

□ 1600

## AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of New York) at 4 p.m.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

## COMBAT TERRORIST USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACT OF 2015

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3654) to require a report on United States strategy to combat terrorist use of social media, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3654

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

## SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Combat Terrorist Use of Social Media Act of 2015”.

## SEC. 2. REPORT ON STRATEGY TO COMBAT TERRORIST USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on United States strategy to combat terrorists, and terrorist organizations’ use of social media.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An evaluation of what role social media plays in radicalization in the United States and elsewhere.

(2) An analysis of how terrorists and terrorist organizations are using social media, including trends.

(3) A summary of the Federal Government’s efforts to disrupt and counter the use of social media by terrorists and terrorist organizations, an evaluation of the success of such efforts, and recommendations for improvement.

(4) An analysis of how social media is being used for counter-radicalization and counter-propaganda purposes, irrespective of whether or not such efforts are made by the Federal Government.

(5) An assessment of the value of social media posts by terrorists and terrorist organizations to law enforcement.

(6) An overview of social media training available to law enforcement and intelligence personnel that enables such personnel to understand and combat the use of social media by terrorists and terrorist organizations, as well as recommendations for improving or expanding existing training opportunities.

(c) FORM.—The report required by subsection (a) should be submitted in unclassified form, and may include a classified annex in accordance with the protection of intelligence sources and methods.

## SEC. 3. POLICY AND COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY TO COUNTER TERRORISTS’ AND TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS’ USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains a comprehensive strategy to counter terrorists’ and terrorist organizations’ use of social media, as committed to in the President’s 2011 “Strategic Implementation Plan for Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States”.

(b) FORM.—The report required by subsection (a) should be submitted in unclassified form, and may include a classified annex in accordance with the protection of intelligence sources and methods.

## SEC. 4. APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.

In this Act, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on the Armed Services, the Committee on Homeland Security, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material for the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this legislation, H.R. 3654. It is entitled the Combat Terrorist Use of Social Media Act of 2015.

I want to recognize the leadership of Judge TED POE, a Member of this body, on this critical issue.

The threats posed by Islamist terrorists have evolved, but the administration’s policies have not evolved. If we are going to prevent additional attacks, then the President must lay out a broad, overarching strategy needed to win. That strategy must include a plan to counter terrorists’ use of social media.

Terrorists are skillfully exploiting social media to recruit supporters, to radicalize, to raise money, to spread fear. Two weeks ago in San Bernardino, California, 14 innocent people were killed, and 21 people were injured by radical Islamist terrorists. We know these extremists—husband and wife—used social media, with one of them making a pledge on Facebook in support of ISIS. This pledge was identified by Facebook and was taken down immediately.

Yesterday, it was revealed that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security actually prohibited immigration officials from reviewing the social media postings of all foreign citizens who were applying for U.S. visas and that they only intermittently began looking at posts from some visa applicants. So imagine a situation in which you have people who are going to Syria, who are posting on social media, and you have a blanket prohibition on reviewing those social media postings. That was the state of the situation as we were trying to defend the homeland.

Frankly, the failure of this administration to incorporate a review of social media posts into the visa approval process is absurd. Ignoring the online statements of terrorists who are trying to enter the United States puts our country at risk. This must be fixed.

This bill, frankly, is timely; it is important; and it forces the administration to put forward a strategy to combat terrorists’ use of this social media. In 2011, the President promised to create that strategy, but he never delivered anything. We are, simply, not going to defeat ISIS or other terrorist groups without combating their social media recruiting.

Following a bipartisan letter from Representatives POE of Texas, ENGEL, SHERMAN, and myself last March, Twitter strengthened its policies to assert that statements threatening or promoting terrorism were against Twitter’s terms of service. Most of the other social media companies have similar user guidelines that prohibit threats of violence and the use of their platforms by terrorists.

