

Microsoft Corporation's 2023 Shareholders' Meeting

Statement given by John C. Harrington

Microsoft in its argument against our proposal says it “. . . has been open about its principled approach to pursuing military contracts cited in this proposal. . .”

There is nothing “principled” about pursuing a technology designed to kill human beings. Keep in mind that this technology will not only be utilized by our military, but others that may seek to destroy us. Technological weapons can be used for defense or offense; for the United States, for Russia, for North Korea, for Iraq, and many others. Weapons technology can be used by anyone, anywhere, once it is developed, released, or modified. Weapons technology can be hacked – and it will. There is no going back. Pandora's box has been opened. The black box to kill has been opened.

While shareholders, as stakeholders, may be impressed by Microsoft's arguments that the company has a “principled approach to pursuing military contracts,” in the end, it is based primarily, if not exclusively, on corporate materialistic self-interest, not patriotism, not necessarily just in defense of America, based upon Microsoft's so called “continued . . . thoughtful approach.”

Corporations are not “patriotic”, people are. Corporations have no soul, people do. Corporations have no morality, people do. Corporations are at best, amoral. They will do business with anyone or any country in pursuit of cash. There is nothing in our company's Articles of Incorporation that supports United States democracy or our military or our country's defense, or, in fact, our constitution. These commitments are not in Microsoft's Articles or charter, which is the rule of corporate law.

If the board of our corporation was interested in “continuing the dialogue” about its participation in developing a weapons technology, and being transparent, why would it not support an outside, third-party, independent report, to assess the reputational and financial risks of continuing to be a weapons manufacturer? Ask that question. Why does our board of directors and management as fiduciaries fear a report asking these questions?