

The Final Round¹

Everett Rutan

ejrutan3@ctdebate.org

Farmington High School

December 7, 2024

THBT Google should be broken up.

A Note about the Notes

These are my notes from the varsity final round at Farmington High School on December 7, 2024. They are limited by how quickly I could write and how well I heard what was said. They are not verbatim transcripts but rather summarize what was said as I understood it. I apologize for any errors, but I hope debaters will appreciate this insight: what a judge hears may not be what the debater said or thinks they said.

There are two versions of the notes. The one below is chronological, reproducing each speech in the order in which the arguments were made. It shows how the debate was presented. The second is formatted to look more like my written flow, structured to follow arguments from one speech to the next. It looks like my written notes from the debate, cleaned up and formatted.

The Final Round

The final round at Farmington was between the Joel Barlow team of Griffin Speck and Cade Fravel on the Government and the Bethel team of Jack Woleck and Willa Zelaznick on the Opposition. The debate was won by the Government team from Joel Barlow.

1) Prime Minister Constructive

- a) Introduction
- b) Statement of the motion
- c) “This House”: people of the US
- d) Definition: “broken up” Alphabet’s divisions as separate companies
- e) Weighing mechanism: benefits to consumers and companies.
- f) G1²: Google violates antitrust law
 - i) Holds high percentage, 90%, of ads and search online
 - (1) Supported by control of data
 - (2) Unfairly limits competition
 - ii) Integrated services—pixel, chrome, android, youtube
 - (1) Convenient for consumers
 - (2) Permits data sharing across apps
 - (3) Unfair as other companies lack access
- g) G2: Benefits of
 - i) Outlook email is just as good

¹ Copyright 2008 Everett Rutan. This document may be freely copied for non-profit, educational purposes.

² “G1” indicates the Government first contention, “O2” the Opposition second contention and so forth.

- (1) Many prefer gmail for its convenience
 - POI: Isn't "convenience" a benefit to "This House"?***
 - (2) One company leaves no viable options
 - (3) Competitors don't have the data
- h) G3: Solvency
 - i) Microsoft pre-installed Internet Explorer
 - (1) Antitrust forced MS to unbundle, enabling competition
 - (2) Google services the same
 - ii) Google pays Apple to be iPhone default search
 - iii) e.g., Standard Oil in early 1900's
 - (1) broke Rockefeller monopoly into smaller companies, Exxon, Shell
 - iv) Bell/ATT broken into small companies
- 2) Leader of the Opposition Constructive**
 - a) Intro/motion
 - b) Accept the definitions
 - c) O1: A breakup is futile
 - i) Most disapproved MS settlement
 - (1) MS still a major player
 - ii) Google deal w/Apple saved Apple \$20bn
 - (1) This benefits people as per the weighing mechanism
 - iii) If Google broken up:
 - (1) How to we choose who leads which division?
 - (2) How do you deal with dysfunction when apps don't work together?
 - iv) There are issues, but not solved by a breakup
 - d) O2: Other approaches have lower resource costs
 - i) e.g., make Google share meta-data
 - (1) fix specific problems
 - ii) MS recovered within 5 yrs
 - iii) Public supports growth of technology
 - (1) Trump won on support for tech
 - (2) Compare to Congress trying to legislate FaceBook
 - e) O3: US is better off if Google is big, integrated
 - i) Integrated services are convenient to use
 - ii) May not be available after breakup
 - iii) Things will take longer, may not work
 - f) G1: Data storage is part of all new tech
 - i) The way social media works
 - ii) Other ways to deal with harms
 - iii) Gov admitted to convenience
 - iv) Americans want efficient, fast apps
 - g) G2: Outlook? People prefer gmail
 - i) Google could share metadata
 - h) G3: MS/IE?
 - i) Not comparable to breakup of Google
 - ii) Bell system?
 - (1) Out of date, not reflective of today's tech

