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TRANSCRIPT OF "FILE ON 4" – "*ONLINE GROOMING*"

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“FILE ON 4”

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Producer: Ben Robinson

Reporter: Geoff White

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## MUSIC

HAYWOOD: She asked me if she could stop at her friend’s house. I said yes. She packed her things. Her dad, Martin, took her over there and that was it. It was the last time.

WHITE: Stephanie Haywood’s daughter, Kayleigh, was killed after being groomed on Facebook. She was 15. Her father was the last family member to see her alive.

HAYWOOD: He dropped her off at the swimming baths, because she did lifesaving on a Friday, and that’s where he would drop her off every Friday, and then they would walk just around the corner to her friend’s house. But she never got there.

WHITE: Kayleigh lived in Measham in Leicestershire, with her parents and seven siblings, who thought of Kayleigh as a second mum.

HAYWOOD: She’d come in from school, she’d play with them, she’d ask me if she could bath the little ones, she’d take them to the park, draw with them, colour, etc.

WHITE: So Kayleigh had quite a lot of people to be looking after?

HAYWOOD: She did, yes, but they all loved her.

WHITE: What sort of stuff did she like at school? What were her favourite subjects?

HAYWOOD: Art. It was drawing and it was fashion drawing.

WHITE: Was she a big clothes person herself as well?

HAYWOOD: She was, yeah. Hair and beauty and things like that. That's what she wanted to go on and do.

WHITE: So she was thinking of that as a career, maybe going into that as a job?

HAYWOOD: She was. She'd done paperwork at school to go on to college and she had chosen hair and beauty.

WHITE: Unknown to Stephanie, Kayleigh had been communicating with a man online. Just two weeks later, those same messages would lead to her rape and murder. Since then, Stephanie's campaigned to get social networks to raise their minimum age from 13 to 16. She's also helped warn millions of people worldwide about the dangers of online grooming.

HAYWOOD: The police asked me if they could make a video regarding Kayleigh's case and how quick social media can take a life, and I agreed because I wouldn't like any family to go through what I've been through.

MUSIC

WHITE: What kind of reactions have people had to it?

HAYWOOD: Heartbreaking. People who are in the street have come up to me and said it's been overpowering, they've taken their children off social media and it's also scared the children and made them more aware.

WHITE: But should it be up to people like Stephanie to make kids more aware? Shouldn't the social media companies themselves be doing more to protect children? After all, Facebook alone has almost two billion users worldwide – many of them are young people, valuable targets for the advertisers who fill the tech companies' coffers. Social media sites are happy to capitalise on youngster' likes, shares and messages. But are they getting the message when it comes to online grooming?

LONGFIELD: We're leaving children without the tools, without the information to fend for themselves in a community which is largely dominated by a very small number of media giants, of companies that have power over so many aspects of their lives.

WHITE: Today on File on 4, we reveal the scale on which social media is being used to groom children. We've discovered its involvement over the last three years in more than 7,000 reports of sexual abuse against victims as young as three years old. We find convicted paedophiles hiding in plain sight on the world's biggest social network, and we hear Facebook's response to these serious allegations.

#### ACTUALITY OUTSIDE POLICE HQ

WHITE: So we've come to one of the Met's main HQ buildings here in West London. We've been invited to the morning briefing of the Child Sexual Exploitation Team. What this group do is they look at all of the reports that have come in from across the capital overnight. These are the most serious, the most concerning reports, and they try to work out what's happened, what the risk of harm is to the child and what needs to be done next.

MARSHALL: Morning everyone. Zena Marshall here, I'm the Detective Chief Inspector in charge of the Child Sexual Exploitation Team. So we've had seven new cases overall, five of these cases have got an online element to them. So Rob,

MARSHALL cont: do you want to take us through the cases please?

ROB: Yes, so our first one is a West job, it's a 12 year old female who has disclosed to her school that she's been talking to an older male on the internet and she is concerned that she has then met him. It seems she has been communicating via online gaming and they've exchanged details social media wise. The male she had been communicating with online messaged her and asked for sexual pictures, which she sent him, and then he sent sexual pictures back as well before she stopped the conversation. The concern is she thinks it might be the same male who she bumped into on the street.

