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<b>Time-codes</b>	<b>Dialogue</b>
14:34:29:15	[CHATTER]
14:35:09:21	<b>Cherie Booth (Blair)</b> Let's welcome Ray Lewis and Ian Johnson ...
14:35:12:14	<b>Ian Joseph</b> Joseph.
14:35:12:12	<b>Cherie Booth (Blair)</b> Joseph, sorry. The Eastside Young Leaders' Academy. I think Ray, you've hit the headlines recently, having been appointed Deputy Mayor?
14:35:24:01	<b>Ray Lewis</b> Yes, thank you.
14:35:25:20	<b>Cherie Booth (Blair)</b> And I'd be very interested to read so much about your programme with the Eastside Young Leaders' Academy. But it does seem to me that you target very carefully the young men that you take on, and I'm wondering how easy is it to replicate that scheme on a much wider scale?
14:35:45:10	<b>Ray Lewis</b> I think it's not without its difficulties, and it's not without its challenges, not least getting the right kind of people to run the kind of programmes that we run. Nevertheless, having replicated in Luton and also two London boroughs now, I think there is a clear precept and principle by which we operate from, if carefully honed and learned, can deliver the kind of results that we're seeing,
14:36:10:05	with the boys which we're working with. And so I'm not pretending for one

moment it's a game of Scrabble, I don't think it's rocket science either.

14:36:19:21 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**

Well, tell us a little bit more about how you do, in fact, target your young people.

14:36:25:04 **Ray Lewis**

We target our youngsters by really asking local schools, head teachers and other professionals, police, social services, to recommend the kind of youngster, the kind of young man, the kind of black young man, that we feel would benefit from a rigorous and time consuming programme, which is what ours is.

14:36:53:03 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**

Pausing there for a moment, then, so your programme isn't designed for every boy, and still less for girls, would that be right, or ...?

14:37:01:20 **Ray Lewis**

No, it's not. It's specifically for boys at risk of exclusion, and we're serious about that, not least because where our funding comes from and for. We don't work with girls. There is some talk, in an advanced stage, that we will start working with young women, but we are particularly concerned to work with black males, and that's what we do.

14:37:25:05 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**

So you go in and you approach the schools and you ask them to recommend ...

14:37:29:06 **Ray Lewis**

That was the original plan, and now schools freely come to us, and one or two

others. I mean, it's possible for a family, a parent, to refer a child themselves, but it's quite important to us that that referral goes back through the school for the purposes of monitoring, but none the less, the schools, in the main, are the principle referrers, and they will fax or call up and make a recommendation for us to accept a child, based on our clearly defined standards and principles.

14:38:02:01 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**

Cos one of the things we've been hearing over the last couple of days is the problem of actually making sure these programmes reach the right young people, because often the young people we're targeting are the ones that are the most disengaged, the most alienated from the system, so how do you actually get, how do you first of all know that these are young people you've

14:38:25:00 got, and secondly how do you then both get them to come along and then keep them coming?

14:38:31:14 **Ray Lewis**

I think in the main what we do is we, we're quite vigorous in the way in which we market our services. Very often we are last chance saloon to the parents when they get to us, and by the time they get to us are often desperate. Having said that, the whole business of motivation is very important, and it's important that we inspire and we encourage people, using whatever means and methods we can. Usually that's a cultural connection that involves speaking to people where they are, and allowing them to see that you understand what it is that they're going through, because in my five or six years of being involved in the Academy, and also previous experiences, I would say the vast majority of parents want to do something for their children.

14:39:19:23 But the big question is not what, it's how. And if you can find a way of encouraging parents and saying that we will help you along the way, then that often meets them where they're at. Having said that, what is important is that

we don't become yet another professional agency, serving more needy people, so that in the end we're a new form of crutch. That is not what we're set up to do, and therefore the work that we do is not built upon the needs of the young people, but on their potential.

14:39:53:03 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**

Yes, I think Gus wants to ...

14:39:55:04 **Professor Gus John**

You've done very impressive work over the last five, six years.

14:39:58:15 **Ray Lewis**

Thank you, Professor.