We need a strategy that clearly articulates our country’s goals, the responsibilities of each Federal agency, what role each one will play, a vision of how our government is going to work with the private sector, and a vision of how we are going to pull civil society into this effort. Without a strategy, the administration’s effort to combat terrorists’ use of social media appears to be disconnected, and it appears to be ineffective.

Then, of course, after we have that strategy, we are going to need action. It is ironic that extremist groups have turned to Twitter, to Facebook, and to YouTube in order to encourage attacks on a free society when these companies would not have been created without there having been a free society, one which upholds free speech, free thought, and encourages entrepreneurship.

Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that the administration lays out how we will contend with these terrorists in their hijacking of the social network for their twisted purposes. We truly have, basically, a caliphate today on the Internet—a virtual caliphate, if you will, on the Internet. This bill by Judge TED POE is intended to force a strategy to solve this problem.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,

December 10, 2015.

Hon. ED ROYCE,  
Chairman,

*House Committee on Foreign Affairs.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: On December 9, 2015, your committee ordered H.R. 3654, the “Combat Terrorist Use of Social Media Act of 2015,” reported.

As you know, H.R. 3654 contains provisions within the jurisdiction of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. On the basis of your consultations with the Committee and in order to expedite the House’s consideration of the bill, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence will not assert a jurisdictional claim over the bill by seeking a sequential referral. This courtesy is, however, conditioned on our mutual understanding and agreement that it will in no way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Permanent Select Committee with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matter contained in the bill or any similar legislation.

I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding and would request that you include a copy of this letter and your response in the committee report for the bill and in the Congressional Record during floor its consideration. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

DEVIN NUNES,  
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, DC, December 11, 2015.

Hon. DEVIN NUNES,  
Chairman, Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for consulting with the Committee on Foreign Affairs on H.R. 3654, the Combat Terrorist Use of Social Media Act of 2015, and for agreeing to forgo seeking a sequential referral of that bill to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your Committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 3564 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with your Committee as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,  
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,  
Washington, DC, December 11, 2015.

Hon. ED ROYCE,  
Chairman,  
Committee on Foreign Affairs.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing with respect to H.R. 3654, the “Combat Terrorist Use of Social Media Act of 2015,” which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary. As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions in H.R. 3654 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, I agree to discharge our Committee from further consideration of

this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 3654 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and asks that you support any such request.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 3654, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration of H.R. 3654.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,  
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, DC, December 11, 2015.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,  
Chairman,  
*House Committee on the Judiciary.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for consulting with the Committee on Foreign Affairs on H.R. 3654, the Combat Terrorist Use of Social Media Act of 2015, and for agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of that bill.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 3564 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with your Committee as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,  
Chairman.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of this measure that would push back against the use of social media by terrorist groups.

Let me start by thanking Congressman POE of Texas for introducing this legislation. I am very glad to be an original cosponsor. I want to thank Congressman SHERMAN for his hard work, and I want to thank, of course, our chairman, Chairman ROYCE. This is a real bipartisan, important, strong measure.

I think we need to be using every tool at our disposal to meet the challenge posed by ISIS and other terrorist groups, and this bill will help us to meet them on the virtual battlefield, which is where they have been having such great success—on social media. Anyone who has looked at the situation over the past months or years knows that the one major difference is social media. Social media, of course, riles up jihadists and also enables them

to surreptitiously communicate in terms of plotting terrorist attacks. We have to be one step ahead of them, and we cannot let them be one step ahead of us.

That is why legislation like this is so important. I cannot think of a conflict in the past in which our enemies have been able to broadcast such horrific depictions of destruction and bloodshed, like we are seeing from ISIS. We all know the images of Mohammed Emwazi, who was known as Jihadi John, as he brutally murdered innocent people. Those videos spread across the Internet with staggering speed, showing everyone in the world the threat that ISIS posed and the tactics ISIS fighters were willing to use. Fortunately, the administration’s efforts succeeded in taking him out, but we know there are far too many who are waiting to take his place.

