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JARED TAYLOR, an individual;
NEW CENTURY FOUNDATION,
a Kentucky not-for-profit trust,

Plaintiffs,

vs.

TWITTER, INC., a California corporation,

Defendant.

No. _____

COMPLAINT

- (1) Violation of California Constitution
- (2) Violation of Unruh Civil Rights Act
- (3) Breach of Contract
- (4) Conversion
- (5) Violation of Consumers Legal Remedies Act

Plaintiffs, Jared Taylor and New Century Foundation (“Plaintiffs”), hereby file this Complaint for Violation of Article I, sections 2 and 3 of the California Constitution, Violation of the Unruh Civil Rights Act (Civ. Code § 51 et seq.), Breach of Contract, Conversion, and Violation of Consumers Legal Remedies Act (Civ. Code §1750 et seq.), against Defendant, Twitter, Inc. (“Twitter”), and would show as follows:

INTRODUCTION

1. Article I, § 2 of the California Constitution guarantees that “every person may freely speak, write and publish his or her sentiments on all subjects.” On its “Values” page, Twitter states: “We believe in free expression and believe every voice has the power to impact the world.” (Exh. A). Twitter states that its mission is to “[g]ive everyone the power to create and share ideas instantly, without barriers.” (Exh. B).

1 2. However, in defiance of California law, as well as its own founding principles and
 2 terms of service, Twitter has decided that it will not allow Mr. Taylor and his publication, American
 3 Renaissance, to respectfully share their views on its open platform. Mr. Taylor’s Twitter account and
 4 the Twitter account of American Renaissance (together, the “Accounts”), were permanently suspended
 5 by Twitter on December 18, 2017.

6 3. Twitter has not banned the Accounts because Mr. Taylor has engaged in disrespectful,
 7 harassing or abusive behavior. On the contrary, during their over six years on the platform, Mr. Taylor
 8 and American Renaissance have treated other users with the utmost respect and courtesy, and Twitter
 9 has never alleged otherwise. Indeed, Mr. Taylor has used the Accounts to caution against the use of
 10 Twitter to harass other users.

11 4. Thus, this lawsuit does not implicate Twitter’s right to regulate its public forum to
 12 prevent legitimate instances of obscenity, harassment, threats, and abuse, so long as these rules are
 13 written and enforced in a viewpoint-neutral manner. Instead, it raises the issue of whether Twitter can
 14 arbitrarily and discriminatorily ban a speaker from its platform due to nothing more than the
 15 controversial nature of the speaker’s viewpoint, political beliefs, and perceived political affiliations.
 16 While the Plaintiffs hold admittedly controversial positions, they have always expressed them—both
 17 on and off Twitter—in a lawful, civil, and respectful manner.

18 5. In unilaterally removing Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance from its open, public
 19 platform Twitter seeks to censor Mr. Taylor solely based on his controversial viewpoints and perceived
 20 affiliations. Giving Twitter the power to ban speakers due to the controversial nature of their speech
 21 and affiliations would nullify the guarantee of Art. I, §§ 2-3 of the California Constitution that “every
 22 person may freely speak, write and publish his or her sentiments on all subjects.” In the words of the
 23 late Supreme Court justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., “if there is any principle of the Constitution
 24 that more imperatively calls for attachment than any other, it is the principle of free thought—not free
 25 thought for those who agree with us but freedom for the thought that we hate.” *United States v.*
 26 *Schwimmer*, (1929) 279 U.S. 644, 654-655 [49 S. Ct. 448] (dis. opn. of Holmes, J.). The California
 27 Constitution embodies these same principles.

THE PARTIES

11. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference each and every preceding paragraph as though set forth fully herein.

12. Plaintiff Jared Taylor is, and at all relevant times was, a natural person residing in the Commonwealth of Virginia. In 1990, Mr. Taylor started the monthly publication, *American Renaissance*, which was produced continuously until January 2012, when all content was shifted to the Internet at www.AmRen.com.

13. Plaintiff New Century Foundation was founded by Mr. Taylor in 1994. It is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, educational institution which conducts all the activities of American Renaissance. New Century’s purpose is to “disseminate facts about race and race relations so that policies and public awareness can be founded as much as possible upon realistic assessments rather than intuition or ideology. Racial harmony, reduction of violence, elimination of prejudice, and mutual understanding between the races can be achieved only through better knowledge of all aspects—historical, cultural, biological, sociological—of the role race plays in the lives of Americans.” It also seeks to “study the effect that immigration is likely to have on the changing demographic character of the nation. The consequences of a more diverse population are little understood, and the institute will attempt to throw light on this question.” (*See* Exh. E). Since 1994, American Renaissance has put on 15 conferences at which academics, politicians, clergy, and activists have discussed these questions.

14. Defendant Twitter, Inc. is, and at all relevant times was, a corporation duly organized under the laws of the State of Delaware with its principal place of business in San Francisco, California.

GENERAL ALLEGATIONS

15. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference each and every preceding paragraph as though set forth fully herein.

16. Twitter is the world’s largest microblogging site, with an average of 330 million active users per month from all over the globe. (Exh. S). Its self-proclaimed mission is to “[g]ive everyone the power to create and share ideas instantly, without barriers.” (Exh. B). On its “Values” page,

1 Twitter states: “We believe in free expression and believe every voice has the power to impact the
 2 world.” (Exh. A). Twitter describes itself as “the live public square, the public space - a forum where
 3 conversations happen.” (Exh. H). Twitter’s CEO, Jack Dorsey, has stated, “Twitter is a
 4 communication utility.” (Exh. I). It allows users who have established accounts to post short
 5 messages, called Tweets, as well as photos or short videos. Anyone can join and set up an account on
 6 Twitter at any time.

7 17. Twitter is the platform in which important political debates take place in the modern
 8 world. The U.S. Supreme Court has described social media sites such as Twitter as the “modern public
 9 square.” *Packingham v. North Carolina* (2017) 582 U.S. __ [137 S. Ct. 1730, 1737]. It is used by
 10 politicians, public intellectuals, and ordinary citizens the world over, expressing every conceivable
 11 viewpoint known to man. Unique among social media sites, Twitter allows ordinary citizens to
 12 interact directly with famous and prominent individuals in a wide variety of different fields. It has
 13 become an important communications channel for governments and heads of state. As the U.S.
 14 Supreme Court noted in *Packingham*, “[O]n Twitter, users can petition their elected representatives
 15 and otherwise engage with them in a direct manner. Indeed, Governors in all 50 States and almost
 16 every Member of Congress have set up accounts for this purpose. In short, social media users employ
 17 these websites to engage in a wide array of protected First Amendment activity on topics as diverse as
 18 human thought.” 137 S. Ct. at pp. 1735–36 (internal citations and quotations omitted). The Court in
 19 *Packingham* went on to state, in regard to social media sites like Twitter: “These websites can provide
 20 perhaps the most powerful mechanisms available to a private citizen to make his or her voice heard.
 21 They allow a person with an Internet connection to ‘become a town crier with a voice that resonates
 22 farther than it could from any soapbox.’” *Id.* at p. 1737 (citation omitted) (quoting *Reno v. American*
 23 *Civil Liberties Union* (1997) 521 U. S. 844, 870 [117 S.Ct. 2329]).