14:39:59:24 **Professor Gus John**

And er, it is interesting that many referrals come from schools. Let me devil's advocate for a minute. These young people go to school compulsorily, every day. They come to you at the end of the school day, X number of evenings a week, and then you have them again at the weekend. Pretty intensive.

14:40:20:13 **Ray Lewis**

Yes, sir.

14:40:21:07 **Professor Gus John**

OK. My question then is, why ... or let me put it another way. Do you envisage a situation where the schools, having regard to the needs that those young people have, which is why they refer them to you, could so reorganise themselves to make that statutory provision for young people that schooling itself delivers to them what you deliver?

- 14:40:50:03 **Ray Lewis**  
Professor Gus, that is my greatest prayer, and think that if in five, maybe ten, years time we still exist I will see it as something of a failing. I think that the reason that I set up the Academy was to demonstrate the possible, and if you can demonstrate the possible then people can actually do it. I think that there is often a reluctance within the school system for people to change. It is a
- 14:41:18:00 cultural shift, it is a mind set, because schools as little villages are quite mindful of their own status, are quite protective about who they are and what they stand for, and nobody wants to believe that they're not doing a good enough job, and I think the schooling system, the education system, is the only, or is one of the few organisations that blame their customers for their
- 14:41:42:13 own failings. That's not to say that there are not issues that parents and others have to tackle, but having said that I think that there is a monumental unwillingness to have a look in the mirror at the way in which school does school, and so I am hopeful, minimally so, that in relation to our children, our work with our children, our work with their parents, the formation of
- 14:42:15:10 community, is something that will affect the way in which schools go about what it is they do, so that in recent times we've been asked to provide some level of training and some advice. Some of that's taken ...
- 14:42:32:18 **Professor Gus John**  
For teachers?
- 14:42:33:19 **Ray Lewis**  
For teachers, yes, sorry sir. Some of that's taken, some of that is taken but filtered through the same faulty mechanisms that the school system works off of. Now I don't want to sit here, Professor, and be, bash schools, because I think all too often they are doing a job that is as unsung heroes. More and more is expected of our schools as our major institutions have collapsed
- 14:43:00:12 around our very ears, not least the family, but also the agencies and

- 14:43:30:21 institutions that shaped us and gave us values. I think we've never faced up to what we do without church in our communities, and I think that is shocking. Not the absence of church, but the vacuum left by the absence of church, uniformed organisations, and people actually believe in right and wrong, and schools are being asked to do that, and that they're asked to be doing more and more until you've got these very long days. And so you say, and rightly so, that it's quite intensive and the provision that we make is adding a lot of hours to children's schooling, I think you know, Gus John, as one of the fathers of the Supplementary School Movement, that our parents and our people are desperate for education.
- 14:43:45:06 **Professor Gus John**  
Sure.
- 14:43:45:17 **Ray Lewis**  
And in many cases of many of the boys I'm working with the education that we provide is the only education that they're getting.
- 14:43:53:16 **Professor Gus John**  
Thank you.
- 14:43:53:22 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**  
So what are the failures that you identify, then? Did you say that the schools are, the schools are failing so can you articulate those?
- 14:44:02:16 **Ray Lewis**  
Can I articulate the way in which schools are failing? I don't think I need to articulate it at the moment. I think the evidence is there. I think that the standards that government and Ofsted and the like have set are generally speaking only met to an average degree. If your question is about how are

- 14:44:30:19 schools failing, I would say that they are failing in the main to provide an education service that's fit for males, let alone black males. I would say that schools are failing because many of them, and I'm not suggesting necessarily the vast majority, but many of them are not able to deal with the state, the disruptive state, the dysfunctional state, of family life and much of that behaviour spills over into the classrooms, and I did a little survey about a year ago, having visited 12 schools in the space of six months, and the average lesson that lasted 50 minutes probably a quarter of an hour's teaching was done. And that was in the good ones. By the time the children got there, they got settled, they got their books out, missed, and spent 50 times telling them what to do, Johnny was unhelpful, Kwame was rude, when you actually got down to teaching, there was very little teaching time left, allowing time for clearing up. And I believe that's a failure in our system.
- 14:45:01:22
- 14:45:23:07
- 14:45:31:15 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**  
What sort, what do you mean by teaching males? What's so special about teaching males that's different from teaching girls, for example?
- 14:45:42:02 **Ray Lewis**  
I'm surprised you'd ask me a question like that. I think it's obvious. I think males have a different psychology to girls, I think males are much more kinesthetic in their learning, I think males, I think the onset of the technological revolution has not been helpful for males in quite the way it has for females, I think the presence of a lot of female teachers who do not look like the boys that they have in their class, let alone boys of colour, is unhelpful, and I could go on.
- 14:46:06:05
- 14:46:13:09 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**  
I'm sure you could, but I think Ian wanted to ask you something.