ISIS isn’t just using social media to foment fear and panic. ISIS and other groups have taken full advantage of Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and other platforms to spread their violent ideology, to recruit new fighters, and to radicalize members of vulnerable and marginalized populations. For example, as more and more information comes out about the San Bernardino shooters, it is becoming clear that Tashfeen Malik used Facebook to convey her commitment to violent extremism to overseas contacts.

We need to find a way to deal with this challenge on social media without violating free expression or privacy concerns. It is going to require creative thinking, but I am confident that we can do it. We have to do it. We don’t have a choice but to do it. We have already taken some steps. I worked with Chairman ROYCE and with Representatives POE of Texas and SHERMAN to push Twitter to make it easier for users to report recruitment efforts. This is a small step to help with one of the tools that ISIS is using, but they are constantly evolving, and we need to keep looking for ways to push back.

That is where this legislation comes in. This bill would require the administration to devise a strategy to combat terrorists’ use of social media and to foster greater collaboration between government and private sector companies to help identify and stop terrorist activities online. Again, we need to look for every advantage possible in taking the fight to ISIS. This bill would help us push back on one of the ways ISIS has achieved such a global reach.

Again, I commend Mr. POE of Texas for his tireless efforts in bringing in legislation to the floor. I commend the chairman as well and Mr. SHERMAN. I support this measure, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), the author of this bill and the chairman of the Foreign Affairs

Subcommittee on Terrorism, Non-proliferation, and Trade.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Representative SHERMAN, on the other side, for cosponsoring this legislation; and I want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Chairman ENGEL for being original cosponsors of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, this is another piece of legislation that has come out of the Foreign Affairs Committee—bipartisan, unanimously voted on, and approved by the Foreign Affairs Committee, as much of our legislation is.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank three staffers who have worked on the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Non-proliferation, and Trade—Luke Murry, Oren Adaki, and Jeff Dressler, who now works with the majority leader's staff. These three individuals know more about terrorism, I think, than any three people on the Hill, and I want to thank them for their work not only on this bill but on legislation in general.

As has been said, Mr. Speaker, terrorists' use of social media has exploded over the last several years. A recent study by The Brookings Institute found that ISIS now uses 40,000 Twitter accounts. Terrorists use social media to do the following: to recruit others, to raise money, to spread propaganda, and to even train future fighters.

This legislation deals with foreign terrorist organizations. We are not talking about a person who claims to be a terrorist or who we think is a terrorist. It is specifically dealing with foreign terrorist organizations that are designated by our government.

The recipes for the bombs used at the Boston Marathon were in al Qaeda's magazine, which was posted on social media before the attack. The al Qaeda affiliate al Shabaab live tweeted the attack on a Kenyan mall that killed 72 people. The al Qaeda branch in Yemen, known as AQAP, which is another terrorist organization, held a press conference on Twitter, allowing users to submit questions that were then answered by AQAP and were posted back on Twitter the following week—a conference call by terrorists. In October, ISIS issued a new instruction manual on how terrorists can use social media. Today, wannabe terrorists don't have to go to the battlefield—to Syria—to get trained. They can get trained online—like receiving college credits—on how to be a terrorist and on how to be a fighter.

Nationwide, the FBI is currently investigating 900 potential lone wolf terrorists in the United States. The Internet and social media serve as their playbook to carry out attacks. Since March of 2014, 71 people in the United States have been charged with crimes related to ISIS.

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Their backgrounds are very different, but nearly all of them had spent time online voicing their support for ISIS. Later, they were arrested after their

online posts drew some attention by the FBI.

In 2011, as the chairman has said, the administration released a report on countering violent extremists that recognized that online radicalization was a growing problem. The administration promised a strategy of how we can deal with this. Four years later, unfortunately, we don't have a strategy, and we don't have a plan. This is a problem because individual agencies are making their own unilateral decisions.

