



DHS: Let's gouge our eyes out lest we see something bad

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In the category of “just plain dumb,” the US Department of Homeland Security has a [policy that it won't analyze social media postings](http://thehill.com/policy/technology/263101-immigration-officials-prohibited-from-looking-at-visa-applicants-social) (<http://thehill.com/policy/technology/263101-immigration-officials-prohibited-from-looking-at-visa-applicants-social>) when considering visa applications. (My colleague Marc Thiessen tackles the limits of political correctness on this same issue [here](https://www.aei.org/publication/political-correctness-kills-obama-admin-prohibits-reviews-of-social-media-postings-by-visa-applicants/) (<https://www.aei.org/publication/political-correctness-kills-obama-admin-prohibits-reviews-of-social-media-postings-by-visa-applicants/>.) DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson kept the policy in place “because he feared a civil liberties backlash and ‘bad public relations.’”



http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/RTX1VTOV_JehJohnson-e1450129528708.jpg

President Barack Obama delivers a statement after meeting with his national security team, November 25, 2015. Also pictured are Attorney General Loretta Lynch (L) and Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson. REUTERS/Carlos Barria.

I'm not sure which is worse: bad public relations because of a policy that looks at publicly posted statements on social media, or bad public relations because "Tashfeen Malik, one of the San Bernardino shooters, posted a message on Facebook declaring allegiance to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria [and] 14 people were killed."

Actually, I am sure.

Looking at social media posts of job applicants has become a routine practice of employers in order to see if applicants are responsible people. With the Internet being open to the public, postings on social media are no different than statements in a public square. It really makes no sense that our government does not review such items as part of the visa application process. If someone is virulently anti-American or pledges support to our enemies, they should have the freedom to do so, but we shouldn't reward them with the right to come enjoy what our men and women throughout history have died to protect.

As I've stated before, [we cannot fight this war with two hands tied behind Uncle Sam](https://www.aei.org/publication/political-correctness-must-die-when-it-comes-to-terrorism/) (<https://www.aei.org/publication/political-correctness-must-die-when-it-comes-to-terrorism/>)'s back. There is too much at stake, including American lives.

This article was found online at:

<http://www.aei.org/publication/dhs-lets-gouge-our-eyes-out-lest-we-see-something-bad/>