24 18. It is universally understood that Tweets reflect the viewpoints of the user who posted
 25 the Tweet, and not Twitter itself. All Tweets are clearly identified with the user who posted the Tweet.
 26 Indeed, Twitter clearly states in its Terms of Service: “You are responsible for your use of the Services
 27 and for any Content you provide, including compliance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations.”

1 (Exh. G). It goes on to state: “You retain your rights to any Content you submit, post or display on or
2 through the Services. What’s yours is yours — you own your Content (and your photos and videos
3 are part of the Content).” *Id.* Twitter and its executives have numerous accounts which they use to
4 publish their own viewpoints on the platform. Tweets are published by individual users, not Twitter.

5 19. For several decades, Mr. Taylor has been a well-known author and public intellectual,
6 primarily in the areas of race relations and immigration. He is a graduate of Yale University and the
7 Paris Institute of Political Studies. He is author or editor of seven books. His writing has appeared in
8 the *Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Baltimore Sun*, *Boston Globe*, *National*
9 *Review*, *Washington Post*, and *San Francisco Chronicle*. Mr. Taylor has been interviewed countless
10 times by national and international print and electronic media on immigration and race relations.

11 20. Mr. Taylor takes the view that race is a biological reality that is part of individual and
12 group identity. He argues that the evidence shows that despite a large amount of commonality, the
13 different races are not—as groups—identical or equivalent, and that there is a genetic component to
14 those differences. He believes that people of all races and nations have the right to choose a destiny
15 for themselves that includes remaining the majority in their nation, region, municipality,
16 neighborhood, or institution. He has always proposed such a choice as an expression of freedom of
17 association, and has never argued for forcible separation of racial groups.

18 21. Mr. Taylor joined Twitter in March 2011.

19 22. On Nov. 16, 2016, Mr. Taylor entered into a commercial agreement for a “followers
20 campaign” under which he paid Twitter to promote his tweets and increase the number of his
21 followers. Twitter’s promotional website for the “followers campaign” suggests each new follower is
22 worth between \$2.50 and \$3.50.¹ Mr. Taylor established a campaign budget of \$200, with a daily
23 expenditure limit of \$2.00. The campaign continued through the week of Feb. 22, 2017, and he paid
24 Twitter a total of \$179.32.

25
26 ¹ See Exh. J (“The cost per follower on Twitter is set by a second price auction among other
27 advertisers – you’ll only ever pay just slightly more than the next highest bidder. A bid of \$2.50 -
\$3.50 is recommended based on historical averages.”).

1 23. At some point before June 2017, Mr. Taylor was granted Twitter’s blue check mark or
 2 “verification badge.” Twitter informed Mr. Taylor by email on November 15, 2017 that it had
 3 “permanently removed” his verification badge.

4 24. At the time Mr. Taylor’s account was permanently suspended on December 18, 2017,
 5 it had 40,900 followers.

6 25. In June 2011, American Renaissance established its own account, which was operated
 7 by its staff. In April 2017, American Renaissance was granted Twitter’s “verification badge,” which
 8 it kept until the account was permanently suspended on December 18, 2017. At the time American
 9 Renaissance’s account was permanently suspended, it had 32,700 followers.

10 26. Over the course of over six years, Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance invested
 11 countless hours and significant time and effort into cultivating a large follower base and Twitter
 12 presence for the Accounts that would generate new readers, subscribers, and donors for American
 13 Renaissance and New Century. In addition to Mr. Taylor’s agreement with Twitter to promote his
 14 account, Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance spent significant time and effort, including much staff
 15 time, in sharing articles and content to the Accounts in order to expand the reach of the Accounts.

16 27. The Accounts were an essential part of the advocacy and educational mission of
 17 Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance. They permitted Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance to
 18 communicate instantly with a broad base of supporters, donors, journalists, and readers. Mr. Taylor
 19 and American Renaissance used the Accounts to alert their followers to their recent publications,
 20 forthcoming conferences, public appearances, articles, videos, podcasts, and their commentary on the
 21 news of the day. This drove traffic to Plaintiffs’ websites and kept their ideas constantly before the
 22 public. And the Accounts allowed Plaintiffs to maintain close contact with donors, crucial for a non-
 23 profit advocacy organization such as American Renaissance. The Accounts allowed Mr. Taylor and
 24 American Renaissance to share and disseminate articles and posts expressing their view on race
 25 relations, immigration, and other important national issues, and to have a voice in public debates.

26 28. Mr. Taylor has always expressed his views with respect and civility towards those who
 27 disagree. He has never engaged in vituperation or name-calling, on Twitter or elsewhere.

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29. Neither Mr. Taylor nor American Renaissance has ever promoted or advocated violence, on Twitter or anywhere else. Indeed, they have urged their followers to maintain a dignified and respectful tone towards those who disagree with them. Neither Mr. Taylor nor American Renaissance is affiliated with any groups that promote or practice violence.

30. At no time did either Mr. Taylor’s or American Renaissance’s accounts engage in “trolling,” insults, or harassment, nor did they ever encourage anyone else to do such things.

31. Even Mr. Taylor’s critics have recognized that he promotes respectful, polite debate and shuns name-calling. The Southern Poverty Law Center, which takes sharp issue with the views expressed by Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance, has written: “In his personal bearing and tone, Jared Taylor projects himself as a courtly presenter of ideas” It also noted that American Renaissance magazine “scrupulously avoided racist epithets [and] employed the language of academic journals,” and was “bringing a measure of intellectualism and seriousness” to dissident critiques of mainstream thinking on race. It has called its conferences “decidedly genteel affairs.” *Slate* magazine has referred to Mr. Taylor’s “Ivy League education and ‘polite manners.’”

32. Mr. Taylor is well known, even among his detractors, for taking a positive attitude toward Jews and for repudiating Nazism. The *Jewish Daily Forward* wrote this about Mr. Taylor: “From the start, he has been trying to de-Nazify the movement and draw the white nationalist circle wider to include Jews of European descent.”

33. Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance have encouraged people who share their views to maintain a dignified tone. An article in *American Renaissance* published on June 10, 2016 urged members of the “Alt-Right” to avoid “personal attacks and harsh rhetoric” on Twitter and other social media platforms. It added that those who use intemperate language should ask themselves: “Do you drive away Americans who might be sympathetic to Donald Trump and/or race realism?” For these stands, Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance drew considerable backlash and controversy. Many commenters expressed vehement disagreement with Mr. Taylor’s and American Renaissance’s stands in favor of temperate language and against harassment of other Twitter users.

