



J.S. Still not sure I'm getting this, but go on.

B.D. By you I mean the Fare Paying Commuter, the Fare that you pay has gone up on average by approximately 8.2% per year between 2010 and 2015.

J.S. Ya, but isn't that exactly the argument being made by lots of ordinary Joe's, that those Fare increases go towards ye'rre wages?

B.D. Oh that sure is the spin alright, but look at it this way, your Fare goes up year on year and my wages have depreciated by 13% since 2008.

J.S. What in the name of Government Advisors are ya on about?

B.D. The Department of Transport, in its own words in 2011 said that the non-payment of the 6% we are owed since 2008 coupled with no pay rises amounts to the equivalent of 13% pay cut.

J.S. Just so I have this clear now once and for all, what you are telling me is that the Government took €27m from Dublin Bus's funding and effectively replaced it with my increased Fares and your Non-payment of wages owed and not increased since 2008.

B.D. Well, I need to be careful here, just in case I get 'Fact Checked', but yes, more or less correct.

J.S. More or less?

B.D. Seems we upset a few folk over at the Department and the National Transport Authority with our chat last week, seems you have to surrender your sense of humour when you sign-up to do a stint on the Permanent Government Team.

J.S. Your off again with your highfalutin fancy words and titles, Permanent Government?

B.D. Oh them the boys n gals who really call the shots, Civil Servants they are, Politicians come and go, this crowd are Lifers.

J.S. OK, assuming I'm getting all of this, what's the catch with the dispute? Solving it I mean?

B.D. That's just it, there is no catch, us Bus Workers feel it can be resolved if the Unions and Dublin Bus were to sit down and hammer out a deal at the Workplace Relations Commission.

J.S. What's the problem with doing that?



B.D. The Government it seems, not sure if it's Shane the Main or the Lifers who are calling the shots, but it appears that Dublin Bus are only 'allowed' to talk about productivity if talks reconvene.

J.S. Your at it again, productivity?

B.D. Sorry, but it's all over the media, Dublin Bus saying they will only talk about efficiencies or extra work for staff, that's what they mean by productivity.

J.S. Am I missing something here? Is that a problem?

B.D. Well, it's back to what I said earlier, staff are sick of subsidising or paying towards their own wages. Workers have contributed to Dublin Bus with two cost cutting plans in 2009 and 2013.

J.S. OK, I think, but sureiy there must be a way of getting around the table again?

B.D. Well, according to the Unions they will go back so talks immediately if Dublin Bus drop the precondition.

J.S. Nearly finished, but you mentioned Ross and his Lifers earlier, what do they need to do?

B.D. They need to tell Dublin Bus that it is okay to attend at talks, unrestricted of course. There also needs to be some kind of commitment to a long overdue debate on Public Transport Funding. Also, there was a study done in 2009 by a crowd of consultants who said Dublin was one of the lowest funded Bus Service across Europe.

J.S. Explain that one again?

B.D. Look, us Bus Workers understand that of all the public services that have had much needed money reduced by Government, Transport is below some on the list of priorities. Health being one of the most obvious. However, it is reasonable to request a debate on the Funding of Public Transport in order to legislate for future infrastructure (Buses) and the services that will be required as the Economy grows. Creating surety around the future funding of Public Transport will also help to reassure those of us who work in the Industry that our earnings will not be going towards the funding of the Transport Services in Ireland.

J.S. Would the mandarins and Lifers agree to that?

B.D. Me thinks it was done before as part of the settlement of the Railway boy's dispute back in 2014. There was a forum (fancy talk for a committee) set up so unions could have an input into the future financial infrastructure of the Company, that was Irish Rail, same could apply at Dublin Bus.