

Speech: Baroness Shields' speech at the National Security Agency

Part 1: background and career path

Thank you for the warm welcome. It's an honour to be in the company of so many outstanding women.

Growing up in unremarkable surroundings in Pennsylvania, I never imagined that I would be standing in front of you today. But in many ways, I feel like we are fellow travellers.

As leading women in intelligence and security, together we endeavour to combat crime and protect lives. And you, too, might have come from unusual backgrounds. You, too, might have defied the odds to be sitting here today. And you, too, might have done it all whilst trying to be perfect mothers, daughters, sisters, spouses and friends.

Today, I work for Her Majesty's government as the Minister for Internet Safety and Security and the Prime Minister's Special Representative for Internet Crime and Harms. You must be thinking how on earth did that happen? How does someone from a little town in Pennsylvania become a baroness in the House of Lords? Well, I must say it's not a scenario that I could have ever imagined or planned.

And though it sounds a bit like a fairytale, I can assure you it was anything but. Raising my son as single mom and balancing a high-powered career 4,000 miles from family and friends – there were times when I honestly felt that my life and career were dangling from some castle tower. But I wouldn't trade it for the world. In fact, I have discovered that when the unexpected happens in life, that's often where the magic begins.

It has been a long road – I first discovered digital technology back in 1986. I was a grad student at GW and I wrote a business plan for a start-up that developed a turn-key system for photojournalists that would scan, capture and transmit photos over phone lines for printing in newspapers or magazines.

Back in 1986 this was revolutionary and I remember the first time I saw photos from the front lines of the civil war in Lebanon rolling off a digital press at Gannett News. I knew I had found my future career. I was so impatient, I didn't even stick around for graduation, I just packed up my car and headed west. I began my work in Silicon Valley, which took me to some of the world's top internet companies like Google, AOL and Facebook but not before spending a decade in a chip manufacturing company where I started as a product manager and rose all the way up to VP in 9 years.

But after a career that far outweighed my expectations, I was starting to see technology's unforeseen consequences and I was becoming a bit uneasy.

In his recent book *The Attention Merchants*, Columbia Law professor Tim Wu

argues that early idealists and evangelists of the web made one fatal mistake. They failed to create systems and institutions that preserved the internet's openness, whilst warding off its harms.

We were so focused on all the wonderful things that the Internet would do that we never stopped to think about the things it would undo. Things that the internet would challenge and upend. Things that matter like facts, truth, equality and respect for one another.

We had no systems, no institutions, to preserve the internet's openness – or, for that matter, to protect its users.

In 2012, I was working at Facebook, and took a meeting at No.10 that would change the course of my career. The Prime Minister wanted to see me to talk about an urgent issue. I had met him a few times before and had taken Mark Zuckerberg to see him shortly after his election.

The funny thing about the first meeting was that Mark showed up in a suit and tie and David Cameron wore a hoodie! You can't make it up! But this meeting in 2012 was about a much more serious topic. The Prime Minister was polite but clearly preoccupied.

He had just met with the parents of April Jones, a little girl from Wales who had been abducted and murdered by a paedophile. Her killer's search history showed he had been viewing child sexual abuse material online. April was just 5 years old.

As a mother, it was an anguishing wake up call. As a leader in the industry, I felt sick that we weren't doing a better job. I knew we needed to police our systems and rid them of this vile material. We needed an internet that would unite, not harm.

I began to work more closely with law enforcement to make Facebook more responsible. I logged long hours around conference tables with contacts in government. And over time, I developed a strong working relationship with David Cameron.

He asked me to head up the digital economy strategy and policy – advising the government on everything from tech entrepreneurship to online safety and security. In 2014, I had the honor of becoming (I believe) the first American-born woman to serve as a life peer in the House of Lords. And in 2015, shortly after the British elections, I became the first Minister for Internet Safety and Security.

When I took up this job, I suddenly found myself in an unusual position, one of privilege but also of enormous responsibility. Although an unlikely candidate born in America, the British government had called on me. And I knew I had a duty to serve.