14:46:17:13 **Ian Joseph**

Alright. With regards to earlier, you said there was, setting up your programme was not without difficulties. What are some of the difficulties that you faced? I ask that because you said it's been rolled out to Luton and to other London boroughs, and I would like to see what sort of resistance you came across, if any, when approaching the schools, as to sort of see reasons

14:46:42:19 why it can't be rolled out, being such a very good programme, from the sound of it, rolled out nationwide.

14:46:51:24 **Ray Lewis**

I'm not sure I did say it was difficult setting it up. Certainly our experience is that our borough, the London Borough of Newham, were actually quite cooperative. There were a few schools, and remain a few schools, that are not inclined, and that's not just about us as an institution, but others, they're not inclined to work with the voluntary sector in the main. It's changing.

14:47:13:00 But even when and where they are, it tends to be on their terms. But in terms of setting Young Leaders' Academies up, we've not had too much problems, too many problems should I say, with the Academies that we're working with and running in the different boroughs, so I'm not sure that we've had, if I

14:47:33:07 suggested that there was difficulty then I was ...

14:47:36:00 **Ian Joseph**

You said it was not without its difficulties. I just ...

14:47:38:08 **Ray Lewis**

Well, yea, of course, I mean there's always the, the problem of money, there's always the problem of perception. We have a programme that is essentially quite strict. Now that may be a reflection of my own upbringing. It's probably a reflection of the way in which my parents administered justice in the home and therefore that translates into what it is I do, and the way in which I do it.

14:48:04:06 And some of our Anglo-Saxon brethren sometimes struggle with that phenomena and would rather I had a far more therapeutic approach to what it is I do and without recognising, in my opinion, our boys are three laps behind in a four lap race. And I cannot afford, financially or otherwise, to run a programme that works in a way that's not suitable for the children I'm working with.

14:48:33:04 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**  
So is this tough love, or is this actually just tough?

14:48:38:10 **Ray Lewis**  
It's love. And love, love admonishes, love encourages and love reproaches. And I'm always anxious that people don't put me in their own boxes and translate my words into something that would be palatable for reports. And that's often a struggle for schools, and other institutions, because I'm not particularly comfortable with the way in which our overlords conduct business, even though I have to work in their world. Now, black people are used to metamorphosing for the circumstances that they find themselves in, granted not all black people, but having said that I'm one of these people that I give what I can, but in relation to our children I, I do not hold back.

14:49:38:18 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**  
I think actually love was not reproachful in the Letter to the Ephesians, but I think I'll call Geoffrey Dear at this point.

14:49:46:19 **Lord Geoffrey Dear**  
Mr Lewis, thank you for coming, and I think all of us would agree that we're deeply impressed with what you've been doing for the last five or six years. And thank you for coming to share that with us. I noted particularly in the write-up that we got about you the fundamental part that the family plays in

- 14:50:09:03 your programme. If the family aren't behind them then really it fails, I guess, and you draw the family in very closely, and I wanted to move you back in time to ask you a question about the family. Would I be right in surmising from what I see here that you would believe that if the family support and standards and values and structure were all in place you'd have very few problems. Would that be fair?
- 14:50:29:17 **Ray Lewis**  
Precisely, sir.
- 14:50:30:12 **Lord Geoffrey Dear**  
So, to move you away from your programme, if I may, and to say what would you do if you had this magic wand to create a different family structure? How, what would you do?
- 14:50:44:23 **Ray Lewis**  
Hm.
- 14:50:45:17 **Lord Geoffrey Dear**  
Because it's a problem, it's a problem for social workers, it's a problem for government, taxation models, and are you ...
- 14:50:51:02 **Ray Lewis**  
I think social workers are a problem, full stop. But ...
- 14:50:53:18 **Lord Geoffrey Dear**  
That's right. So, what can one do to, maybe over several generations now, because it's not an easy question, but what would one do to recreate the family and family values, which we are now agreeing, lies at the root of all of this, or much of this.

