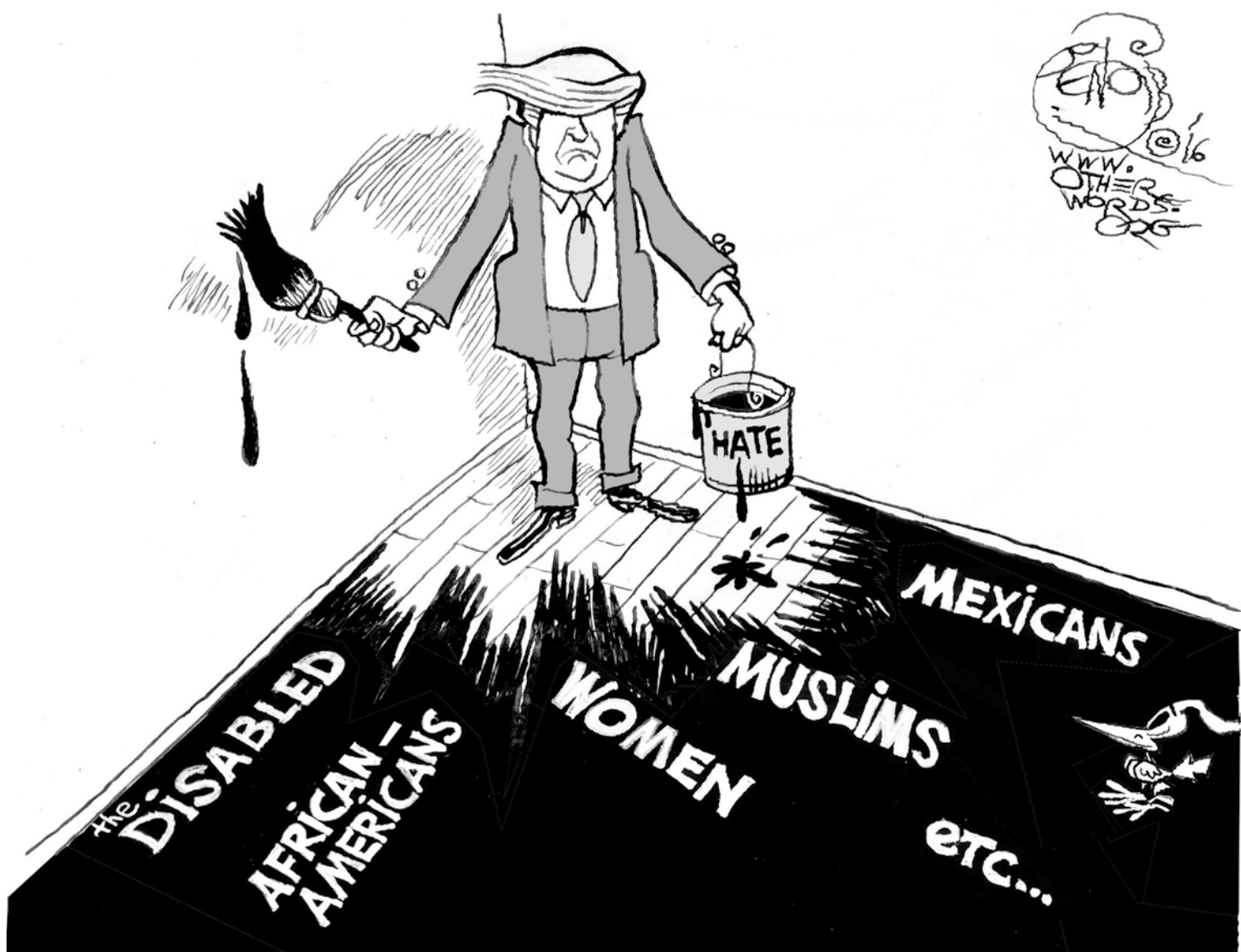


OPINION



Companies Need to Stop Bankrolling Hate

Trump led GOP a deal breaker

BY LUCIA MARTINEZ

It's common for major corporations to sponsor political conventions to buy favor with political parties. But what about when the convention nominates a presidential candidate who's an out-and-out racist?



That's a deal breaker, right?

For some big tech companies, apparently not.

Facebook recently announced that it will provide funding and other support for the Donald Trump-led Republican National Convention. And Google will be the event's official livestream provider via YouTube.

These companies need to find their moral compass and divest from hate.

Trump's violent rhetoric has inflamed a national atmosphere that's already hostile toward Latino, Muslim, and black communities, as well as women and people with disabilities. He's called for the mass deportation of undocumented immigrants, promised to build a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border,

and vowed to ban all Muslims from entering the United States.

Trump has also incited actual physical violence against people of color, and refused to denounce the white supremacist organizations that openly support him.

If that weren't enough, Trump's also threatened to shut down the open internet, censoring the dissident voices standing

panies not to bankroll a platform for hate while Trump continues to incite violence against marginalized communities. Other groups, including my own, have joined the effort to push tech companies to pull their support from the Republican convention, including both direct financial donations and in-kind contributions.

This isn't about left or right, but right and wrong. People of color make up a large portion of the users of services like YouTube and

democracy.

It's important to note that these companies have taken stands on other political issues.

Both Google and Facebook recently spoke out against North Carolina's transphobic "bathroom bill." And earlier this year, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg circulated an internal memo calling out employees who crossed out the words "Black Lives Matter" on the signature wall at the company's headquarters. He called the

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up against his hate and racism. He's called for greater surveillance of communities of color, and has encouraged violence against protesters and journalists.

In short, Trump's campaign isn't "business as usual" — and corporations shouldn't treat it as such. That's why the racial justice group ColorOfChange has launched a campaign called Divest from Hate.

They're urging major tech com-

panies are essentially profiting off the very communities that Trump's rallying against.

Erin Egan, a Facebook vice president for publicity, claims that the company's involvement in the convention will "facilitate an open dialogue among voters, candidates, and elected officials." But throwing a coronation ball for Trump and his white supremacist supporters has nothing to do with

behavior "malicious" and "unacceptable."

Now it's time for Facebook and Google to take another stand against hate — and to join companies like Coca-Cola, Hewlett-Packard, and Microsoft that have already scaled back or cut their support to the Republican convention.

Lucia Martínez is an organizer with the Free Press Action Fund. Distributed by OtherWords.org.



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