

TOM REDINGTON

The main problems are the same as anybody else living in this area, it's the infrastructure I suppose we call it, it's the phones and the roads and the transport is just atrocious. But the phones, you can spend an hour or two hours trying to get a call through to Dublin, where if you want to ring somebody in Germany or France well, you know, you can forget it, so that we do lose business on the phones and the telex and the roads, definitely.

PAT JESS

These problems also help explain why the multinational carpet yarn factory closed down.

COLM REAGAN

Well the closure related to international factors like the recession in the textile industry. It also related to the problems of the area here. Problems of poor infrastructure, roads in particular, given that the input had to be brought in and then trucked back out again. Problems with telecommunications, the management here consistently told us that they had problems with using the telephone and telex systems, and then there were problems that were specific to the plant itself. Problems involving what we could describe as a clash between the cultures of the management and the cultures of the people who worked in the plant; they were very specific to the plant itself.

PAT JESS

This closure had knock-on effects particularly on the dyeing plant in Kilcar.

The raw wool input to the spinning factory is first dyed a variety of shades and colours, then blended together to give the wool its distinctive character. The large scale investment of the dyeing plant was justified by the fact that it serviced the multinational carpet factory and another factory further north. The closure of both these factories meant that the dyeing plant was reduced to working very inefficiently at less than 10% of its full capacity.

Maintaining positive linkages between small scale local industries in areas like this is one of the tasks in peripheral development. For example wool from Kilcar gives firms such as Jim Doogan's or the knitting cooperative an easily accessible source of yarns which can be coloured to order. It also enables them to operate without having to hold large stocks of yarn themselves.

Despite the problems of peripheral development, there has been considerable local industrialisation, and unemployment in Donegal is low by contemporary standards.

[End of recording]