece of filth like Al Gore taking them up on the offer. Gross. It doesn't have to be like this, folks. Politicians don't have to be liars and cheats, but our couch-potato ball-game watching society doesn't care at this point... truly sad...

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- [John McCain for president.](#) by Shanoyu (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @06:04AM EST
 - [McCain is a murderer](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @08:39AM EST
- [Re:It's called a money-grubbing, corrupt governmen](#) by loudici (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @07:58AM EST

Gore seems to have some balls. (Score:1)
by Ken Broadfoot (kpb@efn.org) on Tuesday November 16, @04:29AM EST (#19)
(User Info) <http://www.mp3.com/robertrude>

To refuse to even appear if press was not allowed I applaud.

He is right to not comment on the case, however his statements about antitrust law make me think he is on the DOJ side.

Microsoft has money but its not like the 17,000 votes from MS employees can equal the hundreds of thousands from all the other hi-tech companies.

In other words, so what if we piss off Microsoft and its employees?

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- [Violence is never right](#) by idic (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @04:56AM EST
 - [Re:Violence is never right](#) by jsn2 (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @05:09AM EST
 - [Re:Violence is never right](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @06:42AM EST

Because MS gives tons of money to republicans.... (Score:0)
by Anonymous Coward on Tuesday November 16, @04:31AM EST (#21)

M\$, as well as many other silicon valley companies, have moved to buying republican politicians as they are often more sensitive *cough* CORRUPT *cough* to the needs of big businesses that want to exploit employees, the public, etc.. M\$ has donated a good

sum of money to the campaign of George Jr., and perhaps Al feels that if he convinces the DOJ to take it easy on M\$, he will be able to win back some support in silicon valley for the democrats, and himself. -supabeast! who can't get his login to work from work.

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- [Um, huh?](#) by Wakko Warner (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @07:21AM EST
- [Re:Because M\\$ gives tons of money to republicans..](#) by Zagato-sama (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:27AM EST
- [Not true.](#) by Electric Eye (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:50AM EST

Gore's war on illegal copying (Score:2, Informative)
by ole (ole@gnu.org) on Tuesday November 16, @04:32AM EST (#22)
(User Info) <http://gphoto.org/ole/>

<http://www.bsa.org/government/govhelp.html>

"Today, we are declaring war on software piracy... At home or abroad, intellectual property must protected." (Vice President Al Gore, October 1, 1998)

<http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/words-to-avoid.html#Piracy>

Publishers often refer to prohibited copying as "piracy." In this way, they imply that illegal copying is ethically equivalent to attacking ships on the high seas, kidnaping and murdering the people on them.

If you don't believe that illegal copying is just like kidnaping and murder, you might prefer not to use the word "piracy" to describe it. Neutral terms such as "prohibited copying" or "unauthorized copying" are available for use instead. Some of us might even prefer to use a positive term such as "sharing information with your neighbor."

-- Ole Aamot

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- [Re:Gore's war on illegal copying](#) by gad_zuki! (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @05:18AM EST
- [Calling a spade an fscking shovel](#) by the Eptot (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @05:42AM EST
 - [Re:Calling a spade an fscking shovel](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @06:11AM EST
 - [Re:Calling a spade an fscking shovel](#) by timftbf (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @06:32AM EST
 - [Re:Calling a spade an fscking shovel](#) by A Big Gnu Thrush (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @07:38AM EST
 - [Re:Calling a spade an fscking shovel](#) by rking (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:08AM EST
 - [Re:Calling a spade an fscking shovel](#) by fwr (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @06:51AM EST
 - [Re:Calling a spade an fscking shovel](#) by A Big Gnu Thrush (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @07:45AM EST
 - [Re:Calling a spade an fscking shovel](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @06:57AM EST

There is a political angle here anyway (Score:2)
by CormacJ (cormac@iol.ie) on Tuesday November 16, @04:38AM EST (#24)
(User Info)

Microsoft may try to stall and appeal until after the next president comes into office.

This would mean that the many political appointments that are made could be beneficial

to Microsoft.

The current administration want to have a solution so that they aren't seen as being weak.

They may also want to have something that will cause the next administration as much havoc as possible.

[[Reply to This](#) | [Parent](#)]

- [Don't be ridiculous](#) by orcris (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @04:56AM EST
 - [Re:Don't be ridiculous](#) by CormacJ (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @06:38AM EST
 - [Re:Don't be ridiculous](#) by orcris (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @07:26AM EST
 - [Re:Don't be ridiculous](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @08:18AM EST

If they can take money from China... (Score:1)

by jcr on Tuesday November 16, @04:38AM EST (#25)
([User Info](#))

.. then why can't they take bribes from Bill G? It's patently clear what Gore's purpose is. "Hey bill, this can all go away for 20 million bucks!" I think it's extremely inappropriate for a presidential candidate to go sucking up to defendant in a major antitrust case. Gore can go to hell. -jcr

[[Reply to This](#) | [Parent](#)]

Iznogoud! It is like advertising (Score:1)

by ubi on Tuesday November 16, @04:44AM EST (#27)
([User Info](#)) <http://village.flashnet.it/~fa01179/ubi-en.html>

My experience in Italy says that 90% of PC users think that MS is a sort of "only one existing choice". The fact that big machines and servers cannot even run Windows is often unknown, mostly as it is unclear to people that things very different from PCs exist -the existence of something unusual is probably due to that strange thing called Apple! If the White House plays a role in the game, the MS brand will be strengthened among the IT-unaware ones, because those will see it as a necessary move. To them, to hit MS means to endanger the world of computing!