1 34. At the time Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance joined Twitter, there was no
 2 provision in Twitter’s Terms of Services that permitted it to suspend or terminate accounts for any or
 3 no reason.

4 35. Twitter amended its Terms of Service on May 17, 2012, to read, *inter alia*: “We may
 5 suspend or terminate your accounts or cease providing you with all or part of the Services at any time
 6 for any reason, including, but not limited to, if we reasonably believe: (i) you have violated these
 7 Terms or the Twitter Rules. . . .” (Exh. K). On May 17, 2015, Twitter again amended its Terms of
 8 Service to read: “We may suspend or terminate your accounts or cease providing you with all or part
 9 of the Services at any time for any or no reason, including, but not limited to, if we reasonably believe:
 10 (i) you have violated these Terms or the Twitter Rules” (Exh. L). Twitter’s current Terms of
 11 Service include this same language. (*See* Exh. G). The provision allowing Twitter to terminate a user
 12 “at any time for any or no reason” is unconscionable under California law and violates California’s
 13 Covenant of Good Faith and Fair Dealing. It also violates Article I, sections 2 and 3 of the California
 14 Constitution and the Unruh Civil Rights Act (Civ. Code, § 51 *et seq.*), insofar as it purports to allow
 15 Twitter to ban users based on their political views or affiliations. These terms were unilaterally added
 16 by Twitter after Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance joined the platform without their knowledge
 17 or consent, and purport to allow Twitter to unilaterally cancel and destroy the benefit of its bargain
 18 with Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance for arbitrary, capricious, discriminatory or illegal reasons,
 19 without affording Mr. Taylor or American Renaissance any rights or remedies and purporting to cancel
 20 any rights or remedies they might have legally held.

21 36. On January 27, 2016, Twitter revised its Terms of Service to read, *inter alia*: “We
 22 reserve the right at all times (but will not have an obligation) to remove or refuse to distribute any
 23 Content on the Services, to suspend or terminate users, and to reclaim usernames without liability to
 24 you.” (Exh. M). This provision was amended on October 2, 2017 to read: “We may also remove or
 25 refuse to distribute any Content on the Services, suspend or terminate users, and reclaim usernames
 26 without liability to you.” (Exh. G). This term is also unconscionable under California law and violates
 27 California’s Covenant of Good Faith and Fair Dealing. It also violates Article I, sections 2 and 3 of

1 the California Constitution and the Unruh Civil Rights Act (Civ. Code, § 51 *et seq.*), insofar as it
2 purports to allow Twitter to ban users based on their political views or affiliations. These terms were
3 unilaterally added by Twitter after Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance joined the platform without
4 their knowledge or consent, and purport to allow Twitter to unilaterally cancel and destroy the benefit
5 of its bargain with Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance for arbitrary, capricious, discriminatory or
6 illegal reasons, without affording Mr. Taylor or American Renaissance any rights or remedies and
7 purporting to cancel any rights or remedies they might have legally held.

8 37. The Twitter Terms of Service state: “We may revise these Terms from time to time.
9 The changes will not be retroactive, and the most current version of the Terms, which will always be
10 at twitter.com/tos, will govern our relationship with you. We will try to notify you of material
11 revisions, for example via a service notification or an email to the email associated with your account.”
12 (Exh. G).

13 38. On December 18, 2017, Twitter announced it was enacting “New Rules on Violence
14 and Physical Harm.” In a blog post announcing these changes, Twitter stated: “Specific threats of
15 violence or wishing for serious physical harm, death, or disease to an individual or group of people is
16 in violation of our policies.” (Exh. N). Twitter included as “related content,” “[a]ccounts that affiliate
17 with organizations that use or promote violence against civilians to further their causes.” It defined
18 such groups as follows: “Groups included in this policy will be those that identify as such or engage
19 in activity — both on and off the platform — that promotes violence. This policy does not apply to
20 military or government entities and we will consider exceptions for groups that are currently engaging
21 in (or have engaged in) peaceful resolution.”

22 39. The Twitter rules on “Violent Extremist Groups,” first announced on December 18,
23 2017, provide: “You may not make specific threats of violence or wish for the serious physical harm,
24 death, or disease of an individual or group of people. This includes, but is not limited to, threatening
25 or promoting terrorism. You also may not affiliate with organizations that – whether by their own
26 statements or activity both on and off the platform – use or promote violence against civilians to further
27 their causes.” (Exh. O). They go on to state: “We take pride in Twitter being a platform where a

1 diverse range of opinions can be held and discussed, but we will not tolerate groups or individuals
 2 associated with them who engage in and promote violence against civilians both on and off the
 3 platform. Accounts affiliated with groups in which violence is a component of advancing their cause
 4 risk having a chilling effect on opponents and bystanders. The violence that such groups promote
 5 could also have dangerous consequences offline, jeopardizing their targets’ physical safety.” *Id.*

6 40. With respect to “When this applies,” Twitter states:
 7 We prohibit the use of Twitter’s services by violent extremist groups – i.e., identified
 8 groups subscribing to the use of violence as a means to advance their cause, whether
 9 political, religious, or social.

10 We consider violent extremist groups to be those which meet all of the below criteria:

- 11 • identify through their stated purpose, publications, or actions, as an
 12 extremist group
- 13 • have engaged in, or currently engage in, violence (and/or the promotion
 14 of violence) as a means to further their cause
- 15 • target civilians in their acts (and/or promotion) of violence

16 Exceptions will be considered for groups that have reformed or are currently engaging in
 17 a peaceful resolution process, as well as groups with representatives elected to public
 18 office through democratic elections. This policy does not apply to military or
 19 government entities.

20 Behavior we look for when determining whether an account is affiliated with a violent
 21 extremist group includes:

- 22 • stating or suggesting that an account represents or is part of a violent
 23 extremist group
- 24 • providing or distributing services (e.g., financial, media/propaganda) in
 25 furtherance of progressing a violent extremist group’s stated goals
- 26 • engaging in or promoting acts for the violent extremist group
- 27 • recruiting for the violent extremist group

28 (Exh. O).

29 41. On December 18, 2017, Twitter suspended both of the Accounts without explanation.
 30 Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance immediately appealed the suspensions. Twitter replied via
 31 email that the suspensions were permanent because the Accounts were “found to be violating Twitter’s
 32 Terms of Service, specifically the Twitter Rules against being affiliated with a violent extremist
 33 group.” Twitter did not specify the “violent extremist group” with which Mr. Taylor or American
 34 Renaissance was supposedly affiliated. Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance immediately sent

1 emails to Twitter expressing astonishment at the reason given for the permanent suspensions and
 2 seeking clarification, but Twitter did not reply. All of these exchanges took place on December 18,
 3 2017. To be clear, neither Mr. Taylor nor American Renaissance has ever practiced, promoted, or
 4 advocated violence against anyone.