This week, we learned that the Department of Homeland Security did not review the social media posts of Tashfeen Malik, who was granted a fiancee visa, but posted her radical views on social media prior to obtaining the visa.

The State Department does not know how to effectively counter terrorist messaging because it does not have the expertise of the intelligence community. The intelligence community approaches social media as a “capture everything” because it has not been made clear what it can do and what it cannot do. The FBI does not know how far it should push social media companies to prohibit them from allowing terrorist organizations' content on their sites.

So we must have a comprehensive strategy before we can effectively defeat the enemy on the cyber battlefield. Mr. Speaker, all U.S. departments really must be singing the same song on the same page in the hymnal about how to defeat foreign terrorist organizations that use social media—American social media companies.

I will say this: Facebook has done a fairly decent job of bringing down terrorist sites, and Facebook has seen a drop in the number of terrorists that try to use their site, but not all social media companies have been as responsive to terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, we already have technology that is used to make sure that child pornography is not posted online. Thanks to Hany Farid, the chairman of the computer science department at Dartmouth College, who invented a technology that is used with Microsoft. He said that we can use that same protocol that we do to bring down child pornography to bring down social media sites that deal with foreign terrorist organizations' propaganda and their spreading of murder. Here is what he said:

“There's no fundamental technology or engineering limitation. This is a business or policy decision. Unless the companies have decided that they just can't be bothered.”

So that is his opinion on how we can use this same protocol. This can be done. We can use the same protocol, and we can bring down those foreign terrorist organization sites.

This is not a free speech issue—that has been discussed, and some are concerned about that—because we are dealing specifically with foreign terrorist organizations. The Supreme Court has already ruled regarding that

issue in 2010 in Holder v. Humanitarian Law Project that a foreign terrorist organization does not have constitutional rights in the United States under the First Amendment. So this is not a problem.

In this 21st century fight against terrorists who are sophisticated and tech savvy, we have to defeat these organizations on all the battlefields: overseas, over here, and online.

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROSLEHTINEN), the chair of the Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and the ranking member, who lead this committee in such an able, expert manner and in a bipartisan way. I thank especially the author of this important resolution, one of our subcommittee chairmen, TED POE.

I rise in strong support of Judge POE's bill, the Combat Terrorist Use of Social Media Act. I urge all of my colleagues to support this important measure.

Extremist groups like ISIS are well-known for their extensive use of social media, spreading their hateful ideology, inciting violence, and attempting to recruit susceptible individuals to their hateful and twisted cause.

When we hear reports and statistics that we have heard today—like ISIS having over 40,000 Twitter accounts or that there are an estimated 200,000 pro-ISIS social media posts per day—clearly, more needs to be done. These jihadists have become more and more tech savvy and are more adept at manipulating the tools of social media. Yet we in the United States lack any comprehensive strategy to counter their perverted ideology via social media.

As Judge POE has very ably argued, the administration could be stopping pro-extremists' social media in much the same way that we now stop online child pornography. ISIS and other foreign terrorist organizations do not have free speech rights under American law.

Now, we were all shocked, as you heard today, that our very own Department of Homeland Security maintained a policy that prevented the screening of visa applicants' social media accounts because we worried about bad public relations; we worried about intrusions into their privacy, even though social media posts, by their very definition, are exactly that, reaching out to the public through social manners, meaning through public ways.

Every pro-ISIS post or any post by any other foreign terrorist organization that uses Facebook, YouTube, or Twitter, every one that we are able to take down before action is being taken is one less chance for these extremists

to recruit and spread their vicious propaganda, and the administration needs to start getting serious about stopping it.

This bill will require the administration to provide Congress—and, therefore, the American public—with a strategy to fight Islamic extremists' use of social media, as well as require that the administration give us a policy that enhances the collaboration between the Federal Government and social media companies so that we can counter this troubling and dangerous threat.

I applaud Judge POE for introducing this bill. I thank our esteemed chairman and ranking member for bringing it to the floor in such a speedy manner.