I would understand such need if only Windows could do what it does, but we have alternatives!

[[Reply to This](#) | [Parent](#)]

Because Gates & Clinton have a history... (Score:1)

by LinuxGeek (linux77@hotmail.com) on Tuesday November 16, @04:47AM EST (#29)
([User Info](#))

I seem to remember pictures of Bill G and Bill C playing golf together before the 1995 DOJ anti-trust slap on the wrist. You know, the decree that MS basically got to author themselves saying that they were sorry for smacking DR-Dos and some other software developers around. This time around, the Clinton administration didn't get the ball rolling even after some congressional hearings and a lot of proding from Republicans.

The DOJ didn't get involved until 20 states had already joined together to file suit. The DOJ was starting to look like they were more interested in protecting a Clinton friend and then had to take action to save face.

[[Reply to This](#) | [Parent](#)]

conspiracy, corruption? nahhh.... (Score:0)

by Anonymous Coward on Tuesday November 16, @04:49AM EST (#30)

And don't forget the recent EU/USA "banana incident". I guess that shows quite clearly that US politicians are "in the pocket" of the banana industry (the name Chiquita doesn't come to mind now does it?) --- The \$\$\$ Man.

[[Reply to This](#) | [Parent](#)]

the funny thing is.... (Score:1)

by walkingCrash on Tuesday November 16, @04:50AM EST (#31)

([User Info](#))

how M\$ pressured him for his views on the antitrust laws, then M\$ changes the subject to hate laws???

[[Reply to This](#) | [Parent](#)]

- The secret of long-term persuasion. by Lemmy Caution (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @07:58AM EST

As a UK citizen.. (Score:3, Insightful)

by maroberts (maroberts@dial.pipex.com) on Tuesday November 16, @04:55AM EST (#33)

([User Info](#)) <http://www.maroberts.dial.pipex.com/>

..I have no influence on US elections,

Judging from the transcript Al Gore was sitting on the fence and refused to come down [publicly] on either the side of Microsoft or the DOJ. A bit disappointing for a possible future leader of the country IMHO, especially when the MS case is probably going to have a huge effect one way or the other on the US economy.

The fact that MS is such a large company explains why the White House is tempted to stick its nose in - of course, it may regret being associated with any decision come a few years down the line.

Mark Roberts

Feed the Karma monster - moderate this post up! :-)

[[Reply to This](#) | [Parent](#)]

- But thats the most effective kind of President! by Shanoyu (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @05:47AM EST
 - Re:But thats the most effective kind of President! by A Big Gnu Thrush (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @07:31AM EST
 - Re:But thats the most effective kind of President! by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @08:49AM EST
- Re:As a US citizen.. by phil reed (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @07:29AM EST
 - Re:As a US citizen.. by Amphigory (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @07:56AM EST
- Re:As a UK citizen.. by rde (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @07:53AM EST
 - Re:As a UK citizen.. by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @08:59AM EST
- Luke, I am your father by Greyfox (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @08:32AM EST

The Plot thickens... (Score:1)

by publius on Tuesday November 16, @05:08AM EST (#37)

([User Info](#))

Perhaps Mr. Gore realizes that Microsoft, through the Gates Foundation, controls a large amount of money distributed to some of the more vocal groups in US society. The fact that the Gates Foundation has received a sizeable amount of their wealth in stock already ties them to MS's well-being and makes their self-interest somewhat the same as MS's. Perhaps Mr. Gore knows that if he can broker an agreement with MS, with MS's support may come some or all of the people now attached to the MS teat. Or maybe I've just read too many bad spy novels...

[[Reply to This](#) | [Parent](#)]

What else could Al Gore say? (Score:2, Informative)

by joe@ (joe@nospamlinuxfan.com) on Tuesday November 16, @05:13AM EST (#40)
(User Info)

Let's not forget it was one month after Janet Reno's appointed Anne Bingaman was in office that she had the DOJ take the Microsoft case from the FTC, where they had been sitting on the evidence for years; undecided if they should do anything. The first attempt by the DOJ was not too successful, but the DOJ continued on.