5 42. Twitter enacted its new rules regarding “Violent Extremist Groups” on December 18,
 6 2017, the same day it banned the Accounts. It purported to apply these new rules retroactively, in
 7 violation of its Terms of Service. It made no attempt to notify Plaintiffs of its new rules before
 8 permanently banning them, also in violation of its Terms of Service.

9 43. Neither Mr. Taylor nor American Renaissance has ever engaged in any conduct that
 10 runs afoul of Twitter’s new rules on “Violent Extremist Groups.” They have never “made specific
 11 threats of violence or wished for the serious physical harm, death, or disease of an individual or group
 12 of people.” They have never “affiliated with organizations that use or promote violence against
 13 civilians to further their causes.” They have never “engaged in violence (and/or the promotion of
 14 violence) as a means to further their cause,” or affiliated with any such group. They have never “stated
 15 or suggested that an account represents or is part of a violent extremist group”; “provided or distributed
 16 services (e.g., financial, media/propaganda) in furtherance of progressing a violent extremist group’s
 17 stated goals”; “engaged in or promoted acts for [a] violent extremist group”; or “recruit[ed] for [a]
 18 violent extremist group.” In fact, Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance have denounced the use of
 19 Twitter to harass or threaten other users. Any construction of Twitter’s policy on “Violent Extremist
 20 Groups” that would cast Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance as being in violation would indicate a
 21 hopelessly vague and incomprehensible standard.

22 44. The true motive for banning Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance may be gleaned
 23 from testimony that Twitter executive Sinead McSweeney provided to the British Parliament on
 24 December 19, 2017, the day after Twitter banned the Accounts. She suggested that Twitter was now
 25 banning speakers it considered to be “racist” and “extremist” based on their viewpoints:

26 Twitter was in a place where it believed the most effective antidote to bad speech was
 27 good speech. It was very much a John Stuart Mill-style philosophy. We’ve realized the
 world we live in has changed. We’ve had to go on a journey with it, *and we’ve realized*

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it's no longer possible to stand up for all speech in the hopes society will become a better place because racism will be challenged, or homophobia challenged, or extremism will be challenged. And we do have to take steps to limit the visibility of hateful symbols, to ban people from the platform who affiliate with violent groups — that's the journey we're on.

(Exh. P) (emphasis added).

45. Thus, it appears that the stated reason for Twitter's ban of Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance is a pretext. Instead, Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance were targeted for permanent suspension from Twitter due to nothing more than their controversial views on race and immigration—the subjective perception that they are “racist” and “extremist.”

46. Twitter has enforced its policy on “Violent Extremist Groups” in a way that discriminates against Plaintiffs on the basis of their viewpoint. It has not applied its policies fairly or consistently, targeting Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance, who do not promote violence, while allowing accounts affiliated with left-wing groups that promote violence to remain on Twitter. (See Exh. C).

47. Twitter's actions threaten the free speech of all users on its platform. Twitter asserts the unilateral right to deprive anyone, at any time, of the ability to speak on its forum, if it dislikes the user's viewpoint. This will have a chilling effect on all users of the platform, requiring users to avoid expressing viewpoints that Twitter might dislike, or risk having their accounts suspended permanently.

48. As a result of Twitter's actions, Plaintiffs have suffered and will continue to suffer irreparable harm. The Accounts permitted Plaintiffs to communicate instantly with a broad base of supporters, donors, and readers. Plaintiffs used the Accounts to alert their followers to their recent publications, forthcoming conferences, public appearances, articles, videos, podcasts, and their commentary on the news of the day. This drove traffic to American Renaissance's website, and kept the ideas of Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance constantly before the public. The Accounts also supported Plaintiffs' fundraising efforts, vital to the continued existence of New Century, a 501(c)(3) non-profit. The Accounts were an invaluable way to extend Plaintiffs' reach, allowing Mr. Taylor and New Century to attract new readers, supporters, and donors.

1 to impact the world” (Exh. A); Twitter’s entire business purpose is to allow the public to freely share
 2 and disseminate their views without any sort of viewpoint censorship; and no reasonable person would
 3 think Twitter was promoting or endorsing Plaintiffs’ speech by not censoring it—no more than a
 4 reasonable person would think Twitter was promoting or endorsing President Trump’s speech or Kim
 5 Jong Un’s speech by allowing it to exist on their platform. Thus, Plaintiffs’ speech imposes no cost
 6 on Twitter’s business and no burdens on its property rights. Serving as a place where “everyone [has]
 7 the power to create and share ideas instantly, without barriers” and “every voice has the power to
 8 impact the world” is Twitter’s very reason for existence. By adding to the variety of views available
 9 to the public, Plaintiffs are acting on Twitter’s “belief in free speech” and fulfilling Twitter’s stated
 10 mission of “sharing ideas instantly.”

11 53. Indeed, Twitter published a “Twitter Government and Elections Handbook”
 12 (“Handbook”) with the express purpose of helping elected officials and government agencies “tap into
 13 the power of Twitter to connect with your constituents.” (Exh. Q). According to the Handbook,
 14 “Twitter is a free platform for all voices to be heard and to organize.” *Id.* Twitter instructed officials
 15 in agencies on how to host “Twitter Town Halls,” where constituents can ask questions via Twitter.
 16 *Id.* It explained that “[t]hese forums are exceedingly necessary and important” and are among the
 17 “best opportunities for community expression and dialogue using the platform.” *Id.* Twitter’s
 18 publication of this guidebook underscores its status as a privately-owned public forum under the
 19 California Constitution. The dangers that would result from Twitter being able to hold itself out as
 20 the forum for individuals to communicate in “Town Hall” forums with their elected representatives,
 21 on one hand, while allowing Twitter to ban users from participating on its forum if it disagrees with
 22 their viewpoints, on the other, are self-evident. Individuals could be deprived of their most essential
 23 free-speech rights based on internal Twitter corporate directives.