MAN: It looks to me that when she's uploaded the stuff, she's put her location there, so clearly this person could have tracked her down.

WHITE: In case after case, online communication and the use of mobile phones are critical factors.

MAN: 13 year old girl apparently has engaged in sexual activity with some boys that she met online, and some of that activity has been recorded on their mobile phones. They've used those images to try and control her and force her to engage in some criminal activity. She's talking about carrying knives, cash and drugs for these boys.

WHITE: None of this comes as a surprise to the Children's Commissioner, Anne Longfield, who's got a legal duty to protect the rights of children in England. She put together a report earlier this year on children's safety online.

LONGFIELD: My starting point is that the internet is a force for good, but it wasn't built for children. And a third of the users of the internet are children, so we need to make special accommodation, if you like, for them. Now what they told me was that they often found themselves coming across content that they didn't expect and they thought was nasty or distasteful; they sometimes found their own postings being used in ways that they weren't happy with.

WHITE: Were there specific examples of that?

LONGFIELD: So there were specific examples. There are examples of children who were being approached by adults, asked for nude photos, things that anyone would believe was wrong, and again, nothing was done with that. There were children who found photos of themselves that had been used in other ways, children who had found content that they found very disturbing, and they felt, in the main, nothing was done about it.

WHITE: How do you react to that?

LONGFIELD: Well, I think that's appalling. We've got here social media giants that are built into every part of children's existence and those kids need to have some comeback on that.

WHITE: For some families, it's too late for comeback. Kayleigh Haywood's parents didn't find out she'd been groomed until she'd already gone missing and the police had arrived.

HAYWOOD: They came out and took a brief statement, then it clicked that her tablet was upstairs, and I fetched it down and there we see messages from Luke Harlow arranging to meet Kayleigh, and then it all unfolded from then.

WHITE: And so are you looking through the tablet with the police as you find it?

HAYWOOD: I am, yes.

WHITE: What did you make of that?

HAYWOOD: Oh, it was vile, the messages were horrid, oh horrid, sick. He had wormed her in, he really did - it was horrid.

WHITE: So that moment, it's almost like looking back in time - you can see the messages and how it's been going; it's like suddenly being able to see a view into this world that you didn't realise was there.

HAYWOOD: Definitely. He'd sent her false hopes and Kayleigh being Kayleigh, because she was, you know, kind-hearted, trusted everyone, took on that he was going to look after her and be her friend.

WHITE: In fact Luke Harlow, who was 28 and unemployed, was anything other than a friend. His method was typical of many online paedophiles: they find children on Facebook or other social media sites and send out friend requests. Once connected, the groomer is able to message their victim in private.

It sounds like you and Kayleigh got on – you had a good relationship. All this was going on in her private life, it was all happening up in her bedroom, on the tablet. She kept it all private?

HAYWOOD: She did, because obviously she didn't think nothing was going to happen, you know, she was a 15 year old girl - they need privacy. If she thought she was in danger, I would have been the first person she would have come to - either me or her dad - but she didn't. She didn't believe she was in trouble she didn't believe that she was in danger.

WHITE: And presumably that's partly because Luke, in his messages, was maybe reassuring her and telling her it'd all be okay?

HAYWOOD: He was, yes, promising her the world, saying that he would look after her, saying he would buy her gifts, let's be friends, etc.

WHITE: In fact, Harlow sexually abused her, kept her in his house, and then the following evening invited round his friend, 29 year old Stephen Beadman, who raped and killed her. He left her body in a hedgerow. Harlow was sentenced to 12 years in prison, Beadman at least 35 years. As we've discovered, the online grooming that led to Kayleigh's death is a daily reality.

WHITE cont: Back at the Met's morning briefing, the gathered officers are hearing about one incident where the contact, like that with Kayleigh Haywood, has started out on Facebook.

#### ACTUALITY AT MET BRIEFING

MAN: Over a period of time a number of offences identified and passed across from Lancashire, Scotland and Avon and Somerset, all linked to a male residing in South London, concerns that he's contacting females on Facebook, young girls on Facebook, and inciting sexual activity, trying to get images of them.