Keep in mind that Haley Barbour, former head of the RNC, is a paid lobbyist for Microsoft is also a campaign advisor for George W Bush

Recently:

Ny York Post Online ran an article titled "Microsoft waits for GOP to bail them out!" In it they suggest that George W will win, replace Janet Reno and the others with more Microsoft friendly department heads!

Just what do you expect Al Gore to say to a group of influential Microsoft employees? Can he really afford to tell them they are screwed if he gets elected? No, the only thing he can do is say things that are not too definite, he didn't say the White house would let Microsoft go, just that they would be involved.

As I posted before, time is running out, the DOJ could be replaced by a more Microsoft friendly group after the next election. Don't be misled by a few, investigate all the facts before you vote next election. The Microsoft FUD machine is hard at work in Washington, has been for the last two years, they are there protecting their own interest, not the consumer. Just because this is politics, don't get stupid.. it's still the same Microsoft using the same type of FUD, just trying to get everyone to support their candidates.

PS, I'm running late, can't do much proof reading, please excuse any typos
>>>please remove "nospam" from email address

[[Reply to This](#) | [Parent](#)]

- [So if I understand your argument....](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @05:49AM EST
 - [Re:So if I understand your argument....](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @06:26AM EST
- [Bush is nothing but a mouthpiece for business](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @06:42AM EST

I'm Sorry, but... (Score:1)

by L Wolenczak (lwolenczak@usa.net) on Tuesday November 16, @05:25AM EST (#43)
(User Info)

The White House has no place in talks, this is a matter for the court system, not the white house, they are just trying to stick their nose into an area where The Constitution grants them No Power.

In other Words, The white house has no right to get involved with any talks with MS. I wouldn't mind seeing MS broken up, but the only reason the government is even going after MS, is because the Billions and Billions of dollars they have, because the government has realised, that they cannot continue to raise taxes. Perhaps if the Federal staff were reduced, and all the freebie programs started by this administration were taken away, they would not need to tax people so heavily.

They are doing the same thing with other industries, Cigarette Industry, Guns (under the title that we need to protect the children). The people of the United States needs to wake up, and see what their elected politicians are doing. will somebody please take the razor

[Reply to This | Parent]

- Government should run the software industry** (Score:2, Insightful)
by [dgb2n](#) (bassett@NO.t-onlineSPAM.de) on Tuesday November 16, @05:28AM EST ([#44](#))
([User Info](#))

[\[Reply to This | Parent \]](#)

- Gates: Microsoft may be involved politics** (Score:1)
by vr (f.u.cn.rd.ths.u.r.prbly.a.gk@hihi.boo) on Tuesday November 16, @05:38AM EST
(#46)
(User Info) <http://www.ifi.uio.no/~vetler>

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Where you smell politicians there's cash... (Score: 1)
by Aladdin Sane on Tuesday November 16, @05:39AM EST (#47)
(User Info)

[Reply to This | Parent]

He went there to sniff Bill's wallet (Score:1)

by ch-chuck on Tuesday November 16, @05:40AM EST (#48)

[\(User Info\)](#)

politics is such a thinly veiled influence peddling racket - with W's war chest bulging at the seams Big Al has to snuggle up to some real loud free speech. Whether he fires up the bullhorn and shouts, "We must leave business alone to innovate and create jobs!" or "We must protect consumer rights!" all depends on how many zero's are on the soft money check.

How's that for cynicism?

Reporting from the Gerrymandered Bob Scott district, this is

Chuck

.sig under construction

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translation (Score:0)

by Anonymous Coward on Tuesday November 16, @05:43AM EST (#50)

Qucik & dirty translation:

AL Gore to Microsoft:

If Microsoft continues to support Goerge W 100% and he wins, you are free, however, if you continue to support George W exclusively, and he loses, look out! It's far better to hedge your bets, because, as you know the White House will be involved in the final decision.

This is a wake up call to Microsoft, if you want to play hard ball in politics, you better be ready to take a few good hits.

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- [Now THAT'S and INTERESTING take! Re:translation](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @08:57AM EST

This is awesome! (Score:1)

by jdube (jdube@linuxmail.org) on Tuesday November 16, @05:49AM EST (#52)

[\(User Info\)](#) <http://jdube.freeshell.org>

Who else do you want involved with this thing? I mean, come on, the guy *made the internet!* And on top of that he invented algorithms, too. Get it? Al-Gore-Ithms? AHAHAHAHhhh... *sigh*

If you think you know what the hell is really going on you're probably full of shit. jdube is who I am.

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The finest politicians money can buy. (Score:1)

by packrat on Tuesday November 16, @05:53AM EST (#54)

[\(User Info\)](#)

Now if only the US had regulated the level of bribes... er... political contributions, then perhaps this could be a way to bankrupt Microsoft...

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Instead of talking to each other.... (Score:1)

by Harv on Tuesday November 16, @06:18AM EST (#58)

[\(User Info\)](#)

This seems a perfect opportunity to let the Vice President know just how welcome it would be for the White House to intervene. Oh, and put ABC News in as a 'cc' on your email. I won't both giving this group the email addresses; I'm sure you can find them. Instead of chewing on this with each other, why not strike a blow for effective Internet feedback?