I offer my full support, and I urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, every day ISIS is working to bring new fighters into its ranks, recruiting candidates from South Asia, from France, the U.K., and right here in the United States. ISIS is able to cast such a wide net because they are taking full advantage of social media. We need to take this tool out of their hands, even as we press forward with our partners to fight ISIS on the battlefield.

This legislation will enable us to work more closely with social media companies and put together a strategy to meet this challenge.

Again, I want to commend my friend, Judge POE.

I urge a "yes" vote on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), you are right: "That is just the way it is."

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, again, it was revealed yesterday that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security actually prohibited immigration officials from reviewing the social media postings of all foreign citizens applying for U.S. visas and only sporadically began looking at posts from some visa applicants.

The failure to incorporate a review of social media posts into the visa approval process is absurd. Ignoring the online statements of those terrorists trying to enter the United States puts our country at risk. This must be fixed.

Destroying ISIS will require determined leadership. It is going to require Presidential leadership. And the President must use his authority as Commander in Chief to lead this fight to destroy ISIS—not to contain it—to destroy ISIS and other extremist groups.

So it has been said that a virtual caliphate awash in hate and propaganda exists online. Yet U.S. Government efforts in this area are failing. A strategy to combat terrorist use of social media is one of many measures the administration must develop so we can win the fight. Promised in 2011, this strategy is overdue.

With this bill, Congress is demanding that the administration deliver its strategy so that the Federal agencies can effectively prevent terrorists from

using social media to spread hate, fear, and violence.

I again want to recognize my colleagues Representative POE of Texas and Representative ENGEL of New York for their leadership on this measure, which I encourage all the Members of this House to support.

I yield back the balance of my time, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Congressman TED POE from Texas for his work on H.R. 3654, Combatting Terrorists' Use of Social Media Act of 2015.

The proliferation of terrorism is an existential threat to our homeland greater than ever before because of the viral spread of extremism on the world-wide web.

The challenge before us is balancing civil liberties such as freedom of speech with our national security interests.

Various social media platforms are being utilized by Daesh leaders and their affiliates across the globe to reach, engage and radicalize—instantly and for free.

One only needs to view the gruesome propaganda videos put online by Daesh with evocative music, clearly edited to inspire violence with imagery that conjures an "us vs. them" emotion.

The world-wide web was intended as a platform to share productive and creative knowledge and ideas.

The sensory impact of the violent propaganda video is so powerful that a powerful counter-narrative is imperative.

Through its online campaign, Daesh instantly gains access to vulnerable and impressionable minds, whether teenagers going through teenage angst or unemployed educated women and men who have limited economic prospects and feel disenfranchised from society.

So what we have is a mélange of Daesh recruits, copycats and wannabes all inspired via the worldwide web, ready to carry on and die for an ideology they don't fully grasp its gravity on them and their future.

The evidence of this is tens of thousands of foreign fighters from all over the world who have left their homes and joined Daesh in Iraq and Syria.

But then we also have those who do not even leave the comforts of their homes in carrying out their crimes.

Part of what our government and governments across the globe must do is to fight back by cutting off terrorist bank accounts, Twitter, Facebook, Google and other social media accounts.

Whereas money is the currency for compensating Daesh's recruits, social media is being utilized as a currency and tool for engaging and brainwashing these recruits.

I commend our powerful military's might and professionalism of neutralizing Abu Salah who has been described as one of the most senior and experienced members of Daesh's financial network and in fact has been referred to as the organization's finance minister.

I hope that our friends in Silicon Valley and the tech industry will join us in our fight against Daesh with their genius as we continue our collective efforts of addressing the role that social media will play in defeating enemies of the peace on the traditional battlefield as well as on the contemporary battlefield of the web.