- 14:51:10:06 **Ray Lewis**  
I think that we would have to do several things. I think first of all we would have to model what it is we believe. And to that extent you would have to ask who is doing the modelling. I think that we would have to do something to create community because community is all but dead, and as a consequence of that I think too many of our young people have no sense of shame. All too
- 14:51:43:23 often I meet young people, and parents actually, who have an inflated sense of their own entitlement and if we talk in terms of family we have to work out quite what we mean by family, and quite what values we attach to that. I think we've moved away from the collective into a sprint towards individualism, and I think we're paying the price for that. But what would I do my magic wand in
- 14:52:25:24 terms of restoring families? That is one I would have to think about. Certainly what we're trying to do at Eastside is we've set up a parent university and it's an opportunity to encourage fathers to take care of their children ...
- 14:52:42:23 **Lord Geoffrey Dear**  
So training parents, in effect.
- 14:52:45:01 **Ray Lewis**  
Yea. It's an opportunity to find ways of getting support for mothers raising children, girls and boys. I think also what we have done is that we have given space for people to examine their own psychology in the light of the way in which they have been raised, and reflect on their own parenting in relation to the way in which they bring up their children. And they are some of the things
- 14:53:14:17 that we've tried, some of the things that we've actually enjoyed some measure of success with. And something that we hope to expand and export to other places. I don't know if you've got any comments on that, Ian?
- 14:53:26:06 **Ian Joseph**

Yea. [CHATTER].

14:53:36:19 **Ray Lewis**

I think they'll have to increase your budget, my brother.

14:53:40:01 **Ian Joseph**

I agree with you. [CHATTER].

14:53:46:17 **Lord Geoffrey Dear**

Do you want me to cue a question in? For a starter? Would that help? On which point would you like me to lead across?

14:53:54:15 **Ray Lewis**

I have no intention of repeating what I've just said.

14:53:56:13 **Lord Geoffrey Dear**

No. OK then.

14:53:58:15 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**

Cos you've forgotten already!

14:53:59:23 **Ray Lewis**

We want inspiration, Cherie, which doesn't come ... [CHATTER]

14:54:05:14 **Lord Geoffrey Dear**

Mr Joseph, could I ask the same question to you again, about the question of the family? And say, could you throw any light on this issue, if the family breaks down then everyone has a problem and how does one reinforce the family to stop it happening in the first place?

14:54:20:00 **Ian Joseph**

I certainly think there's a connection between what people do and where they come from, and certainly for the youngsters that we encounter at the Academy. We get youngsters come along who come from a background where they don't have the social connections, ties and limitations, whether that be a family or wider community, over the last, I think we're seeing the

14:54:39:20 evidence of, you know, street crimes, street gangs, street violence, of a breakdown of the kinds of restraints people have, and certainly in the kind of research that I carry out, I find that youngsters increasingly aren't able to establish for themselves moral systems, systems of communication, ways of resolving conflict, all of which, when you're in that kind of social flux, and in

14:55:00:21 that social disorganisation, you actually find yourself behaving in ways and according to rules that aren't acceptable by everyone. You know, I think that the kind of violence that we see, the anti-social behaviour that we see, the feral behaviour that we see, is a breakdown, not only just of the family, it is certainly a more complex and dynamic process than that, and the dynamism

14:55:20:16 and multi-level nature of it, whether it be at individual level, at family level, at social level, national or even global level, because of globalised culture now, this whole range of factors needs to be taken in and [INAUDIBLE] when we kind of look at what happens in the everyday kind of violence that youngsters use when they're dealing with their social interactions.