The UK punches way above its weight in the digital arena and I knew it was an amazing opportunity. I could lead this emerging policy area and to make an impact on a global basis.

The UK was the first government to create a post responsible for this agenda. That meant this job could be a lonely and frustrating fight.

In the countries I visit, I don't even have a counterpart. That often makes it tough to mobilize against cross-national crime, especially when it can trace its origins to the darkest corners of the internet. Unfortunately, you know this all too well.

Part 2: challenges and obstacles – extremism

There is, of course, the question of extremism – inciting violence around the world through fear and hatred.

I arrive here today following another tragic terror attack. This one in London around the Houses of Parliament; my home and also my place of work. The details and motivations are still the subject of intense investigation and forensics. But there remains no doubt that terrorists and extremists use internet platforms and applications to radicalise and incite violence.

The internet has become a vast, uncontested space which not only allows such destructive attitudes to exist but in some cases, to prevail.

Social networks algorithmically connect like-minded individuals and amplify their passions. That is the core of the online advertising business model.

But these connections sometimes channel people into echo chambers where highly emotive and passionate content, amplified by these algorithms, reinforces extremist messaging. This creates an illusion of strength in numbers.

We know how extremists use technology to manipulate information and sow the seeds of discord in society. We know how they use propaganda to reinforce grievance and recruit and inspire. And we know how they convince people to give up their lives and join "the fight". They look for those who feel invisible; the left behind. Or those who are marginalised or hold a grievance. All this didn't start yesterday. It's been going on for years. But today the pool of recruits is increasing as billions are connected to networks which act as beacons for the recruitment funnel.

Alongside this we can see an increasingly potent 'cycle of hate' across multiple extreme groups and ideologies as both sides of the extremist spectrum feed off each other, escalating tensions. We saw this after the London attack when this image appeared.

The photographer who took the picture said he posted it because the young woman wearing a hijab was traumatised by the event. However it was co-opted and manipulated by right wing groups as representing insensitivity to the carnage.

Challenges and obstacles: misogyny, online abuse, etc

Which leads me to the second type of horror, a more insidious kind.

Admittedly, for many years I was an avowed web utopian. One of those who preached the promise and the potential of a world that is better because it is connected. A world where access and opportunity is democratised. Where everyone has an equal chance for their voice to be heard. But today, even I am feeling somewhat bewildered.

You may remember last March, Microsoft launched a Bot experiment on Twitter and with the help of natural language processing and machine learning technologies, the Bot learned to hate in just 24 hours. They launched it again a few days later to see if this was some kind of anomaly. But within hours its learned racist and abusive language reached unacceptable thresholds and its profile was suspended indefinitely.

It is a cruel irony indeed that one of humanity's most liberating innovations – the internet – has also become a vessel for violence and hatred. Online abuse, sexual exploitation and misogyny, trolling and cyber-bullying, hate speech and extremism can all make life online very threatening. And for women in particular, the internet is an increasingly hostile domain.

Women's equality and advocacy are issues close to my heart, not least because, as a woman, and a working mother, I have lived it and experienced the struggles and challenges gender inequality poses first hand. I have worked my way up in male dominated industries and brought up my son alone. And I have put a lot of pressure on myself to do it all perfectly.

I've seen this first hand – when I entered politics, I was shocked by the amount of hate and vitriol I received online. I've always considered myself a model citizen. But now nothing was off limits. Nothing was too personal or too sacred – and it was terrifying. And I was not alone.

In fact, following the murder of Jo Cox, the Met set up a special unit dedicated to combating misogynistic hate against politicians. It should come as no surprise that female politicians were among the worst affected – 33 out of 53 complaints were from women.

I should say that in 33 years as a working professional, I've seen a lot of positive changes in attitudes towards women in the workplace and in society as a whole.