The past few months have been marked by senseless threats or actual violence and tragedy across the globe from the most recent details of the threat triggering the Los Angeles Public School District shut down, to the San Bernardino shootings, to Boko Haram attacks in Nigeria, shootings in Bamako, Mali, at the Bataclan Theatre and other social venues in Paris, to attacks in Beirut, Lebanon and the downing of a plane claiming innocent lives of Egyptians and Russians.

Violent extremism cannot be the "new-normal" in our nation and in our world.

To combat the scourge of violent extremism, and make sure this is not our "new normal" it is important that we adapt to the capabilities of adversaries of peace through a multipronged approach, which is why I support H.R. 3654.

Specifically, this bill requires the President to transmit to Congress a report on U.S. strategy to combat terrorists' and terrorist organizations' use of social media.

This bill is in tandem with the President's comprehensive strategy to counter terrorists' and terrorist organizations' use of social media, encapsulated in the President's 2011 Strategic Implementation Plan for Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States.

Among other things, the President's robust plan seeks to protect our communities from violent extremist recruitment and radicalization.

This is a top national security priority for the Administration and those of us here in Congress.

The President's strategic plan and H.R. 3654 facilitate the creation of a report which will enable our country in our efforts at combatting violent extremism through: evaluation of the role social media plays in radicalization in the United States and across the globe; analysis of how terrorists and terrorist organizations are using social media; recommendations to improve the federal government's efforts to disrupt and counter the use of social media by terrorists and terrorist organizations; a classified assessment of the intelligence value of terrorists' social media posts; and a classified overview of training available to law enforcement and intelligence personnel to combat terrorists' use of social media and recommendations for improving or expanding existing training opportunities.

Part of what the Bill seeks to achieve is information on our nation's policy that enhances the exchange of information and dialogue between the federal government and social media companies as it relates to the use of social media platforms by terrorists.

Finally, among other things, the Bill also calls for our updated comprehensive strategy to counter terrorists' and terrorist organizations' use of social media, as committed to in the President's 2011 Strategic Implementation Plan for Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States.

As a nation, we must work together, private and public sector to prevent all types of extremism regardless of who inspires it.

At the same time, countering ISIS, better to be referred to as Daesh, Boko Haram, al-Qa'ida and other extremists' violent ideologies requires our coordinated social media, intelligence sharing, law enforcement and community engagement strategy that will enable us to thwart violent extremism, saving many American lives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3654, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

#### SUPPORTING FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 536) supporting freedom of the press in Latin America and the Caribbean and condemning violations of press freedom and violence against journalists, bloggers, and individuals exercising their right to freedom of speech, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

##### H. RES. 536

Whereas despite the strong tradition of independent and critical media in many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, journalists in some countries are becoming increasingly vulnerable to violence and government harassment;

Whereas, on July 29, 2015, the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee convened a hearing titled “Threats to Press Freedom in the Americas” and Carlos Lauria, Senior Americas Program Coordinator at the Committee to Protect Journalists stated that “Scores of journalists have been killed and disappeared. Media outlets have been bombed and forced into censorship. . . . Censorship due to violence in Latin America has reached one of its highest points since most of the region was dominated by military rule more than three decades ago.”;

Whereas in 2014, Cuban authorities detained 1,817 members of civil society, 31 of whom were independent journalists;

Whereas in Cuba, independent journalists face sustained harassment, including detention and physical abuse from the Castro regime;

Whereas in Ecuador, in September 2015, the government took steps to close the sole press freedom monitoring organization, Fundamedios, for exceeding its corporate charter, but the government relented in the face of international criticism and potential economic reprisals;

Whereas in the country, forced corrections by the government have become a means of institutional censorship;

Whereas according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, Mexico is one of the most dangerous countries in the world for the press;

Whereas in Mexico, over 50 journalists have been killed or have disappeared since 2007, at least 11 reporters have been killed

since 2011, 4 of them in direct reprisal for their work;

Whereas according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, at least 4 journalists have been killed in Brazil in 2015, many times after being tortured and having their bodies mutilated;