14:55:40:07 **Professor Gus John**

Does that not apply equally to girls?

14:55:44:13 **Ian Joseph**

Yes, certainly, I mean, the whole of life comprises of interactions and relationships, and equally happens to girls as to boys. I think there's certain cultures of masculinity that exists around boys that they understand in their own encoded ways. I think the ways that girls negotiate, how they work in a

14:56:05:24 group, are different from the, their social exchange mechanism that boys use in a group, and that, and so the programme that EYA delivers takes recognition of some of the peculiarities around masculine, masculinity, status and how violence is actually used as a kind of social language in their interaction.

14:56:22:14 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**

I certainly sometimes find males rather peculiar, that's for sure!

14:56:32:17 **Ian Joseph (?)**

Can I ask a question to you in your role as Deputy Mayor, with responsibility for youth crime in London? It seems to me now that this whole issue, highly politicised, one of the core issues of the election, likely the government will respond to that by making lots of money, more money, available to tackle these sorts of things, so I think there'll probably be more money in a highly

14:56:55:05 politicised environment, with you sitting in that role, incredibly influential. What's come across to me, very clearly, from the brief time I've been sitting her listening to you, is doing some great work, and that you have very very clear views, and a particular ideology approaching these things. And there are other approaches to it. In that highly politicised environment, with lots of

14:57:18:18 money being there with you I'm guessing, I'm not exactly sure what your role will be, as an arbiter of what will get funded and what won't get funded, will your approach be it's my model and if you don't fit my model you won't get funded, or is it more a let a thousand flowers bloom and different approaches to tackling youth crime and get behind the ones that work rather than a kind

14:57:41:09 of this is the ideology that must be in place for it to work and here's the money?

14:57:47:08 **Ray Lewis**

I love it when you ask questions that are so long I've forgotten the beginning

14:58:19:07 part, but anyway, I think in general what I've learned over the years is how to manage my own prejudice. And so I'm a person of great conviction, and I have particular views, and those views are particular to the kind of people I'm working with, I have over the years also worked with young women, I've worked with people of different racial perspectives and religions, and so I don't bring a prefabricated ideology into the post that I'll be doing on behalf of [INAUDIBLE] Johnson. And for me, frankly, money is probably the last consideration, and I'm thinking, my thinking lends itself towards the idea that somehow the less money spent the better. We have seen in successive years a successive government that pouring money into a problem doesn't necessarily fix it. And that's partly and mainly because often people are

14:58:49:09 looking for answers, for solutions that are little more than a stopgap and a shelf life as long as a mayor or indeed a government, when in fact the biggest issue for us is what is the right question, and I think we need to find out what are the right questions, because the solutions to our problems will not lie in massive amounts of funding but in local laboratories of people working out

14:59:14:20 what it is that's gone wrong and how we can fix it for ourselves. That is my core conviction and so money is, whilst it's important, very important, it is not the basis upon which I will be looking to find effective community solutions to the problems that we face.

14:59:33:06 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**  
So that sounds like let a thousand flowers bloom to me.

14:59:36:19 **Ray Lewis**  
I don't know what that means, Cherie, so I kind of ...

14:59:38:19 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**  
It means trying different approaches in different areas. For example, this morning we were seeing a programme called From Boyhood to Manhood,

which has also had a great deal of success, perhaps not identical to your model but a different model.

14:59:54:11

**Ray Lewis**

Cherie, I think I'm saying that I'm not interested in programmes, actually. I'm not really concerned, yes, of course, programmes are important, but it's not what drives me. Eastside is not a programme. It is a village where children find themselves, where parents find their children, and where school heads and teachers, church ministers and others, discover they are elders in a very

15:00:20:02

important village. I have numerous contacts within the business community who give of themselves, not as volunteers but as citizens. People like Damon [INAUDIBLE] just give themselves, and that's quite important, because it says something to the children. Our children and our families generally have lots of teachers but very few examples. I want to be an example and allow others to

15:00:50:15

be an example for our children, in the way in which they are raised.

15:00:54:21

**Cherie Booth (Blair)**

That seems to me to be a generalisation which presumably would apply also equally to other racial groups, not simply Afro-Caribbean boys.