There is more awareness of both conscious and unconscious bias and discrimination. There is more solidarity amongst women and more women are willing to stand up for themselves. And brave men often raised by amazing mothers, rise in support of women too, realizing that as long as women are not free, neither are they. However there is one forum in our society where, as a global community, we are failing to raise enough awareness and failing to protect women against the harms of misogyny, and that's online. The rise of online misogyny is a global gender rights tragedy. It is a powerful, decaying force taking a big step back in our attitudes towards women.

Online misogyny is enabled by virtual anonymity. The ability to remain anonymous online detaches abusers from their sense of reality and their responsibility to behave to acceptable moral standards. Unable to see or hear

the people they hurt, they express harmful beliefs, abuse others and illicit damaging reactions without fear of punishment. They then connect to others with similar intent, in whom perhaps these views are latent, and create networks, movements even, of aggressors. As a result users as a whole are bombarded with negative views across every social platform they inhabit, normalising offensive language and making offensive acts seem acceptable.

And this whirlwind of negativity is dissolving our hard earned respect as women.

So not only are these corrosive comments being shared extensively at great speed, but those who might otherwise have challenged them are desensitized to their impact.

And we know from our work countering violent extremism that dangerous attitudes online can translate into tragic situations offline. If extremist political views online can become terrorism, then online misogyny can manifest in the abuse of women in the real world.

Online abuse is still abuse. And never more true than for the heart-breaking crime of online child sexual exploitation. Criminals with a sexual interest in children can join forces with other offenders to abuse on a mass scale.

They can pay to watch child sexual abuse live-streamed all over the world, and children are being groomed and coerced into producing sexually explicit images by people they have never met, sometimes in countries far away. This has in turn led to the increase of child sex tourism and trafficking.

Part 3: solutions and long term impact

But unlike in the physical world where national governments can take clear and firm action to keep people safe, there are no obvious solutions in the digital world. It is incumbent upon us to work together to find solutions to online harms and crimes. Solutions that cross national borders and involve real partnership between government and industry. Solutions that require unprecedented levels of collaboration for an era of unprecedented threats.

I am afraid that evil has access to all the same technology tools that we do which is why we must work with tech industry leaders to outsmart criminals, and stay one step ahead.

It has become a life mission for me to use technology to protect children all over the world from this heinous crime. In 2014, I founded an organisation called WeProtect to eradicate online child sexual exploitation and abuse using a multi-stakeholder approach. WeProtect leverages the power of technology to rescue victims, thwart criminals and bring perpetrators to justice. With the support of Prime Minister Theresa May and the leaders of 70 other governments, law enforcement, tech companies and NGOs, we are making great progress and we will not stop until every child can use the internet safely without fear.

The success of WeProtect's collaborative approach shows us that in this interconnected world, no one person, company, or country for that matter, can

solve these problems alone, it takes us all. We have proven that when the world comes together, we can achieve unprecedented things. ###Part 4: conclusion

I know that, like me, many of you might not have set out to work in intelligence. We have enormous responsibility on our shoulders. In our jobs we are expected to deliver immediate answers to near impossible questions with no margin for error. The world we operate in has never been more complicated and we face unprecedented scrutiny of everything we do.

Intelligence is a calling more than a career. But it's also a heavy burden. Can we ever do enough? Maybe not. But we can try.

So today I want to leave you with 3 messages:

1. It is our duty to share our expertise and skills
2. We must join together and turn our ideas and creativity into positive change
3. We must stand up for a world in which knowledge, debate and discussion bring people closer together so we feel part of something greater than ourselves. We can't let the world retreat to a dark place of ignorance and prejudice

I've been inspired from a line by the ever-popular musical, Hamilton:

When my time is up, have I done enough?

By being here, by showing up, you are asking yourselves that admirable question.

So I encourage each and every one of you to never stop asking, to fight for a better answer, and a better world, every single day.

Thank you.

[News story: Operational Honours and Awards List: 21 April 2017](#)

The full list, which recognises and honours service on operations is below.

