



*Positive*  
*(1) Positive*  
*(2) Food processing*

1519

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## PRESS RELEASE

Speech by Liam Connellan, Director General, Confederation of Irish Industry, at Conference on "Employment and Development - The Role of Local Authorities" held in Bridge House, Tullamore, on Tuesday, 29th April 1986 at 4.00p.m.

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### LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND INDUSTRY

#### Local Authorities as Commercial Utilities

Industry recognises the need for and the value of the services which are provided by local authorities and the necessity to have adequate financing for the provision of those services. I would like to see local authorities operate as public utilities in a manner no different in principle to those involved in providing electricity, telecommunications, and transport services. In some other countries the services which are offered by local authorities are delivered by public utilities although their organisation varies considerably throughout the industrialised world.

The concept that people should pay proportionately for these services may be objected to on the basis that many people may not have the financial resources to do so. I would like to see that issue tackled by making provision

for social transfer payments to the local authority to meet the cost of providing services to those who cannot pay. This social cost grant to the local authorities should be on an "above the line" basis, and the local authority should be required to act as a commercial utility after the transfer payment has been taken into account. A similar transfer payment from the Exchequer could be made for any strategic duties imposed upon local authorities for which the cost could not be recouped.

Industry supports the role of the local authorities. The local authorities have a very special role in providing certain essential services to the community. As a general principle, the users of these services should pay for them according to their degree of usage. The Confederation accepts that business and industry must pay its appropriate contribution towards the cost of providing such services. However, it does not accept that business and industry should be the only sector of the community which is required to make specific payments for such services.

(1) TRANSPORT

Roads + AIRPORTS ,

I would suggest that each local authority could also prepare a short list of potential toll road projects in the area controlled by the authority. The aim must be to

provide a better quality system at a lower total cost to the consumer taking into account charges for using the facility. Innovative solutions to these problems can cut transport costs, and at the same time increase economic activity and job opportunities.

(2) WASTE DISPOSAL

Industrial Waste Disposal

Industry is very concerned at the inadequate provision of industrial waste management sites for industrial and commercial waste. The emphasis must be on waste treatment rather than on dumping. The provision of adequate waste management sites is essential in every local authority area.

Waste management should not be seen as a burden for a local authority but rather a development opportunity.

The availability of a waste management facility in a county has two advantages. It provides an opportunity to provide a new commercial facility which should operate strictly within the requirement of environmental and safety legislation. Furthermore, the provision of an industrial waste management site is an incentive to industries to set up manufacturing facilities nearby. Provision of modern waste management facilities can, therefore, result in the creation, directly or indirectly, of many new jobs in the county or borough. Local authorities which set up sophisticated and commercial

waste management facilities would be acting in a very real way as development authorities for their areas.

3

Housing — JOINT VENTURE

Wasting

I suggest that a portion of the additional sites which are now dormant in the hands of local authorities should be released to private builders to construct affordable homes for those who are on the waiting lists of the local authorities. This should be done in a manner which allows maximum control to be exercised by the local authorities. House construction could be greatly stimulated by the use of joint venture housing which the Government stated would be "further promoted" in "Building on Reality".

4

Unpredictable

Planning Procedures

Industry remains concerned at delays in planning procedures which are perceived as being lengthy and unpredictable. This uncertainty slows down development. Industry often finds it difficult to negotiate the financial package for a project when it cannot indicate the time scale of the project i.e. when planning permission will be granted or refused.

Where a planning application is in accordance with the development plan and the requirements are reasonable the planning authority should see its task as one of

aiding the applicant towards achievement of the project. Strict time limits should be placed on granting or refusing the planning application and in the case of a refusal a strict time limit should be placed on processing an appeal.

5

Enterprise Development

I believe that local authorities can make a major contribution to their localities in the field of enterprise development. County development teams can play a major role in helping individuals and local enterprises to make the most efficient use of state agencies to assist development. As commercial utilities the local authorities should be in the position to initiate development which will make full use of the infrastructure available in the county, and provide greater employment and revenue-generating activities.

Development teams can play a more active role in encouraging individuals to set up their own small businesses for the provision of local products and services. They can be catalysts in organising seminars of people interested in development in each town and village. I have no doubt that many executives from local industries would be prepared to give of their services voluntarily to work on appropriate development committees.

New Century

Waste disposal



X FACTS + FIGURES

BRAIN DRAIN

[
   
 Councils
   
 subways,
   
 log food
 ]

↳ Drift from agriculture

Incomes



\* Prices low → \* processing →

Incomes higher elsewhere

Dr. DAVID Fenton

Better {
   
 Attitudes to ~~with~~ Europe;
   
Self image →
   
 Better image of ourselves → ;
   
 Contact → open up opportunities

Attitudes to languages → primary level.

X French

X French

Local authorities can make a major contribution in acting as a catalyst for self-help in each community.

They can help stimulate discussion and enthusiasm throughout the area for the setting up of business enterprises. For example, each local authority could encourage the setting up of a designated fund under the Business Development Scheme through which individuals could make tax allowable investment in local manufacturing industry.

*Electronics & Telecom*

#### Conclusion

In summary, I believe that local authorities can make a major contribution to employment and development in eight ways:

1. Acting as a catalyst for development, while recognising that the public authorities should be the provider of last resort.
2. Providing services on the same basis as commercial utilities.
3. Generate revenue from the users of the services provided, except where a grant is made from the Exchequer for identifiable social or strategic expenditure.

Lois

\* Comilla Kea - || ① Employers liab. insurance  
— Costs  
— legal  
— safety

② Comilla Mofa :

insurance would work →

Peak →

\* { 1973 → 1985 }  
→ Employment

if implemented ;

IDA +

\* { Agreed policy → comprehensive  
rehabilitation programme } what  
stage?

Rehab 1/6 v 2/6

Cost of public finances → does this

Alan McCarthy, Co. Man. Off. :

Directors below v Contractors ||

\* { Naas — 80% in private }

! Not enough consensus →  
Contract scheme or Waste Management ;

Insurance → private enterprises → 1/3 legal  
LAND Acquisition difficulty ;

Best way  
Objective  
Examine

Roads Bles → strong public  
Support.

4. Negotiate the provision of local toll roads to reduce the cost of transport.
5. Establish industrial waste management facilities as commercial enterprises and as an increased attraction for new industries.
6. Generate additional housing activity by negotiating joint venture housing arrangements with private builders and building societies.
7. Streamline local planning procedures to encourage more investment.
8. Encourage the setting up of Enterprise Development Committees in every town and village in the region using all the private and public resources at their disposal.

I believe that the widespread adoption of these and similar ideas to stimulate development could have a major impact on the pace of economic development and job creation.

END

29.4.1986

C11  
 I { Decentralisation → }  
 Jim Heane

Councillor <sup>Daly</sup> - MLN

- 1 Public Sector → "Hospitals" → TAX - NESC.
  - ↓ Current
  - free services
  - free hospital
- 2 Companies into receivership → \*
  - VAT; PRSI
- 3 ML Nationals →
- 4 Northern Ireland shopping → £120 → £50.
  - Duty free zone.
- 5 Allowances → PAYE allowances;

Bypass: Athlone  
 Kinnegad  
 Mullingar

1988 → Motorway to ~~Kinnegad~~ Kinnegad;  
 X Dual carriageway to Kinnegad

£40m  
 ↓  
 £30m Roads plan / £800m

Toll Roads → X 1/2m  
 As low as 25%

X Coordinating the work of Council.

Link with Henry Abbot →