"Erflech makumbanasta eohlookinanna-ish."

[[Reply to This](#) | [Parent](#)]

Our Freedoms - Support MS PLEASE! (Score:1)

by SL33Z3 (joedipshit@hotmail.com) on Tuesday November 16, @06:29AM EST (#63)
([User Info](#))

What do you mean if politicians get involved? They are already involved. They have been. It's all fun and games until it's not in your favor. I'm not the biggest Microsoft-lover out there, but I don't hate them by any means. I have one of their certifications. I also don't like some of the things they do. But when the political mess was all AGAINST Microsoft (and it still is I might add), all the *nix camps sat back and laughed about it and said it was great -- about time. But when Microsoft figures out that this whole case was caused because they forgot to grease some palms along the way, everyone gets upset. Politics works both ways. This whole charade was made because someone wasn't happy that MS had all that money and they weren't giving any of it to "campaign contribution" or lobbying as they like to call it. OK. So this may be flamebait of sorts, but it's necessary flamebait. You can't have a discussion about this without stepping on someone's toes.

My point in this whole jumbled rant is that the politicians always try to get involved. Sometimes you like what they are "restricting". Sometimes you are NOT. You cheer for the government when you like what they are doing and you complain when you don't. My contention is that you should complain all the time. Government regulation will bite you in the ass in the end. Whether it's an agreement between the Gov't and the NAACP to remove GOOD literature from the school system, a fight to take the right to freedom OF religion away from people (notice it says freedom OF religion, not freedom FROM religion), or whatever your cause. If you support the government in taking away those rights because you don't agree with them, I promise you it will come back to haunt you later. This is no different. If you don't want the government stepping in when Linux or BSD or whatever OS makes it's way to the top, then I highly suggest you support Microsoft in this struggle to free themselves from Government regulation. It will only restrict YOUR freedom by siding with the government.

Nuff said - kill my karma and flame me for whatever reason you feel necessary.

SL33ZE, MCSD

em: joedipshit@hotmail.com

- Artificial Intelligence is No Match For Natural Stupidity -

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- [Re:Our Freedoms - Support MS PLEASE!](#) by HaKn5La5H (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @06:54AM EST
 - [Re:Our Freedoms - Support MS PLEASE!](#) by SL33Z3 (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @07:04AM EST
 - [Camels](#) by llamayak (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:43AM EST

Why Not?? Father and Son Theory :-) (Score:1)

by cansecofan22 on Tuesday November 16, @06:33AM EST (#66)
([User Info](#))

Why wouldn't he want to get involved. He did, after all, invent the Internet. Microsoft now wants to be a leader of the Internet revolution. It just makes sense that he would want to be a part of it, its like father and son. No, really, the White House should have nothing to do with this issue. They need to just step back and let the DOJ take care of it.

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Stop the Ceaseless Advance of the Borg! (Score:1)
by Ereinion on Tuesday November 16, @06:39AM EST (#69)
(User Info)

Surely it's time to change that stupid, stupid Borg icon on MS stories? There's been so many of them in the past couple of weeks, it's getting old...
It's like 'Windoze' or 'Micro\$oft' - OK, it was mildly amusing the first time, but after a few YEARS it starts to wear a little thin, no?

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- [Re:Stop the Ceaseless Advance of the Borg!](#) by Zagato-sama (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:32AM EST
 - [Re:Stop the Ceaseless Advance of the Borg!](#) by Ereinion (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:38AM EST
- [Re:Stop the Ceaseless Advance of the Borg!](#) by Banpei (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:40AM EST

It's very simple: (Score:2, Insightful)
by Alex Belits (abelits@phobos.illtel.denver.co.us) on Tuesday November 16, @06:40AM EST (#70)
(User Info) <http://phobos.illtel.denver.co.us>

Al Gore needed exposure and money for elections. He scheduled the meeting with what perceived as the most "advanced" company in the area that he is supposed to support, expecting to get positive PR from it to himself, declare his support for everything Microsoft does and look good overall. However before he arrives things turn ugly, and Microsoft suddenly has a lot of dirt that Al Gore doesn't want to associate himself with. Microsoft sees any public event with Al "Is there some embarrassing statement about technology I haven't made yet?" Gore as possible PR disaster if anything antitrust-related is mentioned, so they are trying to keep press away.

Al Gore realizes that considering his past praise of Microsoft, meeting behind closed doors will arise suspicions that he is either trying to help Microsoft using his current position, or promise support in the future if he will be elected, so to avoid being perceived as corrupt politician he demands to allow press at the meeting, and tries to avoid the whole issue of Microsoft troubles to be mentioned. Microsofties are trying to play along, however not being politicians they fail to realize that any mentioning of lawsuit will force Al Gore to either declare his support of Microsoft and be at risk of losing points in political battles, or declare the support of government in attempt to keep the image of "supporter of technology". So few dumbasses ask him about antitrust lawsuit, and Al Gore tries to play safe. Yet, not being smart enough to understand where he should switch into "I have no comment and no promises" mode, he gives in, and makes vague, stupid-looking promise to "do something about that" despite being in no position to do that.