Commander of the Order of the British Empire

Air Commodore Martin Elliott SAMPSON, DSO, Royal Air Force

Officer of the Order of the British Empire

Commander Stephen HIGHAM, Royal Navy

Commander Mark Richard VARTAN, Royal Navy

Colonel Angus Donald MACGILLIVRAY, MC

Lieutenant Colonel (now Colonel) James Rowland MARTIN, DSO MC, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment

Lieutenant Colonel (now Colonel) Geoffrey Edward MINTON, MBE, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment

Squadron Leader Emily Elizabeth RICKARDS, Royal Air Force

Member of the Order of the British Empire

Petty Officer Bethany Victoria Rauccio BURTON, Royal Navy

Major George John Robertson LITTLE, Royal Marines

Major Lloyd Benjamin PRITCHARD, Royal Marines

Acting Major Thomas Joseph GOODALL, The Royal Logistic Corps

Lieutenant Colonel David Osborne LEE, The Parachute Regiment

Colour Sergeant William Richard THOMAS, The Parachute Regiment

Distinguished Service Order

Wing Commander James Robert Edward WALLS, Royal Air Force

Military Cross

Acting Lance Corporal (now Corporal) Nicholas JEZEPH, Royal Marines,

Distinguished Flying Cross

Flight Lieutenant (now Squadron Leader) Roger Alexander CRUICKSHANK, Royal Air Force

Queens Gallantry Medal

Captain Giles Edward George MOON, The Royal Lancers

Mention in Despatches

Captain (now Major) Daniel Thomas EATON, Royal Marines,

Private Dominic Kyle HOPKINSON, The Parachute Regiment

Colour Sergeant Steven David NIXON, The Parachute Regiment

Flight Lieutenant Niall PAIRMAN, Royal Air Force

Flight Lieutenant Alex Fraser VAUGHAN, Royal Air Force

Queen's Commendation for Bravery

Marine Mark Andrew Charles WHEELER, Royal Marines

Corporal (now Sergeant) Paul Thomas BYRNE, The Parachute Regiment

Private (now lance Corporal) Thomas Christopher CORRIGAN, Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Corporal Antony Luke COLLINS, Royal Air Force

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service

Colour Sergeant (now Acting Warrant Officer 2) Philip BARLOW, Royal Marines

Corporal Adam Paul CARTER, Royal Marines

Major James DUTTON, Royal Marines

Able Seaman (Seaman Specialist) Sarah Kirstie GRIFFITHS, Royal Navy

Commander Richard HUTCHINGS, Royal Navy

Leading Seaman (now Petty Officer) Craig Tyrone JACOBS, Royal Navy

Corporal Edward Frank MAIN, Royal Marines

Major James Edward Dallas MORRIS, Royal Marines

Chief Petty Officer Peter Daniel MUIR, Royal Navy

Acting Corporal (now Corporal) Jamie Christopher CALVERT, The Parachute Regiment

Corporal Mahesh GURUNG, The Royal Gurkha Rifles

Captain (now Major) Edward Louis Tabor HARRIS, Corps of Royal Engineers

Colonel Robert Mackenzie HOWIESON,

Major Edwin Peter OLDFIELD, The Royal Gurkha Rifles

Major Colin Malcolm OLIVER, MBE, The Rifles

Sapper Philippa PROUD, Corps of Royal Engineers, Army Reserve

Staff Sergeant Christopher Arthur RHODES, Royal Corps of Signals

Acting Brigadier James Christopher RODDIS, DSO MBE

Major David Joseph STEAD, Corps of Royal Engineers

Acting Flight Lieutenant (now Flight Lieutenant) Alex Joseph Douglas BAMBER, Royal Air Force

Flight Lieutenant George LE CORNU, Royal Air Force

Flight Lieutenant (now Squadron Leader) Christopher Michael PEARSON, Royal Air Force

Miss Lisa Michelle WAIN, Civil Servant

NON-OPERATIONAL GALLANTRY

Queen's Gallantry Medal

Lance Corporal (now Acting Corporal) Samuel James BUTLER, Royal Army Medical Corps

Press release: David Sweeney appointed Executive Chair Designate of Research England

The Higher Education and Research Bill, subject to Parliamentary approval, proposes to establish Research England as a Council of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), to undertake the England only research and knowledge exchange functions currently performed by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

During the transition to UKRI David will continue in his current role as Director of Research, Education and Knowledge Exchange within HEFCE alongside working as part of the shadow UKRI executive team to set up the new organisation. David will then transition to become the first Executive Chair of Research England upon the creation of UKRI in April 2018.

