

TRADES UNION CONGRESS

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The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret
Thatcher MP,
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London SW1.

YOUR REFERENCE

OUR REFERENCE
LM/MW/EAC

DEPARTMENT

International

November 23, 1981.

Dear Prime Minister,

Poland: European Council

You will be aware that Solidarity in Poland has made a public appeal to Governments, and in particular those in the European Community, to undertake extraordinary and immediate assistance to Poland. Solidarity has also approached national trade union centres including the TUC with a request that they should do all in their power to obtain from Government and intergovernmental institutions assistance to overcome the grave economic and social difficulties confronting Poland.

The most serious immediate problem in Poland is the acute shortage of most kinds of basic food, which can only become worse in the coming winter months, and could increase political instability and civil and industrial unrest. Our Finance and General Purposes Committee have today discussed the position, and consider that it would clearly be in the interests of the United Kingdom and of all other European countries for Poland to receive all possible assistance in meeting its basic food needs. I believe that that view is shared by all our colleagues in the Western European trade union Movement.

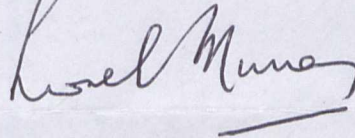
The forthcoming meeting in London of the European Council, and your chairmanship of it, provides an opportunity for the UK to give a lead to the European Community in providing assistance to Poland in the form of food aid. That would help Poland to avoid massive unrest, the consequences of which might be extremely dangerous for Europe as a whole and for Poland in particular. We would hope that, if additional food aid is made available, means could be found, by arrangement with the

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Polish authorities, to enable Solidarity to assist with its distribution inside Poland. The involvement of Solidarity would, I am sure, help it to play the constructive, practical role its leadership seeks.

I hope that you will agree that the issue of food aid for Poland should be included in the agenda of the Council meeting; and that the Government will strongly support the requests for assistance which have been made recently.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Leszek Mura". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the closing "Yours sincerely,". A horizontal line is drawn under the signature.

General Secretary.