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- [Re:It's very simple:](#) by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @08:24AM EST

From the newsroom (Score:2)
by Zoltar on Tuesday November 16, @06:44AM EST (#74)
(User Info)

AP Newswire - 11/16/1999 - Microsoft purchases the rights to Pokemon

In what can only be described as a bizarre transaction today Microsoft announced they have purchased the rights to Pokemon, which will be renamed to microsoft-e-mon. A very happy Bill Gates had this to say about the announcement: "We are thrilled to own

the rights to Pokemon. We have been looking for a way to help children to learn about Microsoft at a very early age and we feel this will be a terrific avenue for them. At Microsoft we have always focused on our customers and innovated to meet there needs, this acquisition fits well with our strategy. God Bless America !"

An official spokesperson for Microsoft talked further about Microsoft's strategy for microsoft-e-mon. "All microsoft-e-mon toy figures will now be bundled with the state of the art browser IE5. We have always felt that children of all ages could benefit from our internet innovations, we look forward to being an integral part of the formative years of all children." The spokesman continued, "In an effort to teach children to be responsible and innovative we will also be charging a \$5 per month licensing fee for all microsoft-e-mon toys. This nominal fee will help kids to learn about part time jobs and making monthly payments, skills which will benefit them as they become adults. At Microsoft we love children and are thrilled to finally be able to help them. God Bless America"

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it's an election year. (Score:1)

by [lophophore](#) (beelzebub@hades.org) on Tuesday November 16, @06:49AM EST (#75)
([User Info](#))

Of course AlGore wants to get involved. First he will figure out which way the popular wind blows, then he'll adopt that as his platform. He doesn't care about "the right to innovate" any more than the right to operate in a balanced, free market, without getting squished like a bug. He just wants to be president.

there are 3 kinds of people:

- * those who can count
- * those who can't

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Algor-ithms and the natural dynamics of... (Score:1)

by [rootrot](#) (ikahn@SPAMLESSpipeline.com) on Tuesday November 16, @06:53AM EST (#78)
([User Info](#))

government. First off, of course A. Gore invented the net as he is the father of algor[e]-ithms.

Secondly, I do not think it should come as any suprise that the Whitehouse would want to keep an finger/be involved with this settlement. Our government has a history of being involved with *major* corpoptate events, particularly when such events involve the judical branch. I wager Congress will also get in the act.

With all due respect, it is the beauty or bane of a political system based on checks and balances. I would be considerably more concerned if the other branches of the government simply ignored what was happening in the judiciary.

Whether you are for or against the Court's action, you must admit that it is going to have far-reaching implications for the corporate, economic and political arenas. The Whitehouse would be derelict in its responsibilities if it did not have some form of involvement.

That said, the nature of the involvement is...er...dangerous. One one hand, they should be involved in some form. On the other, they have no business interffering with the function of the judiciary branch. So they walk a thin line in which they lose no matter which side they "step over" on. This is to say, if they get "involved" they will be derided for interffering with another branch of the government. If they stay too remote, they will be accused of, literally, not being involved enough in the process. I really do see this as a loose-loose situation for virtually everyone *except* MicroSith.

rootrot

Encryption is the envelope for email...who do you want reading your msgs...

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Why does any politician get involved... (Score:0)

by Anonymous Coward on Tuesday November 16, @07:00AM EST (#84)

He is sending a clear signal to Microsoft to pass over the loot^H^H^H^H^H campaign contributions to insure 'favorable' treatment at DOJ. There is precedent, Bush had DOJ back off in 1994.

[[Reply to This](#) | [Parent](#)]

- I hate to spoil an argument with facts, but... by phil reed (Score:2) Tuesday November 16, @07:32AM EST

Gore + Microsoft = Questions (Score:1)

by doogieh (dhudson @ gwu . edu) on Tuesday November 16, @07:07AM EST (#87)
([User Info](#))

If Al Gore becomes involved in a settlement of the MS case during his presidential campaign, it's good for him as free PR, but is good for everyone else?

First, how much do we want politicians interfering with the judicial process?

Second, MS told Gore, a few years ago, that if the antitrust trial was too severe, they would "pack their bags and move to India". Isn't Gore making himself vulnerable now--he has to find a "good" solution, or he won't become prez?

Last, let's just remember how Gore championed the Telecom Act of 1996 as a great source of competition; then we saw the largest stream of anticompetitive telecom mergers in the history of the US. Is this the person we want settling the MS case?