Research England will oversee the England-only functions in relation to research and knowledge exchange, including providing grant funding to English universities for research and knowledge exchange activities, developing and implementing the Research Excellence Framework in partnership with the UK Higher Education (HE) funding bodies, oversight of sustainability of the HE research base in England and overseeing the £900 million UK Research Partnership Investment Fund. This will secure and enhance the role of the dual support funding system for research, the protection of which will be enshrined in legislation for the first time as part of these reforms.

Announcing the appointment Science Minister Jo Johnson said:

David's contribution to the UK's world renowned science and innovation sector will ensure he will establish a strong, strategic vision for Research England. The appointment demonstrates the outstanding leadership he's shown to the Higher Education Funding Council for England, and his extensive experience will be vital to the creation of UK Research and Innovation.

Sir Mark Walport, UKRI Chief Executive Designate said:

I am delighted that David Sweeney will continue his fine work that he has been undertaking at HEFCE when he becomes the first Research England Executive Chair in UKRI, subject to Parliament.

David Sweeney, Executive Chair Designate of Research England said:

I am delighted to be taking on this role. The UK's research system is among the very best globally, with over 90% of our world-leading publications having university authorship. The partnerships between our universities and business, health, cultural and social organisations are central to economic growth as well as social and cultural impact. Research England will be an advocate to government on behalf of universities and challengers to universities to deliver to national agendas. The strategic decisions which universities make are central to the future of cities, regions, the nation and our world.

Research England will work with the other councils in UKRI to enhance our global research position and will liaise with the funding bodies in the devolved organisations to contribute at UK as well as England only level. We will also collaborate with the Office for Students as teaching and research agendas in universities are intrinsically linked to deliver both the highly-skilled graduates and new knowledge which our nation needs.

The role of executive chairs will be crucial to the ambition for UKRI to be a world-leading research and innovation organisation. Each of the 9 councils that will be part of UKRI will be led by an executive chair, a role which will combine the responsibilities of the current chair and chief executive of each council.

1) The Higher Education and Research Bill proposes the creation of a new body – UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) – that will be the strategic centre of the UK's research and innovation funding system. It will provide a strong and unified voice championing UK research and innovation, facilitating dialogue with government and partners on the global stage. The Bill also establishes 9 Councils within UKRI – 7 of the Councils reflect the functions of the existing Research Councils, Innovate UK and Research England.

2) David Sweeney is a statistician and Director (Research, Education and Knowledge Exchange) at the Higher Education Funding Council for England. After gaining First Class Honours in Statistics at the University of Aberdeen, he worked at 2 Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) research institutes, as a consultant statistician then developing mathematical models of plant growth. His work on the computational aspect of this led into broader applications of IT in education and research, and he was Director of Information Services at Royal Holloway, University of London, before moving into university leadership as Vice-Principal (Communications, Enterprise and Research). In this role he was responsible for research strategy and for developing Royal Holloway's research-led commercial and consultancy activities.

He joined HEFCE in 2008 as Director (Research, Innovation and Skills) and led the development and implementation of the first Research Excellence Framework including the new impact agenda element. He is currently responsible for research policy and funding, knowledge exchange and university/business relations. He also leads on the UK Research Partnership Investment Fund and held the Health Education brief until recently. He has advised many overseas governments on research assessment and funding and was a member of the Finch Group on Open Access to Research Outputs.

David was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Aberdeen in 2012, was Vice-Chancellor's Fellow at the University of Newcastle, NSW in 2015 and is a Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society.