15:01:07:09

**Ray Lewis**

Absolutely, absolutely. Yea.

15:01:08:22

**Cherie Booth (Blair)**

For example, we were in Liverpool yesterday, and the problems there, in relation to guns and street crime, actually are not an Afro-Caribbean problem, they are very much more white working class problem. Do you see the sort of programmes that you've been developing, because you have a programme, being useful in those areas as well?

- 15:01:31:13 **Ray Lewis**  
Possibly. I mean ...
- 15:01:32:19 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**  
And what do you see the differences, I mean, do you, are you saying to us that your approach really is because there's a unique element here, which is the Afro-Caribbean element, or are you saying that in fact it applies across the board?
- 15:01:48:19 **Ray Lewis**  
I'm saying that over the years I have learnt that the programme is secondary. It's secondary to people finding the mechanisms within themselves and within their neighbours and their neighbourhoods to fix their own problems. I have recognised long ago that life didn't start when I got here. And that it probably won't end when I leave. And that the things that I do, you know, there was
- 15:02:22:16 life before we started, there were effective things going on then. The things that we do are my way of responding to particular community needs, and I am loathe, and that's why we have taken so much time to replicate what we do, I'm loathe to believe that I have a one-stop solution for everybody. What I have and what we offer is a opportunity to stir up your imagination and from
- 15:02:53:13 that you can dream dreams, and come up with ideas that will work for your particular community groups. How you put that in policy that's another question, but the suggestion that I'm making is really that there are, I've tried to deal with a particular problem, Liverpool, Boyhood to Manhood, Uncle Tom Cobbley, they've all got their own solutions, and I thank god for that. But what I
- 15:03:21:23 am manifestly concerned for is that we stop pouring money at something without thinking very carefully about what it is we're doing so that we have something that lasts generationally and not just stops after a few years.
- 15:03:36:11 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**

Let me just ask Fay to ...

15:03:38:12

**Fay**

Well, it was along the same lines, really. A lot of the schemes we've looked at which are similar to yours have had different mechanisms and ways of doing things, but they've all had a very strong, well, some of them have had a very, the most successful ones seem to have a strong philosophy which is about respecting each other, about self discipline, learning self discipline. And it

15:04:01:07

seems to be the kind of morality, or the supporting people or young people to learn those ways of doing things which is the most important part of the elements of what they do. And not wanting to give you something which is transferrable but is that, would you see that as something which is at the heart of what you do?

15:04:22:07

**Ray Lewis**

Yes.

15:04:23:08

**Fay**

And that's transferrable? That essence of that?

15:04:26:07

**Ray Lewis**

Yes.

15:04:28:00

**Ian Joseph**

Yea, I mean, I think there's a core, I think there's a core social issue of why young people drift into violent crimes and gangs. But at the same time, because becoming involved in that kind of behaviour really depends on the environment that they're in, one size fits all really doesn't work and can't work, and that gives some basis for the whole range of, you know, approaches

15:04:56:24

that voluntary groups will have across the country. I think what's needed in

- terms of social policy, I think this is where there's been some failure in policy over the last 20 or 30 years, particularly when it comes to gangs, is that there's been this top-down prescriptive idea, that there's an assumption that if we pour money in through regeneration it's going to filter down, it's going to solve the problem. If we increase police it's going to take youngsters off the street, that isn't necessarily true. It might solve part of the problem, but
- 15:05:21:18 because of the pervasive nature of youngsters drifting into this alternative sub-culture of violence and crime you actually need something that's situational. You need to understand the environments that they come from, the complexity of it, and the dynamism of it, and then make relevant interventions. And it's not always about money, it's about understanding the
- 15:05:40:19 nature of the problem, and having an intervention that takes them away from just a diversionary activity to prevention, and that's going to be the big challenge for us in the coming future.
- 15:05:53:11 **Cherie Booth (Blair)**  
Well, thank you for that. I think that's a very useful summary, actually. We're grateful to both of you for coming along and sharing your experiences with us today. [CHATTER].
- 15:06:22:01 CUT