MARSHALL: So how do we know that it's linked in with Lancashire and Scotland and Avon and ....?

WOMAN: That's where the victims are, I think.

MARSHALL: Oh, so the suspect's living here and ....

MAN: They've collated it and sent the IP address and the telephone number which has resolved back to an address.

MARSHALL: Okay, okay.

MAN: So all that needs is someone to take that to court to get a warrant, execute. It has got to be the most pressing matter.

MARSHALL: Yes. Well if I ask you to review it ...

WOMAN: It only came in very late yesterday, so ....

MARSHALL: Yeah, okay, can we bring that back on Monday to see where we are at with it? Obviously if there is risk there, we need to get that warrant as soon as possible.

WOMAN: Sure, yes.

WHITE: After the briefing, I spoke to the unit's boss, Detective Superintendent John MacDonald. He says the police struggle to get full cooperation from the social media firms.

Just talk us through the kind of bureaucracy that's involved if you think, okay, we've got to go to a social media company. What next?

MACDONALD: If they're abroad, you've got to get a legal document and that document's got to be presented abroad to the satisfaction of the authorities over there. That is a lengthy process, weeks if not months, to resolve something like that, if in fact they'll accept it. By the time we get told about it and we're satisfied that an offence has taken place, it's easiest to go and make the arrest and deal with what you get there, prosecute the offender for whatever you can and look after the victim. And I think, in terms of the social media companies, that my biggest concern is not that aspect, it's simply the lack of disclosure. They could be telling us now who's committing the offences, so we can stop things now. That's the frustration.

WHITE: MacDonald says the social media companies are simply failing to tell his team about grooming behavior, and he contrasts this with how those same firms approach images of child sexual abuse.

MACDONALD: The social media sites have been pretty good in terms of indecent images and I think they've done a reasonable amount of work on that; they make disclosures and we are arresting a lot of people for possession of images and swapping images of children. But what hasn't happened yet is grasping this risk, grooming online and passing information, disclosing information to the police so we can act on it. I haven't seen any come in the last 12 months directly to my team, which are a hands on team who go out and make the arrests, who protect the children.

WHITE: Facebook told us they make a lot of effort with the police, particularly the National Crime Agency's Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command. Since we spoke to the Met, Facebook has got in touch with them to try to address John Macdonald's concerns. But the Met aren't the only ones struggling with the social

WHITE cont: media companies. The Children's Commissioner fears the big players might not even be monitoring the disturbing behaviour children see on their sites.

LONGFIELD: It plays a major role. Over the last ten years, the internet is something which has been built into every aspect of life, and certainly into every aspect of communication. And what we've seen over the last few years is that activities, such as child sexual exploitation and grooming in different ways, have really seized upon social media as a way to speed up their transactions, and indeed drug use as well has been something where social media has been hugely helpful for them. Now that's not to say that social media is to blame for that, it's just that it's a useful tool for those that are seeking to use it for ill intent.

WHITE: Have you had interactions with the social media companies, and if so, how did that go?

LONGFIELD: Yes, they are very secretive if they're approached. If I approach them, I'd say, 'Please give me the number of times children have reported problems over the last six months, tell me what they were and tell me what you did about them,' but I do know that if they can't explain that to me, then actually yet again we've got this kind of veil of secrecy that comes over us, where actually the most progressive companies in the world are hanging onto data in a really secretive way.

MUSIC

WHITE: We got data from the police. We asked all UK forces how many times they'd recorded sexual offences against children involving the ten most popular social networks for kids. The results – from 22 forces - paint a worrying picture. Over the last three years there have been more than 7,000 offences involving those leading networks. That includes grooming, rape, sexual assault and sexual activity. The number's grown 44% in those three years. Of the forces, 14 gave us figures for individual social networks. Snapchat, for example, accounted for almost one in five of those offences. But by far the biggest share went to Facebook. Not only was the main Facebook site involved in 2,600 reported child sex offences, but if you take into account its subsidiaries, Instagram and

WHITE cont: WhatsApp, Facebook Incorporated accounts for just over 70% of all these reported crimes. Of course, that's a reflection of how popular Facebook and its subsidiaries are compared to the other services. Even more troubling were the ages of the victims. More than a quarter were under 13, meaning they're below the minimum age for the major social networks. In other words, the grooming and sexual abuse of many of these children involved services they should never have been allowed to use. Snapchat told us they work to stop their systems being used for sexual content and that under 13s aren't allowed to use their service. But they didn't tell us how they verify users' ages. We asked Facebook's UK Head of Policy, Simon Milner, about the figures. That surely shows you're not doing enough on particularly this grooming behaviour?

