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Mr. Earl D. Jacobson  
Director of Marketing  
Honeywell Information Systems  
P.O. Box 6000  
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Mail Sta. A-69

Dear Mr. Jacobson:

I am writing you in behalf of the HLSUA Multics Users' Subcommittee to express our deep concern over Honeywell's failure to acknowledge any role for Multics or the series 68 as a large system product at the recent HLSUA Forum in Seattle. It appears that Multics related items were in fact deliberately and methodically excluded from the presentations given by H.I.S. personnel at the opening general session of Forum XIX. Some of us thought we were at the wrong meeting. For example, Honeywell failed to announce the purchase of the first Level 68 Multics System by the University of South Western Louisiana (USL) on September 27, despite a specific request by USL for this acknowledgement.

It is recognized that this introductory session could only deal at an overview level. However, in more than an hour of introductory remarks in which Honeywell representatives touched upon Level 66 GCOS, the 636 line, and even Level 64 and series 2000, Multics was not mentioned once. Further, of several dozen types of product brochures distributed at Forum XIX by Honeywell, not one dealt with Multics. All of these points help to reinforce the opinion that the decision makers within H.I.S. neither understand nor care to understand the technological or marketing potential of the Multics system.

After the opening session at the Forum, Adrian Bos was individually accosted by most Multics users present, each of whom expressed their concern and frustration over Honeywell's attitude toward Multics. Adrian was kind enough to address the first session of the Multics subcommittee to help convince the users that H.I.S. was in fact not only committed to Multics but was in the process of strengthening that commitment. We all appreciated Adrian's efforts, but the negative effect caused from the opening session was still not overcome since most of the users have received these relatively private assurances before.

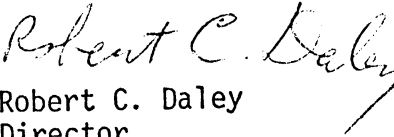
The Multics users are in general quite knowledgeable about Multics, and all recognize the problems within the current system as well as its technological advantages. However, all of the users have studied the system well enough to understand that the underlying system architecture of Multics is vastly superior to any system currently available or announced. We firmly believe that the only obstacle to the realization of the full technical and marketing potential of Multics is Honeywell's negative attitude toward the system.

I have personally watched quite closely the development of Multics by Honeywell since 1970. Since that time, very little in the way of major new function (e.g., COBOL compiler, SORT/MERGE tape support, etc.) has been added. Honeywell has so far failed to support the system in a way that would exploit its full potential.

In 1970 I felt that Multics had a seven year technological edge on any other system. During the past four years I have watched with anguish while this technical edge as been allowed to dwindle to a short three years. Time is rapidly running out on Honeywell's opportunity to fully exploit the potential of Multics. IBM's future system announcements draw closer every day and unless Honeywell has something like Multics already running in the back room, I firmly believe that the Multics architecture represents Honeywell's only opportunity for remaining competitive in the late 1970's.

In summary, the Multics users cannot understand Honeywell's lack of interest in Multics. Honeywell seems to view the system as a burden or a threat rather than recognizing its potential and welcoming the challenge to capitalize on an unusual opportunity.

Sincerely,

  
Robert C. Daley  
Director

RCD/mjg

cc: R. P. Henderson  
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