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I think I'll vote for Al. (Score:1)

by nevets (srostedt AT stny DOT rr DOT com) on Tuesday November 16, @07:27AM EST (#95)

([User Info](#)) <http://home.stny.rr.com/rostedt>

On my way to work this morning, they covered this on NPR. It was much more interesting to hear what he had to say then to just read it. The MS employees really tried to hit him with these questions. One, being in the position that he's in (VP), he can't comment on the trial. But to say that the case is "sound" with confidence was actually shocking for me to hear. He didn't seem to "around the bush" talk. To me it stood out how he felt about the case, and that he's telling these people what they don't want to hear. I haven't seen a politician do that in a long time. Al didn't back down on any of these questions. Although they all started no comment, he continued to have sayings about how he felt.

After one person said "I'll try not to repeat the question, but I work for Microsoft..." and Al just interrupted by saying "How many of these are we going to have?" and the audience all laughed. Another question that hits him with government stopping MS from joining the Internet, Al said that "For a company that has a large market share in one area, for them to use that to keep others out of another area, is not the American way."

All in all, I was impressed at how he stood up the best he could. Answering without answering. I think he just got my vote.

Steven Rostedt

-- "The Linux has you." with Bob McLaren's [Neo Tux!](#)

[[Reply to This](#) | [Parent](#)]

- Re:I think I'll vote for Al. by Anonymous Coward Tuesday November 16, @09:03AM EST

Bill (Clinton) needs a domestic legacy. (Score:1)

by ShieldWolf on Tuesday November 16, @07:32AM EST (#98)
(User Info)

As a Canadian I may be a little off here, but this is an outsiders take:

Bubba, after the impeachment, is now a lame-duck president with 14 months to go. He is a student of history, and knows well that his place in presidential annals will not be profound. He has tried to make sweeping domestic policies but has been stymied by a Republican Congress, e.g. Health Care reform. He has then turned to Foreign policy e.g. N. Ireland, Middle East, etc. But Billy (Clinton) knows that no one in the US really remembers foreign policy and so he sees his one last chance for an effective domestic policy: breaking up the largest company in the world (Microsoft). It is lasting, powerful, and a worthy legacy. Of course there is another powerful Billy who may just have other ideas...

-ShieldWolf

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- Re:Bill (Clinton) needs a domestic legacy. by fReNeTiK (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:23AM EST
- Re: Your ignorance is showing by Nexus7 (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:51AM EST

Garnering Techie Votes? (Score:1)

by gssphrek on Tuesday November 16, @07:32AM EST (#100)
(User Info)

I really believe there is the possibility of Gore attempting to get garner some techie votes.... which is the only reason I can see the White hooouse getting involved in this. Afterall, it's difficult to miss the collective distatste for M\$, and it would make sense to make friends of the techies, especially after "inventing the internet" the way Gore did, and proving his idiocy to us all.

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Why? (Score:2)

by G27 Radio on Tuesday November 16, @07:34AM EST (#101)
(User Info) <http://g27.org/numb/pics>

Obviously Gore is defending the Internet that he and Gates have been working so hard to create. (Please don't confuse this with the Internet everyone else has worked so hard to create.)

numb

?syntax error

]

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Tell Gore what you think! (Score:1)

by solar on Tuesday November 16, @08:09AM EST (#121)
(User Info)

For those of you who don't know, you can send Mr. Gore an email telling him just how much you like/dislike his corporate smoozing. If he likes your email enough, he might just come to your birthday party and **do the macarana** once his political career is in shambles! (*For a small fee I'm sure*)

So start churning out those emails fellow slashdotters.

Don't vote Democrat or Republican; vote intelligently!

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- [vote intelligently?](#) by loudici (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:27AM EST
- [Stupid activism](#) by Nexus7 (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:43AM EST

Gore Isn't the Only One (Score:1)

by John Murdoch (jmurdoch@nospam.windgap.com) on Tuesday November 16, @08:19AM EST (#126)

(User Info) <http://www.windgap.com>

Bear something in mind--Al Gore is not the only presidential candidate to visit Microsoft so far this year. In fact, he is the *sixth*. Candidates this year are recognizing that this campaign--perhaps more than any other ever--will hinge on money. And it isn't just Microsoft (the corporation) that has money (although the Wall St. Journal points out that the corporation itself has \$19 billion in cash on hand). Those 200 top managers of Microsoft are all worth at least 7 figures apiece--many of them worth 8 or 9 figures.

Al Gore has always had a reputation as a "money guy." He ran for Congress and subsequently for the Senate with an extensive list of supporters of his father (the former senator from Tennessee). Gore has always been particularly adept at raising funds, and political commentators frequently suggested that the reason Gore was chosen for the Vice Presidential nomination in 1992 was his vaunted ability to raise funds.

I think the real question about Gore's comment is how he emphasized it. Reportedly the questions got pointed, and there was clearly a hostile audience present. Did Gore say, "oh--I'm sure the White House will be involved in any settlement discussions" in a light, breezy fashion. Or did he get frustrated by a hostile crowd, and snap "...and I'm sure the White House," stop and glare, "will be involved in any settlement discussions."