MILNER: Well, I actually think what it shows is that we are very effective in the way that we cooperate with law enforcement, we help them out when they come to us and they need some information. But also it does tell you something about the scale of our service. A great majority of the people who use the internet are using Facebook, and as well as lots of teenagers, unfortunately as is the case in terms of people who want to try and have inappropriate contact with children, they will go to the places where they are, and that's something, that's one of the reasons why we take this issue so seriously.

WHITE: But some people claim they're so concerned about grooming on sites like Facebook, that they're taking matters into their own hands.

#### ACTUALITY IN LIFT

LIFT ANNOUNCEMENT: Going up. Floor one.

WHITE: So-called paedophile hunting groups use fake profiles to find groomers online. They say they do what the police can't or won't. The police disagree and have criticised the hunters' methods. Among the most well-known groups is Public Justice. I went to see one of their members, Jay, at his flat in North London. So how does it work? So you set up the account, somebody volunteers some photos, what happens next?

JAY: So we'll set up a Facebook account. We don't add anyone, we don't request any people or anybody, purely for the fact is that would kind of be enticing them into something perhaps they wouldn't do, so I'll go into a few groups, play a few games just to get the account active, and I might go into a room. There was one that appeared, I don't know if it's been taken down, but it used to be schoolgirls in uniform or something like that. I might go in there and go, 'Hi, does anyone want to chat?' I'll leave it at that and then the next day I tend to go in, have a look at friend requests, chat requests and I'll just start chatting to people.

WHITE: How many people are you getting effectively hitting on these profiles?

JAY: It can be hundreds, because a lot of it is we ...

WHITE: Hundreds?

JAY: Yeah, because we tend to get people from other countries, it's not just the UK. So we tend to get a lot of other countries from around the world. I think they just go on to child-like pages, I think they probably ...

WHITE: So fan pages and that kind of thing?

JAY: Yeah, so they kind of do what we do. They go looking for what they're kind of hunting for, and unfortunately it's children.

#### ACTUALITY WITH COMPUTER

JAY: [TYPING] So I am 13, female, London, UK. Now most people, if they got that, would hopefully say, I'm not going to talk to this person, would just delete it, so I'm not inviting anyone in to these conversations. There you go, look again, I'm getting more friends requests. So ...

WHITE: Good Lord, so there's three boxes opened up.

JAY: There you are. London male. Male, 34, London. Now you've got to remember my user name does state Lisa, 13, female, London.

WHITE: So some people would look at that and say, well hang on, you're stringing this guy along and you're entrapping him.

JAY: The male from 34 London is asking me, 'knickers or thong today?' Not even, 'Hi, how are you, how's your day been?' anything like that. He's asking me what my knickers are. So where is this at all entrapment or anything like that? This is purely people just trying to get their rocks off with children.

WHITE: Jay says Facebook is one of the main sites where his decoy identity gets propositioned. He showed me a Facebook conversation he'd had through his 13 year old alter ego, with a man who said he was 57.

JAY: [READING CONVERSATION] 'I have to say you look sexy, love.' Bit of a strange thing to say to a 13 year old.

WHITE: So he's telling a 13 year old they look sexy on Facebook?

JAY: Yeah. So, I mean, this is 13 pages long so I won't go through the whole conversation.

WHITE: He's not lied about his age, he's been honest that he's 57, he knows he's talking to somebody who's 13 – or says they're 13.

JAY: Yeah. 'I would love to go out with you, we can meet up.'

WHITE: Several of these online chats have led to face-to-face meetings. As you can imagine, the people who think they've been chatting with a teenage girl are not exactly pleased to see Jay and his colleagues, especially when the police are



WHITE: Hi, is it Kyran?

PEET: Hi, yes.