24 54. Twitter is given over to public discussion and debate to a far greater extent than the
 25 shopping center in *Pruneyard* or the “streets, sidewalks and parks” that “[f]rom time immemorial . . .
 26 have been held in trust for the use of the public and have been used for purposes of assembly,
 27 communicating thoughts and discussing public questions.” *In re Hoffman* (1967) 67 Cal.2d 845, 849

1 [64 Cal.Rptr. 97]. Unlike shopping centers, streets, sidewalks and parks, which are mostly used for
 2 functional, non-expressive purposes such as purchasing consumer goods, transportation, and private
 3 recreation, Twitter’s primary purpose is to enable members of the public to engage in speech, self-
 4 expression and the communication of ideas. *See Packingham, supra*, 137 S. Ct. at pp. 1735-1736
 5 (noting that “[s]ocial media offers relatively unlimited, low-cost capacity for communication of all
 6 kinds” and that “social media users employ these websites to engage in a wide array of protected First
 7 Amendment activity on topics as diverse as human thought.”) (internal quotation marks omitted).
 8 In analysis that cuts to the heart of the *Pruneyard* public forum inquiry, the *Packingham* Court stated:
 9 “While in the past there may have been difficulty in identifying the most important places (in a spatial
 10 sense) for the exchange of views, today the answer is clear. It is cyberspace—the ‘vast democratic
 11 forums of the Internet’ in general, and social media in particular.” *Id.* at p. 1735 (quoting *Reno, supra*,
 12 521 U.S. at p. 868).

13 55. Because Twitter is a protected public forum under California law, Twitter may not
 14 selectively ban speakers from participating in its public forum based on disagreement with the
 15 speaker’s viewpoint, just as the government may not selectively ban speech that expresses a viewpoint
 16 it disagrees with.

17 56. Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance used the Accounts to share and promote their
 18 recent publications, forthcoming conferences, public appearances, articles, videos, podcasts, and
 19 commentary on the news of the day; to have a voice in public debates on current events and political
 20 issues; to express their views on race relations, immigration, and other issues; to communicate with
 21 readers, supporters and donors; and to seek to generate new followers and readers. These activities
 22 constitute expressive speech and are activity protected by Article I, section 2 of the California
 23 Constitution.

24 57. Twitter’s exclusion of Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance from its public forum
 25 amounts to viewpoint discrimination in violation of Article I, Section 2 of the California Constitution.
 26 Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance were targeted for permanent suspension from Twitter due to
 27 nothing more than their controversial views on race and immigration, as well as their perceived

1 political affiliations and political identity. Under *Pruneyard*, privately-owned public forums may
 2 adopt reasonable “time, place and manner” restrictions on expressive activities, but may not enact
 3 content- or viewpoint-based restrictions. *Fashion Valley Mall, LLC v. National Labor Relations Bd.*
 4 (2007) 42 Cal. 4th 850, 864-870 [69 Cal.Rptr.3d 288]. That is, privately-owned public forums “may
 5 no more exclude individuals who wear long hair . . . who are black, who are members of the John
 6 Birch Society, or who belong to the American Civil Liberties Union, merely because of these
 7 characteristics or associations, than may the City of San Rafael.” *Pruneyard, supra*, 23 Cal.3d at p.
 8 909 (quoting *In Re Cox* (1970) 3 Cal.3d 205, 217-218 [90 Cal.Rptr. 24]). Thus, while Twitter may
 9 enact neutral rules against threats and harassment, singling out speakers that it perceives to be “racist”
 10 or “extremist” for prohibition is content-based and prohibited viewpoint discrimination. *See R.A.V. v.*
 11 *St. Paul* (1992) 505 U.S. 377, 391-392 [112 S. Ct. 2538]; *see also Glendale Associates, Ltd. v. National*
 12 *Labor Relations Bd.* (9th Cir. 2003) 347 F.3d 1145, 1155 (“California state courts borrow from federal
 13 First Amendment jurisprudence to analyze whether a rule is content-based or content-neutral.”).

14 58. Twitter has arbitrarily and unreasonably construed its newly-minted policy on “Violent
 15 Extremist Groups” in such a way as to exclude Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance from its public
 16 forum. Any construction of this policy that would render Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance in
 17 violation is intolerably vague, subjective and overbroad, in violation of Article I, Section 2 of the
 18 California Constitution. Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance have never advocated violence against
 19 any group, nor are they affiliated with any groups that do. They have used their Twitter accounts to
 20 urge their followers to be respectful of other users and to not use offensive language or imagery,
 21 garnering considerable opposition in the process. Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance have spoken
 22 out against anti-Semitism within the Alt-Right. Moreover, Twitter has failed to apply its new policy
 23 on “Violent Extremist Groups” even-handedly, as it has allowed accounts affiliated with left-wing
 24 groups that promote violence to remain on Twitter. (*See* Exh. C). Instead, Twitter has used this new
 25 policy as a pretext to ban the Accounts due to nothing more than dislike of the viewpoints expressed
 26 by Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance.

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1 59. In addition, Twitter’s policy regarding “Violent Extremist Groups” is overbroad on its
2 face, in violation of Article I, section 2 of the California Constitution. That is because, like the
3 California Constitution, “the First Amendment protects speech that advocates violence, so long as the
4 speech is not directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action and is not likely to incite or
5 produce such action.” *Huntingdon Life Sciences, Inc. v. Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty USA, Inc.*
6 (2005) 129 Cal. App. 4th 1228, 1251-1252 [29 Cal.Rptr.3d 521] (citing *Brandenburg v. Ohio* (1969)
7 395 U.S. 444, 447 [89 S.Ct. 1827]). *Brandenburg* struck down, as facially overbroad, an Ohio statute
8 that punished persons who “‘advocate or teach the duty, necessity, or propriety’ of violence ‘as a
9 means of accomplishing industrial or political reform’; or who publish or circulate or display any book
10 or paper containing such advocacy; or who ‘justify’ the commission of violent acts ‘with intent to
11 exemplify, spread or advocate the propriety of the doctrines of criminal syndicalism’; or who
12 ‘voluntarily assemble’ with a group formed ‘to teach or advocate the doctrines of criminal
13 syndicalism.’” *Brandenburg*, 395 U.S. at p. 448. It did so because the statute failed to distinguish
14 “mere advocacy” of violence from “incitement to imminent lawless action” *Ibid.*; *see also Siegel v.*
15 *Committee of Bar Examiners* (1973), 10 Cal. 3d 156, 174 n. 18 [110 Cal.Rptr. 15]. Twitter’s policy
16 on “Violent Extremist Groups” is remarkably similar to the statute struck down in *Brandenburg*: it
17 defines “violent extremist groups” as nothing more than “extremist groups” that engage in the
18 “promotion of violence.” An individual may be deemed to be “affiliated with a violent extremist
19 group” if that person posts “media/propaganda” that Twitter deems to be “in furtherance of progressing
20 a violent extremist group’s stated goals.” The policy’s prohibition is not limited to accounts that post
21 specific threats of violence or seek to incite imminent lawless action. Instead, it would ban speech
22 that merely “promotes violence” in an abstract sense. Indeed, the policy is so vague that it could be
23 read to allow Twitter to ban an individual who agrees with the stated goals of a “violent extremist
24 group,” *even if the individual sincerely wishes to achieve those goals through peaceful means.* Say a
25 Twitter user wants to ban abortion, and shares a post about the viability of fetuses. If there is a group
26 that wishes to ban abortion through violent means (such as assassinating doctors who perform
27 abortions), then Twitter could deem the user to be “affiliated with a violent extremist group” because

1 the user has posted “media/propaganda” that is “in furtherance of progressing a violent extremist
 2 group’s stated goals.” So too with any position held by any violent group anywhere in the world:
 3 Basque independence, animal rights, support for government by a worker’s collective, opposition to
 4 the regime of Bashar al-Assad (to name just a few examples).