Whereas Evany José Metzker, a political blogger in the state of Minas Gerais who had been investigating a child prostitution ring, was found decapitated outside the town of Padre Paraíso;

Whereas according to the Organization of American States (OAS) 2014 Annual Report of the Inter-American Commission on Human rights, journalists covering protests in Venezuela were subject to assaults, obstruction, detention, raids, threats, censorship orders, and confiscation or destruction of equipment;

Whereas, on April 21, 2015, a lawsuit within the 29th District Tribunal of the Metropolitan area of Caracas charged the journal *El Nacional* and its Chief Editor Miguel Henrique Otero for “reproducing false information” and was forced to flee Venezuela;

Whereas the Honduran national human rights commissioner reported that 8 journalists and social communicators were killed as of September, compared with 3 in 2013, and dozens of cases in which journalists reported being victims of threats and persecution;

Whereas according to the OAS 2014 Annual Report of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights Members of the media and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) stated the press “self-censored” due to fear of reprisal from organized crime or corrupt government officials;

Whereas in Colombia, there were 98 incidents of violence and harassment against journalists, 30 were physically attacked, and 45 were victims of harassment or intimidation due to their reporting;

Whereas members of illegal armed groups sought to inhibit freedom of expression by intimidating, threatening, kidnapping, and killing journalists;

Whereas national and international NGOs reported that local media representatives regularly practiced self-censorship because of threats of violence from these groups;

Whereas according to the OAS 2014 Annual Report of the Inter-American Commission on Human rights, throughout 2014, Guatemala presented accounts of cases of harassment and the filing of several criminal complaints against a newspaper that criticized the Administration;

Whereas according to the Department of State’s Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 in Nicaragua, the government continued to use direct and indirect means to pressure and seek to close independent radio stations, allegedly for political reasons;

Whereas according to the Department of State’s Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 in Argentina, a survey released of 830 journalists throughout the country indicated 53 percent of respondents worked for a media outlet that self-censored content; and

Whereas almost half the journalists surveyed said they self-censored in their reporting on the national government: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports a free press in Latin America and the Caribbean and condemns violations of press freedom and violence against journalists;

(2) urges countries in the region to implement recommendations from the Organization of American States’ Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression to its Member States;

(3) urges countries in Latin America and the Caribbean to be vocal in condemning violations of press freedom, violence against journalists, and the culture of impunity that leads to self-censorship;

(4) urges countries in the Western Hemisphere to uphold the principles outlined in the Inter-American Democratic Charter and urges their neighbors in the region to stand by the charter they are a party to; and

(5) urges the United States Agency for International Development and the Department of State to assist, when appropriate, the media in closed societies to promote an open and free press.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring forward this resolution, introduced by my friend and colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. Sires), on the important issue of press freedom in the Western Hemisphere.

Freedom of the press is the cornerstone of democracy. It is our obligation to promote and protect this fundamental right, particularly here in our own hemisphere.

Undoubtedly, Mr. Speaker, we have seen a troubling erosion of these rights in several parts of the Western Hemisphere at the hands of authoritarian, populist leaders, as well as violence against journalists by transnational narcotics trafficking organizations.

In Ecuador, President Correa silences discourse and dissent by intimidating and censoring the media. Hefty fines are issued for any reporting unfavorable to him or his policies.

In Mexico, narcotics traffickers intimidate the press and violently target journalists to silence those journalists.

In Cuba, despite the administration’s naïve rapprochement, a lack of free expression is underscored by the continued political imprisonment of anyone who dares to speak or write against the Castro dictatorship.

This resolution is an important demonstration of our support for the fundamental right to freedom of speech and our belief that regional leaders in the Organization of American States need to do more to condemn what, in some parts of the region, has become the systemic violation of press freedom. The United States must stand with brave journalists who are on the front lines of exposing corruption in government.

Earlier this year, Chairman DUNCAN’s Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere held a hearing on threats to