

# Like Guns, Social Media Is a Weapon That Should Be Regulated | WIRED

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The decision by the Sri Lankan government this week to shut down the big social networks—including Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, and Snapchat—in the aftermath of an Easter day terrorist attack on three Catholic churches and three upscale hotels feels like a turning point in our relationship with these platforms. A Gordian knot moment, if you will, where instead of agonizing over how to untangle the social media mess you just pull out a sword and cut.

The coordinated attacks, which took place in three Sri Lankan cities and killed more than 300 people, were designed to foment religious strife in a country that has been slowly recovering from a quarter-century-long civil war. On the 10-year path to peace and stability, there have been occasional flareups of religious violence, such as the anti-Muslim riots in March 2018 that left two people dead. In that case, too, [the Sri Lankan government temporarily blocked the social networks](#) to contain the violence's spread.

[...]

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