5 60. Any unstated policy that allows Twitter to ban users based on its subjective perception
 6 that they are “racist” and “extremist” is intolerably vague, subjective and overbroad, in violation of
 7 Article I, section 2 of the California Constitution. Such a policy also impermissibly discriminates
 8 based on the content of the speech (whether the speech is “racist” or “extremist”) and the speaker’s
 9 viewpoint. *Fashion Valley Mall, LLC, supra*, 42 Cal. 4th at pp. 864-870.

10 61. Twitter has restricted Plaintiffs’ speech and expressive conduct based on subjective,
 11 vague, and overbroad, and expanding criteria that gives Twitter unfettered and unbridled discretion to
 12 censor speech for any or no reason. Twitter’s policies, on their face, allow Twitter to permanently ban
 13 any user, at any time, for any reason or no reason at all. Those policies also purport to deprive users
 14 of any sort of legal remedy in the event they are banned. This reservation of an unreviewable power
 15 to censor for any reason or no reason, without any legal recourse, is unconscionable and inconsistent
 16 with Article I, section 2 of the California Constitution.

17 62. Further, Twitter’s actions also violate Plaintiffs’ right to free association and assembly
 18 by blocking readers and supporters of American Renaissance and followers of the Accounts from
 19 accessing Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance’s tweets, and thus preventing Plaintiffs from
 20 engaging in a dialogue with their Twitter-based followers, readers, supporters and donors.

21 63. No compelling, significant, or legitimate reason justifies Twitter’s banning of the
 22 Accounts. Twitter’s actions in banning the Accounts are not justified by the interests underlying its
 23 policy against “Violent Extremist Groups,” because Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance have never
 24 used their Twitter accounts to promote or advocate violence, and indeed have used the Accounts to
 25 urge their followers to avoid harassing language and violent imagery.

26 64. Twitter’s wrongful actions were taken with oppression, fraud, malice and/or are
 27 arbitrary and capricious, and as part of Twitter’s normal course of business, and were effectuated

1 through Twitter’s staff. And Twitter’s actions were done with the intent to deprive Mr. Taylor,
 2 American Renaissance, and their followers of their rights under the California Constitution.

3 65. As a direct and proximate result of Twitter’s violations of Article I, Section 2 of the
 4 California Constitution, Plaintiffs have suffered, and will continue to suffer, immediate and irreparable
 5 injury in fact, including lost income, reduced donor and subscriber base, and damage to brand,
 6 reputation, and goodwill, for which there exists no adequate remedy at law. There is no public
 7 platform comparable to Twitter that would allow Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance to express
 8 their views. By banning the Accounts, Twitter has deprived Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance of
 9 an essential mechanism to speak and engage in public discussion and debate.

10 **SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION**
 11 **(Violation of Unruh Civil Rights Act – Civil Code § 51, et seq.)**

12 66. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference each and every preceding paragraph
 13 as though set forth fully herein.

14 67. Twitter hosts a business establishment under the Unruh Civil Rights Act, California
 15 Civil Code § 51 et seq. The Act prohibits discrimination against “persons of unusual political views.”
 16 *Marina Point, Ltd. v. Wolfson* (1982) 30 Cal. 3d 721, 730 [180 Cal.Rptr. 496]. It also prohibits “all
 17 arbitrary discrimination by business establishments.” *Id.* at p. 725. Thus, the Unruh Act requires all
 18 business establishments in California to provide full and equal service to all customers without
 19 arbitrary discrimination and regardless of customers’ political and social views.

20 68. Those who hold unpopular views have “protected status” under the Unruh Act. The
 21 California Supreme Court has stated that the Unruh Act prohibits business establishments from
 22 excluding individuals merely on the basis of their “characteristics or associations,” such as those “who
 23 wear long hair or unconventional dress, who are black, who are members of the John Birch Society,
 24 or who belong to the American Civil Liberties Union, merely because of these characteristics or
 25 associations.” *In re Cox, supra*, 3 Cal. 3d at pp. 217–18.

26 69. Under the Unruh Act, therefore, Twitter cannot deny service to Mr. Taylor or American
 27 Renaissance on the basis of their political views. The Unruh Act prohibits businesses from imposing

1 all arbitrary exclusionary policies if such policy “rests on the alleged undesirable propensities of those
2 of a particular . . . political affiliation.” *Marina Point, Ltd., supra*, 30 Cal. 3d at p. 736.

3 70. In this case, Twitter has permanently banned Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance
4 due to their political views and perceived political associations, in violation of the Unruh Act. Twitter
5 has discriminated against and censored Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance based on their political
6 identity and viewpoint—specifically, their views on race relations and immigration. Twitter has
7 denied Plaintiffs full and equal accommodations, advantages, privileges, and services by permanently
8 banning Plaintiffs from Twitter due to their political beliefs and perceived political affiliations.

9 71. Twitter’s discrimination against Plaintiffs is arbitrary, capricious, and pretextual. It is
10 also wholly without any legitimate, reasonable business interest, as Mr. Taylor and American
11 Renaissance are not affiliated with any “violent extremist groups,” and Twitter’s relationship with
12 Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance was mutually beneficial economically. Twitter is censoring
13 and treating Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance differently out of animus towards Mr. Taylor and
14 American Renaissance’s political identity, political views, and perceived political affiliations.

15 72. Twitter’s wrongful actions were taken with oppression, fraud, and malice. Twitter
16 refused to restore access to the Accounts even after Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance wrote to
17 explain that they do not and have never advocated violence and were not affiliated with any violent
18 extremist groups. Further, even a slight bit of research into Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance
19 would have revealed that they do not advocate violence, have never been involved in any violent
20 incident, and are not affiliated with any groups that advocate violence, but instead are dedicated
21 entirely to non-violent writing, research, and advocacy on race relations and immigration.

22 73. To the extent Twitter removed Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance based on the
23 false perception that they advocated violence (or were associated with groups that did), its manifest
24 error rendered its actions arbitrary and reveals a discriminatory intent. Due to their controversial
25 political views, Twitter discriminatorily and erroneously claimed Mr. Taylor and American
26 Renaissance advocate violence and irrationally and arbitrarily denied them full and equal privileges.