WHITE: I'm Geoff, how are you doing?

PEET: Hi, nice to meet you.

WHITE: Sorry to interrupt your packing. Can we come in?

PEET: Yeah, yeah, sure.

WHITE: Now 19, Kyran is off to Brazil and is stockpiling supplies for a sponsored trek.

PEET: Yeah, more mosquito bands. Basically it's a lot of insect repellent and sleeping bags.

WHITE: You're probably going to need it, yes. He's raising money for the Children's Society, the charity that helped him through the sexual abuse he suffered as a 13 year old. It was a difficult time in Kyran's life – he'd just come out as gay and a new Facebook friend provided just the reassurance he needed.

PEET: From everything that he said and everything that he sounded like, he sounded incredible, he sounded really caring and really lovely, so it just attracted me.

WHITE: And presumably somebody who's there for you online quite a lot, you could ask questions, chat a lot at different times of the day and so on?

PEET: Yeah, like we were speaking nonstop for quite a while, but it went really fast. I think it was only like two weeks that we were speaking before we met.

WHITE: And in terms of his age, how old did he say he was?

PEET: He said he was 18, but he was actually 23.

WHITE: So that's a huge difference, particularly when you're 13?

PEET: Yeah, from 13 to 18 isn't good anyway, but like I said, I thought that was fine, like it's only five years, not realising that I was way too young. He came to the house, I told all of my family he was just a friend, and nobody really had a clue up until things started not adding up and my behaviour started to change a little bit.

WHITE: So you were having basically a relationship in secret. You were appearing to be friends in public but there was a more romantic relationship going on between you in reality, is that right?

PEET: Yeah, between us, we would say that we were together and there was obviously a sexual relationship there as well. And my family didn't know up until I found out his real age; that's when I said everything to my family and from there we got in contact with the police.

WHITE: Kyran says he's put it behind him – he's moving on. His abuser was convicted, but even afterwards, Kyran still had feelings for him.

PEET: It was for a while actually, after the court case, I think it was about a year where I genuinely did still feel like I knew it was fake and I knew the persona that he was putting on was to groom me, but I couldn't help but feel like I did fall for that guy, even though it was a persona, I did love him.

WHITE: Could technology have spotted Kyran's abuser before he wormed his way into the youngster's affections? Computer algorithms track our behaviour and show us adverts on these social media sites. Could the same methods be used to identify grooming? Tech company Safetonet thinks so. It's been trialling software that aims to identify harmful behaviour online. The idea is that parents will be able to install the

WHITE cont: company's app on children's phones, with their permission. Its Chief Executive, Richard Pursey, explains how it works.

PURSEY: Step one, it's got to learn the pattern of behaviour, so it works out when your kids speak online, what they say, how frequently they typically answer to an incoming message, the language they use, who they are talking to and so on, so it determines their environment. And then effectively it's looking for anomalies in behaviour, so it's on the alert looking for when things change – so the language changes, the profanity level is, I don't know, 10% of maximum but suddenly they've gone to 35%. That's a change in their behaviour and the software goes looking for what causes that change. Do we think that Facebook and Twitter and Snap and all these other guys have got the ability to write algorithms like ours to spot the sort of stuff that we're spotting? Yes, we do. They have to. These are some of the biggest companies in the world, they employ some of the greatest talent. They can afford to recruit the best skills, the best graduating talent from the best universities around the world. So can they do it technically? Yes, they can.

WHITE: We understand some social media sites are already experimenting with this kind of technology. What about Facebook?

MILNER: What we should be doing, and I think this is exactly what my colleagues do, is focus on behavior, and if somebody is trying to use Facebook to have inappropriate contact with young people, we proactively, using various tools as well as the intelligence we get from other sources, we go after that and when we come across it we alert the authorities to that individual.

WHITE: Of course, a technological solution is still some way off – if it indeed ever arrives. For the moment, the main approach has to be that of educating youngsters. How are they coping with that?

## ACTUALITY AT SCHOOL

WHITE: So we're now in the sixth form common room here at Charnwood College in Loughborough. The sixth formers are sitting in the open plan area, some of them studying, some of them perhaps pretending to study, and I'm here to meet a



WHITE: Do they give you any kind of message or do they say anything to you?