Either way, Al was there to shake down the bigwigs at Microsoft. Pay up--or the government will decide what you can and cannot do.

[[Reply to This](#) | [Parent](#)]

- [Re:Campaign](#) by loudici (Score:1) Tuesday November 16, @08:36AM EST

Get involved ? (Score:0)

by Anonymous Coward on Tuesday November 16, @08:21AM EST (#127)

Of course they will get involved half of America has some part of there retirement funds that are probably tied to MS. Not to mention the fact that it is a huge advantage to all Americans to have and keep the most dominant operating system in control of American's. If you look at the larger long term picture of things I would rather have MS be dominant as opposed to SuSe. Lets face it RedHat will NEVER generate the type of revenue and ROI that MS has for Americans. You can say linux is better that MS all you want but we will see how many thousand employess plus many thousands of investors become millionaires from RedHat.

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Gore talks tech and antitrust at Microsoft

by David Postman
Seattle Times Olympia bureau

REDMOND - Vice President Al Gore did everything he could to fit in at Microsoft's sprawling campus. The suit was put away until the night's big-ticket fund-raiser, and if the V-neck sweater and slacks were a bit too nice for a place where a man can feel comfortable coming to work in a kilt, the Palm Pilot V on Gore's belt was pure geek chic.



Harley Soltes © The Seattle Times

Vice President Al Gore waves to employees gathered in the parking lot at Microsoft's Redmond campus during a campaign stop yesterday.

During his visit yesterday, Gore was also well prepared with insider tech talk.

"I want you to think of this choice of president as whose finger you want on the alt-control-delete button," Gore said.

But to many of the 200 plus Microsoft employees he met with, Gore was still a representative of the federal government that has successfully charged the company as a monopoly.

Gore, a Democratic candidate for president, did nothing to distance himself from the case that resulted in a judge's ruling two weeks ago that said Microsoft used unfair business practices to hamper competition.

He carefully kept away from any direct comment on the lawsuit filed by the Justice Department but said he supports using antitrust laws to foster competition among American businesses, including in the software industry.

"If competition is valuable, which I think it is, then antitrust

laws have a place in embodying the values of our country," Gore said. "If dominance in one area is used to prevent that competition in another area, that's wrong."

Not that he was talking about Microsoft, he said repeatedly.

During an hourlong session with Gore, that's what the company's managers wanted to talk about.

Workers said they considered themselves underdogs in some areas of the high-tech marketplace, certainly not predatory monopolists. They said they were confused over why the government would say such bad things about their company and were disturbed by "Janet Reno wringing her hands with glee." One told Gore that many Microsoft employees are Democrats but are not sure they can vote for him.

"We're deeply conflicted when the administration has basically a favorable reaction to a ruling that says we are harming the consumers," said the man, who began work at Microsoft as a 14-year-old intern.

Gore didn't seem disturbed by the questions, but he was forced to repeatedly explain his stance on antitrust law.

"I'm not going to say anything about this case," he said. "An entrepreneur or a company that wants to develop an application interface - just to pick a random example - and is not able to go into the marketplace and compete, has a right to say, 'Hey, wait a minute, that violates a fundamental American value.'"

Employees asked other questions, too. They wanted to know about school safety, abortion, education, hate-crime legislation and George W. Bush's pop-civics quiz.

That allowed Gore a chance to go into his standard stump speech, calling for tighter gun control and insisting that abortion is at risk under a Republican administration.

Gore was the sixth presidential candidate to visit Microsoft this year. But it was the first meeting open to the news media.

He was clearly concerned about seeming too close to the company. When he was set to leave for a visit to the company's online magazine, Slate, Gore initially invited Microsoft Group Vice President Jeff Raikes to ride along in his limousine. But he quickly thought better.

"No, we better do this separately," Gore told the man he calls his closest friend at the company.

There certainly weren't any hard feelings among top Microsoft employees. At an exclusive \$10,000-a-head dinner at an Eastside golf club last night, at least six current and former company executives were among the two dozen guests.

At Slate, where his daughter once worked, Gore met with editor Michael Kinsley and began writing an installment for the magazine's diary on his visit.

Gore also had a quick tour of Microsoft's Home of the Future where voice commands can turn appliances on and off and announce who's at the door. Bill Hill, a Scot and inventor of that technology, dressed in a kilt, demonstrated the company's new technology for electronic books.

After Microsoft, he met with 450 people at the Northshore Senior Center in Bothell. There, Gore said he is dedicated to protecting Medicare and Medicaid, and opposed plans to increase eligibility for Social Security from age 65 to 70, something supported by Bill Bradley, his opponent for the Democratic nomination.

