

Green Paper Consultation Responses

Social Partnership

Submission 315

In May 1997, three members of the [organisation name], myself included, made a submission to the Pensions Board in relation to the National Policy Initiative. We stated then that “it is our contention that pensions are a component part of the nation’s overall pay system. Our central pay system (Partnership 2000) needs major overhaul before we can move forward on the Pensions Board major agenda item”. This situation, which can only be described as “a quasi type partnership”, remains unchanged for the past eleven years.

Our former Taoiseach chose to ignore the NESC’s pay recommendations in November 1996 and again in 2005. This bizarre decision-making has since created what can only be described as a “political cartel” that is singularly driving “a diverging society country-wide” to state the obvious.

In the Irish Times Innovation magazine of April last, Peter Sutherland stated, and I quote, “I think we are on the verge of a very cataclysmic situation. There is a danger that much of the foreign direct investment will depart if the Irish cost base remains too high. It is too high today. If that is the consequence of centralised bargaining and, above all, the failure of the government to restrain public sector spending and employment, then it could lead to disinvestment”. “Public sector pay is probably relatively high here. The per capita number of civil servants that we have, relative to total population, is probably also very high and so are the costs in this area. We need real benchmarking on these issues with published information giving everyone the facts”, Peter Sutherland stated.