

The 2016 Election

I am endorsing Hillary Clinton for president. I've never endorsed a presidential candidate before, but I'm making an exception this year, because this election is exceptional. Donald Trump represents an unprecedented threat to America, and voting for Hillary is the best way to defend our country against it.

A Trump presidency would be a disaster for the American economy. He has no real plan to restore economic growth.

His racist, isolationist policies would divide our country, and American innovation would suffer. But the man himself is even more dangerous than his policies. He's erratic, abusive, and prone to fits of rage.

He represents a real threat to the safety of women, minorities, and immigrants, and I believe this reason alone more than disqualifies him to be president. My godson's father, who is Mexican by birth and fears being deported or worse, is who convinced me to spend a significant amount of time working on this election at the beginning of this year, when Trump still seemed like an unlikely possibility.

Trump shows little respect for the Constitution, the Republic, or for human decency, and I fear for national security if he becomes our president.

The only two vocal Trump supporters I am close to are Peter Thiel and my grandma. Peter is a part-time partner at YC, meaning he spends a small fraction of his time advising YC companies, does not have a vote in how YC is run, and in his case waives the equity part-time partners normally get.

This has been a strain on my relationship with both of them—I think they are

completely wrong in their support of this man. Though I don't ascribe all positions of a politician to his or her supporters, I do not understand how one continues to support someone who brags about sexual assault, calls for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the US, or any number of other disqualifying statements. I will continue to try to change both of their minds.

Some have said that YC should terminate its relationship with Peter over this. But as repugnant as Trump is to many of us, we are not going to fire someone over his or her support of a political candidate. As far as we know, that would be unprecedented for supporting a major party nominee, and a dangerous path to start down (of course, if Peter said some of the things Trump says himself, he would no longer be part of Y Combinator).

The way we got into a situation with Trump as a major party nominee in the first place was by not talking to people who are very different than we are. The polarization of the country into two parallel political realities is not good for any of us. We should listen to each other more, not less.

We should all feel a duty to try to understand the roughly half of the country that thinks we are severely misguided. I don't understand how 43% of the country supports Trump. But I'd like to find out, because we have to include everyone in our path forward. If our best ideas are to stop talking to or fire anyone who disagrees with us, we'll be facing this whole situation again in 2020.

That kind of diversity is painful and unpopular, but it is critical to health of a democratic and pluralistic society. We shouldn't start purging people for supporting the wrong political candidate. That's not how things are done in this country.