1 79. Implied in those contracts is the implied covenant of good faith and fair dealing. This
2 is particularly so because these contracts were presented to Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance on
3 a take-it-or-leave-it basis, without any opportunity for meaningful bargaining or negotiation. To the
4 extent these contracts delegate broad discretionary power to Twitter, Twitter is obligated to exercise
5 those powers fairly and in good faith.

6 80. At all times, Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance substantially complied with all of
7 Twitter's Rules and Terms of Service. None of Mr. Taylor or American Renaissance's Tweets
8 violated the letter or spirit of any term in Twitter's Terms of Service or Twitter Rules. Neither
9 Mr. Taylor nor American Renaissance ever engaged in harassment or abuse of other users, promoted
10 violence against any individual or group, or used hateful imagery. Indeed, Mr. Taylor and American
11 Renaissance used the Accounts to urge their followers to avoid harassing language and violent
12 imagery, and to maintain a respectful tone toward others.

13 81. Twitter was bound by the implied covenant of good faith and fair dealing in its
14 agreements, terms, and policies, not to engage in any acts, conduct, or omissions that would impair or
15 diminish Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance's rights and benefits under the parties' agreements.
16 Pursuant to the terms of those agreements, Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance were supposed to
17 have equal access to Twitter's platform so long as they complied with Twitter's Rules and Terms of
18 Service. Twitter has, by the acts and omissions complained of herein, intentionally and tortiously
19 breached the implied covenant of good faith and fair dealing by unfairly interfering with Mr. Taylor
20 and American Renaissance's rights to receive the benefits of their contracts with Twitter.

21 82. When Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance joined Twitter in March 2011 and June
22 2011, respectively, its Terms of Service provided: "We reserve the right at all times (but will not have
23 an obligation) to remove or refuse to distribute any Content on the Services and to terminate users or
24 reclaim usernames. Please review the Twitter Rules (which are part of these Terms) to better
25 understand what is prohibited on the Service." (Exh. R).

26 83. The Twitter Rules, as they existed when Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance joined
27 the platform, stated: "Our goal is to provide a service that allows you to discover and receive content
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1 from sources that interest you as well as to share your content with others. We respect the ownership
 2 of the content that users share and each user is responsible for the content he or she provides. Because
 3 of these principles, we do not actively monitor user’s content and will not censor user content, except
 4 in limited circumstances described below.” (Exh. D). Those “limited circumstances” set forth in the
 5 Twitter Rules were:

- 6 • Impersonation: You may not impersonate others through the Twitter service in a
 7 manner that does or is intended to mislead, confuse, or deceive others
- 8 • Trademark: We reserve the right to reclaim user names on behalf of businesses
 9 or individuals that hold legal claim or trademark on those user names. Accounts using
 10 business names and/or logos to mislead others will be permanently suspended.
- 11 • Privacy: You may not publish or post other people’s private and confidential
 12 information, such as credit card numbers, street address or Social Security/National
 13 Identity numbers, without their express authorization and permission.
- 14 • Violence and Threats: You may not publish or post direct, specific threats of
 15 violence against others.
- 16 • Copyright: We will respond to clear and complete notices of alleged copyright
 17 infringement. Our copyright procedures are set forth in the Terms of Service.
- 18 • Unlawful Use: You may not use our service for any unlawful purposes or for
 19 promotion of illegal activities. International users agree to comply with all local laws
 20 regarding online conduct and acceptable content.
- 21 • Misuse of Twitter Badges: You may not use a Verified Account badge or
 22 Promoted Products badge unless it is provided by Twitter. Accounts using these
 23 badges as part of profile pictures, background images, or in a way that falsely implies
 24 affiliation with Twitter will be suspended.

25 *Id.*

26 84. Twitter’s Terms of Service and the Twitter Rules as they existed when Mr. Taylor and
 27 American Renaissance joined Twitter in March 2011 and June 2011, respectively, form a binding
 28 contract regarding Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance’s use of Twitter. Twitter has made no
 29 allegation that Mr. Taylor or American Renaissance violated any of the provisions of its Terms of
 30 Service or Rules as they existed in 2011, or even any of the many revisions to its Terms of Service
 31 and Rules prior to their suspension. Instead, it relies solely on its rule against “Violent Extremist
 32 Groups” that it promulgated on December 18, 2017, and cited in banning Mr. Taylor and American

1 Renaissance that same day. However, Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance cannot be deemed to
2 have meaningfully consented to this new rule.

3 85. Further, it was arbitrary, capricious, unconscionable, and in violation of the covenant
4 of good faith and fair dealing for Twitter to impose this new rule and then purport to apply it
5 retroactively to permanently ban Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance the same day it was
6 promulgated, without giving Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance any advance notice or opportunity
7 to demonstrate their compliance with this new policy. Indeed, Twitter's Terms of Service state that
8 any changes "**will not be retroactive**," and that it will attempt to notify users of "material revisions"
9 to its Terms of Service. (Exh. G) (emphasis added). Twitter violated these provisions in purporting
10 to apply its new policy regarding "Violent Extremist Groups" retroactively to permanently ban the
11 Accounts, without providing notice to Plaintiffs of its new policy.

12 86. Twitter also violated the covenant of good faith and fair dealing by claiming, without
13 any basis whatsoever, that Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance were in violation of its new policy
14 against "Violent Extremist Groups." Neither Mr. Taylor nor American Renaissance has ever engaged
15 in any conduct that runs afoul of this policy. They have never "made specific threats of violence or
16 wished for the serious physical harm, death, or disease of an individual or group of people." They
17 have never "affiliated with organizations that use or promote violence against civilians to further their
18 causes." They have never "engaged in violence (and/or the promotion of violence) as a means to
19 further their cause," or affiliated with any such group. They have never "stated or suggested that an
20 account represents or is part of a violent extremist group"; "provided or distributed services (e.g.,
21 financial, media/propaganda) in furtherance of progressing a violent extremist group's stated goals,"
22 "engaged in or promoted acts for [a] violent extremist group," or "recruiting for the violent extremist
23 group." In fact, Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance have denounced the use of Twitter to harass
24 or threaten other users.

25 87. Twitter engaged in the foregoing acts and omissions by Twitter with the knowledge
26 that it was bound to act consistently with the covenant of good faith and fair dealing. Those acts and
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omissions were not only failures to act fairly and in good faith, but they were acts of oppression, fraud, and malice.

88. As a direct and proximate result of Twitter’s breach of contract, Plaintiffs have suffered, and will continue to suffer, immediate and irreparable injury in fact, including lost income, reduced donor and subscriber base, and damage to brand, reputation, and goodwill, for which there exists no adequate remedy at law.

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION
(Conversion)

89. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference each and every preceding paragraph as though set forth fully herein.