[News story: A&E departments to get more funding](#)

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[News story: The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport Appoints six new Trustees to the Board of the Theatres Trust](#)

Pam Bone

Pam Bone is an independent adviser specializing in planning, resource development and project delivery for the creative industries. Over the past 15 years she has secured £50-100m for arts buildings, artistic and learning programmes and individual projects. Over the last decade she has enabled the creation of significant arts spaces including the refurbishment of the Lighthouse in Poole, the Crucible in Sheffield, the Courthouse in Otley, HEART – enterprise and arts centre in Leeds, studio spaces for Mind the Gap at Lister Mills in Bradford, New Writers' Centre in Newcastle. Clients working with Pam to ensure ongoing sustainability and growth through fundraising have included Leicester Theatre Trust (Curve), Sheffield Theatres (Crucible), Mind the Gap, Jellymould, The Art House and the Quilters' Guild of the UK.

Paul Cartwright

Paul is a partner of the private equity firm, Rutland Partners LLP. Paul joined Rutland in 1988 and has been actively involved in its development through to becoming Managing Partner in 2005. Paul has been a lead member of the team in raising £800m of capital for investment across the three Rutland Funds since 2001. Paul has also led a wide range of turnaround and restructuring investments for Rutland and held many board positions in portfolio companies. Prior to joining Rutland, Paul qualified as a chartered accountant with Arthur Andersen working in corporate finance and consultancy.

David Ian

David Ian is a theatre producer who presents shows all over the world. He started out as an actor and appeared in a number of UK theatre productions, including the musicals Time, The Pirates of Penzance, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, and The Rocky Horror Show. From 2005, David was the Chairman and CEO of the global theatrical division of Live Nation having previously joined the group in 2000 when it was part of Clear Channel, the largest theatrical group in the world.

At Live Nation, David was responsible for Broadway Across America, which produces and tours first class Broadway shows in over 40 cities in the United States and Canada. He was simultaneously CEO of the UK division which included over 25 theatres both in London's West End and the majority of the regional markets in the UK. In 2006 he founded David Ian Productions, based in London's Covent Garden. It is now one of the UK's premier producers of

live large-scale theatrical entertainment.

Gary Kemp

Gary Kemp grew up in Islington and attended local grammar school Dame Alice Owens and Anna Scher's Children's Theatre drama club, becoming a child actor in film and TV. In 1976 he left acting to concentrate on making music and songwriting, founding the 1980s super group Spandau Ballet. His songs spent a combined total of 500 weeks in the charts and generated over 25 million record sales worldwide.

Gary pursued an acclaimed solo career after Spandau Ballet split in 1990 and returned to acting, starring in films such as 'The Krays' and 'The Bodyguard' and performing on stage at Wyndham's, Stratford East and the Trafalgar. He writes articles on art, music and the theatre for numerous publications, including the Times, Guardian and Evening Standard, and presents and produces programmes for TV and radio.

Richard Johnston

Richard Johnston has been Chief Executive of Delfont Mackintosh Theatres since October 2004. He was also Chief Executive of Stoll Moss Theatres/Really Useful Theatres from 1992-2000. From 2000-2004 he was Chief Executive of the Racecourse Holdings Trust/Jockey Club Racecourses, which is the leading group of UK racecourses. Earlier positions included Director of the Birmingham Hippodrome and Chief Executive of the Contemporary Dance Trust.

Simon Ricketts

Simon is one of the founding partners of Town Legal LLP, a boutique planning law firm. Prior to Town, he was a partner at King & Wood Mallesons (previously SJ Berwin). Simon specialises in planning, compulsory purchase and local government law, particularly in relation to UK major mixed-use development projects. He was ranked as the UK's most highly rated planning solicitor in 2017 for a eighth year running by Planning magazine and is rated as a Tier 1 planning solicitor in Chambers UK and Legal 500

Theatres Trust Trustees are not remunerated. These appointments have been made in accordance with the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments. It is a requirement of the Code that political activity by those appointed is declared. Simon Ricketts, Paul Cartwright, Richard Johnson, David Ian, and Pam Bone have declared that they have not carried out any political activity. Gary Kemp has declared membership of the Labour Party.