3) Member of Government Constructive

- a) Intro
- b) O1: MS/IE? Ineffective?
 - i) Why is IE only 10% of market now?
 - (1) Show antitrust works
 - ii) Apple paying Google means even less competition
 - iii) Breakup difficult?
 - (1) Each division already has people in charge
 - (2) Not a problem if we lose some top executives
- c) O2: Resources?
 - i) Opp does not offer any solution
 - (1) No mechanism to share data
 - (2) Gov offers effective solution
- d) O3: Unity/Efficiency?
 - i) Apps now stuck in one company
 - ii) Breakup would create multiple companies
 - iii) Independent companies could work on compatibility
 - (1) Why not MS email, Google word processor, another website host
 - iv) Multiple companies would increase services, efficiency, integration
- e) G1: We explained how breakup could still cooperate
- f) G2: People like gmail?
 - i) Do they choose? Or have choice made for them
 - (1) Convenience forces a choice they don't need to make
 - ii) Separate Google
 - (1) Prioritize compatibility
 - (2) Choose best of each application
 - (3) Result more competition
- g) G3: Solvency
 - i) MS/IE settlement enabled Google/Alphabet!
 - ii) Google more integrated than MS
- h) O1: Saying FD would worsen the situation is a contradiction

4) Member of the Opposition Constructive

- a) Restate O1, O2, O3
- b) G1: Not ignoring problem
 - i) Compatibility and integration best for consumers
 - ii) Not whether it's a monopoly
- c) G2: Gov admitted Google was convenient
 - i) Can solve problems without a breakup
 - (1) e.g., require interoperability, data sharing
 - ii) Breakup means not collusion/sharing
 - (1) Parts won't all have access to data
 - (2) So breakup won't solve convenience
- d) G3: MS was less prolific than Google
 - i) Fewer harms from breakup
 - ii) Bell system was physical, not digital
- e) O1: Talked about MS above

- i) Apple/Google collusion already illegal
- ii) Google's integration is its strength
- iii) Need big companies to provide services
 - (1) Competing companies won't have metadata
 - (2) Breakup won't solve

POI: How can they share metadata?

- (3) FTC could require sharing
- f) O3: Apple/Google agreement show cooperation possible
 - i) Search requires continuity
 - (1) e.g., sharing docs in email

5) Leader of Opposition Rebuttal

- a) Intro
- b) Repeat O1, O2, O3
- c) MS/IE?
 - i) Limited competition at the time
 - ii) Google more efficient
- d) Apple/Google cooperating not colluding
 - i) Result is more efficient for consumers
- e) Department heads?
 - i) Now they can work across divisions
 - ii) This efficiency is lost
- f) O2/Solutions?
 - i) Opp doesn't need to solve, just that alternatives exist
 - ii) Sharing data will increase competition
- g) Efficiency?
 - i) Opp best of both worlds
 - (1) Competition increases by sharing meta data
 - (2) Still single-system efficiency

6) Prime Minister Rebuttal

- a) Breakup is only way to give users a choice
- b) Require data sharing?
 - i) Ignores power of interconnection
 - ii) Admits google is a monopoly
 - iii) Admits google using illegal practices
- c) Breakup vs datasharing?
 - i) Violates terms of service
- d) Breakup not a realistic solution?
 - i) Gov solution uses existing resources
 - ii) Opp tries to give others Google's resources
 - (1) Doesn't stop Google!
 - (2) Leaves Google with unfair advantage
- e) Convenience?
 - i) Companies already cross-integrate
 - (1) e.g., text, Samsung, Apple
 - ii) Breakup means new companies, new options
 - (1) Increases competition

- f) For solvency look at case of MS
 - i) Tech sector grew after antitrust
 - ii) Allowed Google to grow
 - iii) Provided consumer choice
- g) Benefits of breakup
 - i) Increased consumer choice
 - ii) Increased competition
 - iii) Fewer unfair practices