

<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2009/1209/1224260355089.html>

8.12.2009: Ungewöhnlich: eine Radio Station veröffentlicht ein Grundsatz-Editorial „State of the Nation“

The Irish Times - Wednesday, December 9, 2009  
Radio station broadcasts 'state of the nation' editorial

RONAN McGREEVY

NEWSTALK has taken the unusual step for a radio station of broadcasting an editorial on the state of the nation. The editorial, which was drawn up by the station's chief executive Frank Cronin and station editor Garrett Harte, calls on the Taoiseach to address the nation and give the country a "credible, detailed vision of recovery".

Station owner Denis O'Brien was not involved in drawing up the editorial, but approved of the concept, according to his spokesman.

The Newstalk statement, which was read out before five bulletins yesterday and is published on the station's website, describes Ireland as being at an "unprecedented economic and social crossroad" and that the road ahead "seems unbearably bleak" unless leadership is given.

It recommends that Ireland's cost base needs "radical adjustment", everybody needs to reduce their living standards and the country cannot "afford to pay our politicians, doctors, lawyers, teachers, nurses and accountants more than our European counterparts". Mr Harte said it was a first for Newstalk and probably a first for a radio station in Ireland.

He said it was drawn up in response to e-mails and texts of listeners over the last six months.

"We would not see any issues with it. We are not saying anything that is inflammatory. It is a call for community spirit. We would see the statement as a civic duty on the eve of the budget," he said.

"People are looking for leadership and vision . . . the tone of our text messages have changed in the last six months from passive to a common thread about the lack of leadership."

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<http://www.newstalk.ie/newstalk-statement/>

## **Newstalk Pre Budget Statement**

**The following script was broadcast on Newstalk on December 8th, 2009.**

Ireland is at an unprecedented economic and social crossroad. The country appears divided. The road ahead seems unbearably bleak. But here at Newstalk we believe that Ireland has a proud tradition of overcoming, of achieving, of finding a way. We believe this is a country worth fighting for.

Charm, culture, energy and engagement have always been part of who we are, but so too have ambition, determination and achievement. We need to lean on these talents to re-position our country. Old solutions will not solve new problems. We need to be imaginative, decisive.

Every one of us must be prepared to accept the challenges that constrained economic circumstances impose.

We spend €56bn and have revenues of €34bn.

Scarcely has any politician in the history of our State faced such difficulties as those which face the Taoiseach now. The challenge is daunting. It calls for strong and determined leadership. The decisions required will be difficult to accept. Brian Cowen must now assert his authority.

Never before has a budget been so important. Our cost base needs radical adjustment; we must all reduce our living standards. Our country cannot afford to pay our politicians, doctors, lawyers, teachers, nurses and accountants more than our European counterparts. We can no longer afford to out price ourselves against our nearest neighbours. We must compete against Newry and Bratislava. Competitiveness is essential if we are to create jobs for our young, educated and newly unemployed men and women.

This budget must start Ireland's recovery.

We need firm, decisive action to replace the fear and uncertainty, the mistrust that has begun to fester in our homes and workplaces.

Newstalk calls on the Taoiseach to lead the country.

Newstalk calls on the Taoiseach to address the nation and give our people a credible, detailed vision for recovery.

Newstalk calls on the Government to make the hard decisions, to reposition our country; to present us with a Programme for Recovery that creates jobs, stimulates business and returns hope.

All party leaders, business leaders and trade union leaders must set aside short term gains in all our interests. All TD's must see beyond their re-election campaigns to support this vision. When this government's mandate expires voters will have their say.

The future holds much uncertainty and dark days of difficulty but together, working for each other and as a nation we can rebuild our country.

Taoiseach, please lead us, let's not meander.