KATIE: Well one time before they've messaged me and been like, 'Hi, I'm blah blah blah, nice to meet you,' and stuff, but I kind of just like block them and don't reply. I could show you if you want.

WHITE: Yeah, go on, let's have a look. Have you still got the requests?

KATIE: There's five people who I have no clue who they are.

ELLIE: Yeah, and I've got this dodgy person. I don't even know how to read that.

SHEKA: Want some help?

ELLIE: Yeah.

SHEKA: Mr Abdul ....

KATIE: A lot of them, I just don't know what they are.

ELLIE: This guy doesn't even have a name, it's just MMMA6.

WHITE: How often does this happen, where you get random requests?

KATIE: I would say once every week. On my private account I only let people who I know follow me.

WHITE: When you say people you know, how do you know who's who online, as it were?

KATIE: Because you can ask them in real life, and stuff. You usually text them, asking if it's actually them.

WHITE: So you've got a back chat that you go to people with and say, 'I've had a request from you – is it you really?'

KATIE: Yeah, I usually just do that on text messages normally.

WHITE: When it comes to online stranger danger, these children are pretty clued up – partly because they've seen that hard-hitting police video based on Kayleigh Haywood's case. And partly because Kayleigh herself was a pupil at a school just a few miles from theirs.

#### EXTRACT FROM VIDEO

GIRL: He wants me to meet his friends, so he must be serious about it. [CRYING] Get off me! Go away! Help me! Help!

ALEX: I think one of the biggest shocks was how unsafe and horrible the world is when they're behind closed doors. It happened so close to us and we wouldn't have known at the time, but then for her to get killed is horrifying.

ELLIE: It was really shocking to think that anybody could want to do that even, let alone go and do it.

WHITE: Kayleigh's abusers were sent to prison, just like Kyran Peet's abuser and many of the offenders caught by groups like Public Justice. All of them used Facebook to groom their victims. So you'd hope that when such people are convicted, their Facebook accounts would be closed down. That's certainly what Facebook seems to say. The company has a simple rule, and it's here on the site in black and white: convicted sex offenders are not allowed to use Facebook. It sounds very clear and probably quite reassuring to young users of the site and their parents, but we've discovered it's not quite as straightforward as it seems. Sitting in a café, within just a few clicks, I found almost two dozen convicted child sex offenders whose profiles were still live on Facebook.

## ACTUALITY ON FACEBOOK

WHITE: So this is an unsettling experience. I've got two screens in front of me. On one screen I've got details of convicted child sex offenders. I've got their mugshots, I've got their names, I've got details of the offences that they committed. And on the other screen I've got Facebook profiles under the same names with similar - in some cases, identical - pictures. And what's striking is the contrast between the two things. On the one hand, in black and white, the horrific offences that have been committed, and on the other hand, people in Facebook world with their friends, their family, what they've liked - sometimes pictured with children. It's the contrast that's really disturbing. Among them, a profile matching another man who tried to groom Kayleigh Haywood just days before she was raped and murdered. Kayleigh was contacted on Facebook by Bruce Cordwell. In February 2017, he was sentenced to three years and seven months in prison for trying to groom her for sex. We showed Cordwell's Facebook account to Kayleigh's mum, Stephanie.

## ACTUALITY WITH STEPHANIE

WHITE: We've found a profile which we think is that of Bruce Cordwell, still on Facebook and still live. What do you make of that, the fact that he still has an account there?

HAYWOOD: I think it's absolutely vile on Facebook. I think it's disgusting.

WHITE: The accounts we found are almost certainly just the tip of the iceberg - they're the ones that used the offender's real name, as well as a profile photo that was clearly identifiable from the police mugshot. Many more may be using the site under false names or with privacy settings that mean I can't track them down. We decided to tell Facebook about those we had found.

So I'm going to start reporting the suspected child sex offender profiles that we've found to Facebook. There's a form on the site. Basically you fill it in, give the profile name and then some evidence as to why you think that they're an offender. So this could be a police record

WHITE cont: or it could also be linked to a local newspaper, some local news report, and then you submit it to Facebook, so I'm going to do that now for the few dozen profiles that we've found.