90. Plaintiffs had ownership over and the right to possess the Accounts, which they developed and cultivated at great cost, effort and expense. Over the course of over six years, Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance invested countless hours and significant time and effort into cultivating a large follower base and Twitter presence for the Accounts that would generate new readers, subscribers and donors for American Renaissance and New Century. Mr. Taylor even entered into a commercial agreement with Twitter to promote his tweets and increase his follower base. Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance spent significant time and effort, including much staff time, in sharing articles and content to the Accounts in order to expand the reach of the Accounts. The Accounts drove traffic to American Renaissance’s website, and kept the ideas of Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance constantly before the public. The Accounts also supported Plaintiffs’ fundraising efforts, vital to the continued existence of New Century, a 501(c)(3) non-profit. The Accounts were an invaluable way to extend Plaintiffs’ reach, allowing Mr. Taylor and New Century to attract new readers, supporters, and donors.

91. Twitter maintains an internal valuation of followers on its platform at \$2.50-\$3.50 per follower. At all times, Twitter recognized that followers on its platform are assets with independent economic value. It also recognizes that accounts are assets owned solely by their owners, which account owners may sell or assign to others. At the time Mr. Taylor’s account was permanently

1 suspended on December 18, 2017, it had 40,900 followers. And at the time American Renaissance's
2 account was permanently suspended, it had 32,700 followers.

3 92. Twitter converted the Accounts by permanently banning Plaintiffs from having access
4 to them and by refusing to restore access after Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance demanded that
5 they be reinstated. Twitter's interference with Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance's right to
6 possess the accounts was unwarranted, without justification, and has deprived Plaintiffs of their
7 property rights in the Accounts.

8 93. As a result of Twitter's tortious acts in preventing Plaintiffs from accessing the
9 Accounts, they have suffered, and will continue to suffer, immediate and irreparable injury in fact,
10 including lost income, reduced donor and subscriber base, and damage to brand, reputation, and
11 goodwill, for which there exists no adequate remedy at law.

12 **FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

13 **(Violation of Consumers Legal Remedies Act, § 1750 *et seq.*)**

14 94. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference each and every preceding paragraph
15 as though set forth fully herein.

16 95. Under the Consumer Legal Remedies Act (CLRA), businesses are proscribed from
17 "unfair methods of competition and unfair or deceptive acts," including "[i]nserting an unconscionable
18 provision in the contract." Civ. Code § 1770(a)(19). The portions of Twitter's Terms of Service
19 purporting to give Twitter the right to suspend or ban an account "at any time for any or no reason"
20 and "without liability to you," are procedurally and substantively unconscionable.

21 96. These terms are procedurally unconscionable because they were inserted unilaterally
22 by Twitter into its Terms of Service without any opportunity to negotiate, well after Mr. Taylor and
23 American Renaissance joined the platform in 2011. Twitter's Terms of Service did not include any
24 provision allowing it to suspend or ban accounts "at any time for any reason" until May 17, 2012,
25 nearly a full year after Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance established their accounts, and did not
26 include the "without liability to you" language until even later, January 27, 2016. The idea that Twitter
27 would use this language to create content- and viewpoint-based restrictions around their use of the

1 platform would have come as a complete surprise, as the Twitter Rules in effect when they the
 2 Plaintiffs signed up stated “we do not actively monitor user’s content and will not censor user content,”
 3 except in limited circumstances such as impersonation, violation of trademark or copyright, or “direct,
 4 specific threats of violence against others,” and Twitter listed “free expression” and the power of
 5 “every voice” among its core values. Moreover, as two of hundreds of millions of Twitter users,
 6 Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance lacked any bargaining power vis-à-vis Twitter. Twitter
 7 provided Plaintiffs no opportunity to bargain with or opt out of the terms and revisions. Twitter is
 8 essential to Plaintiffs’ ability to communicate, raise funds, and engage with the public, and they had
 9 no suitable alternative platform to move to if they were unhappy with Twitter’s unfair terms. Even if
 10 they did, they would be unable to transfer the tens of thousands of followers they accrued to the new
 11 platform.

12 97. These portions of Twitter’s Terms of Service are also substantively unconscionable.
 13 By Twitter’s own valuation of \$2.50-3.50 per follower, the Accounts were each worth tens to hundreds
 14 of thousands of dollars. These provisions of the Terms of Service purport to allow Twitter to take
 15 away this valuable asset at any time, for any or no reason, without any compensation. Moreover,
 16 Twitter employees could, using these provisions, engage in active content monitoring and threaten to
 17 shut down any account at any time for posting something the employee disliked. Twitter employees
 18 could ban accounts for the most petty and self-interested of reasons—they belong to an ex-girlfriend
 19 or ex-boyfriend; the employee had a bad experience with a particular company that has an account on
 20 Twitter; the employee is a fan of a certain sports team and thus bans all accounts associated with a
 21 rival team. Such terms are so one-sided and oppressive that they shock the conscience.

22 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

23 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs respectfully pray for a judgment as follows:

- 24 1. For an injunction ordering that Twitter (i) immediately lift its permanent ban on the
 25 Twitter accounts of Jared Taylor (@jartaylor) and American Renaissance (@amrenaissance) and
 26 restore these accounts to Mr. Taylor and American Renaissance, respectively; (ii) cease and desist
 27

1 from seeking to ban these accounts or any other account based on the account’s viewpoint; and
 2 (iii) cease and desist from enforcing its facially overbroad policy on “Violent Extremist Groups”;

3 2. For an injunction prohibiting Twitter from attempting to enforce the language in its
 4 Terms of Service purporting to allow Twitter suspend or ban any account “at any time for any or no
 5 reason” and “without liability to you”;

6 3. For a declaratory judgment that Twitter has violated and continues to violate Plaintiffs’
 7 free speech rights under Article I, section 2 of the California Constitution; the Unruh Civil Rights Act
 8 (Civ. Code, § 51 *et seq.*), and Consumers Legal Remedies Act (Civ. Code, § 1750 *et seq.*);

9 4. For compensatory, special, and statutory damages in an amount to be proven at trial,
 10 including statutory damages pursuant to, *inter alia*, Civ. Code sections 51, 51.5, 52, and Code of Civil
 11 Procedure section 1021.5;

12 5. For prejudgment and post-judgment interest;

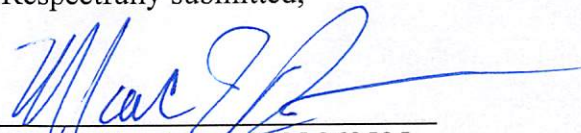
13 6. For costs of suit incurred herein;

14 7. For reasonable attorney’s fees; and

15 8. For such other and further relief as this Court deems just and proper.

16 DATED: February 20, 2018

Respectfully submitted,

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