Last night, the vice president met with 15 environmental leaders at The Golf Club at Newcastle. During the closed-door meeting, environmentalists focused on three issues: protecting endangered salmon, the World Trade Organization and details on the recent announcement that the federal government would station a rescue tug at Neah Bay to help prevent shipping accidents.

"I think he recognizes that he needs to get this campaign and administration closer to the people of this region," said Tim Stearns, policy director of Save Our Wild Salmon.

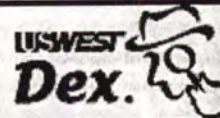
Chris Lehane, Gore's campaign press secretary, said Gore has already made the environment a big part of his campaign. Gore has said recently that as president he would ban all offshore drilling off the West and East coasts and spend \$2 billion to buy more parkland.

Seattle Times Eastside bureau reporter Sara Jean Green contributed to this report.

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Our Century, Nando's in-depth look at the 20th century

Text of Gore's remarks

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WASHINGTON (November 15, 1999 8:29 p.m. EST <http://www.nandotimes.com>) - Following is the text of prepared remarks by Al Gore to the Microsoft Forum in Redmond, Wash.:

I'm here to talk about a subject that is of tremendous importance to Microsoft, and the entire high-tech industry:

How we can keep our prosperity going, and spur innovation and growth in the 21st Century.

We've come a long way these past seven years. Our economy is the strongest in our history. And high technology - especially the Internet - is fueling a lot of that growth. But I'm still not satisfied.

I'm not satisfied when there are still too many nations that want to place tariffs on electronic commerce, and choke off growth and innovation.

I'm not satisfied when too many of our schools are so old and outdated they can barely be wired to the Internet - and certainly can't train the high-tech leaders of tomorrow.

I'm not satisfied when the companies that are so vital to our progress don't have the skilled workers they need to keep the economy growing.

With your help, I want to be a President who will lead America into a new innovation economy - where everyone has the chance to share in its boundless opportunity.

As Microsoft knows so well, the true engines of growth today are ideas. More innovation means more jobs, more growth, higher wages, higher productivity, and lower costs throughout our economy.

I'll be talking throughout this campaign about my economic ideas for the 21st Century. But before I take your questions today, I want to talk about six central steps I would take as President to help our high-tech sector - and all of America - seize its economic potential:

First, we need to continue our strong overall economic strategy. In particular, I'm committed to opening markets around the world, as we've done in telecommunications or in lifting export controls on encryption - balancing our need for national security with the right to sell technology abroad.

Second, I will fight to make permanent today's tax cuts for research and experimentation - so you can count on a long-term tax cut for innovation and job creation. And I'll craft these tax cuts be specifically to help the small businesses and start-ups that are so crucial to our high-tech future.

Third, I will double our nation's investment in information technology. And I will work to bring together the worlds of biomedical research and information technology - by helping to create 20 centers of excellence in biomedical computing on the campuses of our finest schools. That way, we can deliver on the limitless potential for new treatments, diagnostics, and personalized medicine created by the Human Genome Project.

I also need your help in investing in things like broadband deployment - to help the Internet go

both faster and farther, and finally put an end to the "world wide wait."

Fourth, as I press for free and fair trade, I will work to keep international tariffs off of Internet commerce. I want to keep the Internet a duty-free, global free trading zone.

Fifth, we need to make sure that as innovation changes our economy, everyone can keep up.

I'll begin by fighting for revolutionary change in our public schools, not the kind of plans we've seen from some in Congress - which could force deep cuts in education.

I'll create new 401(j) savings accounts - to encourage workers to save for their own training, and provide tax cuts for those who do. I'll expand lifelong learning, so that every adult who needs training or retraining can get it.

And I'll launch an unprecedented effort to close the digital divide in this nation - by finishing the job of wiring every classroom and library, by expanding teacher training in technology, and by creating new "Internet Communities" across America. Through a combination of grants, loans, and new Technology Bonds, these "Internet Communities" will enable small and rural towns to build community computing centers, and train students in technology, so we can close the digital divide once and for all.

Sixth and finally, I want to make sure that our newest technologies don't compromise our oldest values. That's why I was proud to work with companies like Microsoft on GetNetWise, to give parents the tools they need to control what comes into their home. That's why I proposed an electronic bill of rights for this electronic age - to keep personal information such as medical records 100 percent private. And that's why I've tried to encourage industry self-regulation when it comes to Internet privacy. You and I both know: people's willingness to use many of your technologies will depend on whether they feel secure and protected when they use it.

There's going to be a pitched debate about all these issues in the coming year. And I believe you need to know the stakes. Some will try to cut education and unplug our kids from the Internet at a time when education is more important than ever. Some will try to spend the whole surplus on tax cuts, even though that would plunge us right back into deficit.

I believe this is the time to build on the progress we've made. It's been said that "cyberspace is big enough to matter, but (still) small enough to be shaped." I believe that's true. I believe we can work together to shape our new technology in a way that not only strengthens you, but also strengthens America. That's one reason why I want to be your President - and why I need you to join with me.

