

Dear Mr. Carson,

There's a serious problem going on in america that I was hoping to make you aware of. It involved the Digital Millenia Copyright Act.

Colleagues of mine are being persecuted right now, and we're pretty unsure why. A programmer, Jon Johansen, has been arrested for "reverse-engineering" the CSS encryption scheme on the dvd-format. Reverse-engineering is iffy, but (I am not a lawyer and can't cite cases off the top of my head) the last I heard, reverse-engineering is not illegal. I recently saw an article where phillips had been sued for reverse-engineering the chipset of a competitor's device, so that they could make their universal remote compatible with it. That was overturned in a us appeals court. That's big business. The dvd case is a bunch of hobbyists trying to watch dvd players for linux. There has been no law broken. The only law broken is the little guy trying to do something for himself. In this country, to make that illegal is a Sin! I think back to the movie "Tucker", about James Tucker.. The engineer of the automobile Tucker. In the movie, a quote was used. The quote went something like "It used to be in this country, if a man had a better way of doing something, then he had the opportunity to do it and make a living for himself off of it". Now big business is regulating if we're even allowed to do things for free.

Sir, The world is changing. I am 20 years old, and I dropped out of high school. The biggest concern in my life the past 2 months have been dealing with recruiters, and turning down six-figure jobs. But you're putting 16 year old high school students (in other countries mind you, since when do we police the world?) In jail for wanting to watch videos he paid for? Yes that's the issue. We buy our dvd players. We buy our dvd media. We don't want to be in the shackles of microsoft, so we run linux. We should have EVERY right to play that dvd we buy on a linux machine, a windows machine, or a russian electric toothbrush if we please.

It is us, the generation-x/y kids who are shaping the new world. Maybe it's time that the government, the career politicians, the people who's pockets are consitently padded by big business' special interest lawyers step back, and look at how they are impeding progress.

To end on that note, I am organizing a group of local students, engineers, hobbyists, and just down-right intelligent citizens to contact our representatives and let them know we will NOT be pushed around anymore.

Sincerely,

Michael T. Halligan

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