Of the 22 profiles we reported, most were taken down within 48 hours. When a profile is flagged up, Facebook checks with the police before removing it. But after a week, six of those we reported remained live. Guidelines which Facebook helped draw up say we should have been kept informed about what happened, and if the profiles weren't taken down, given an explanation why. But we received no contact from Facebook until we approached their press office for a formal response. I put our findings to Facebook's UK policy director, Simon Milner.

In a couple of hours I managed to find almost two dozen convicted child sex offenders on Facebook, reported them to you and you took them down. I have to say, it struck me after a while that I felt like I was doing a job you guys should be doing?

MILNER: Well look, we appreciate that you did that; we appreciate when anybody reports to us things that are happening on Facebook that shouldn't be. Our teams that particularly focus on this, work with the relevant local police force to get authorisation from them, and as you say, it works.

WHITE: I mean, those people that I found, had it not been for me going out and finding them, would still be on the site. It doesn't seem beyond the wit of man for Facebook to, for example, employ someone to do what I did in a café for a couple of hours.

MILNER: Well, actually we've found, in terms of our working relationship with law enforcement in this country and elsewhere, that they actually think we are amongst the most effective company in dealing with this issue, and we actually do have the right kind of arrangements in place.

WHITE: What seems to be coming across loud and clear then is that for Facebook itself, for the company, its employees, you don't think it's your job to take proactive measures yourself to find convicted child sex offenders on your site. It's up to other people.

MILNER: What absolutely is our responsibility is to ensure that we give people the tools to know, and the education, the advice, either directly on the service or via our partners, of what to do in these situations. But I want to be really ...

WHITE: So that's a yes then?

MILNER: No, absolutely not. I want to be really clear about this, there is proactive work that we do, the same way in which specialist units in the police work based on intelligence, we do use intelligence to proactively go after behaviour on the site that shouldn't be happening.

WHITE: So you are doing proactive monitoring of the behavior, so why not then just take down the profiles of the people who have been convicted of this? That seems to be a fairly easy, low-hanging fruit way to go about it?

MILNER: And we do do that when the police let us know about it.

WHITE: As a general rule though, it does seem tech companies take a more reactive approach when it comes to grooming, compared to images of child sexual abuse. Could there be a legal explanation for this? Jenny Wiltshire, a criminal defence solicitor from law firm Hickman and Rose thinks so.

WILTSHIRE: Social networks come within the regime of hosting companies, which are covered by an EC directive, which gives them a lot of protection. The directive essentially says that if the social network doesn't have actual knowledge of unlawful activity, then they can't be liable either criminally or in civil damages. It's only once they are made aware and they are provided information to say that unlawful activity has happened that they are under an obligation to act expeditiously to remove that material or disable the access to that information. So that's resulted in social networks acting reactively rather than proactively to the problem.

WHITE: So this is where we get the concept that Facebook and other social networks will respond to what users do, so you have to report it to us and then we'll do something about it?

WILTSHIRE: Yes.

WHITE: Yeah.

MUSIC

WHITE: For Facebook, the concern that it's not doing enough to actively police its site has brought negative headlines. The \$400 billion company is already under fire over so-called fake news and the use of its live streaming service to broadcast crimes as they happen. In response, it made a well-publicised announcement about beefing up its monitoring staff, one repeated by Simon Milner.

MILNER: Just recently, we announced that we will be hiring another 3,000 people to add to the 4,500 people who work solely on keeping people safe on Facebook.

WHITE: Which sounds impressive. Until you learn that Facebook reportedly handles 30 billion messages every day. So that's 4 million messages for each of those human moderators, day in, day out.

Isn't the truth here that with almost 2 billion users worldwide, Facebook has just become too big to police?

MILNER: Absolutely not; we take our responsibilities extremely seriously in this area, and we're very committed to doing everything we can, both through the kind of human review that we do and the expertise that we have in our company, but also through the tools we provide to people on Facebook that they can have a safe experience on Facebook, and also know what to do if somebody else in our community tries to do something which is inappropriate. We take our responsibilities extremely seriously in this area and we are determined to continue to improve.