

PRIME MINISTER

Len Murray writes to you once again in an attempt to involve you in representations by the National Pensioners' Convention.

In 1979, you arranged for Mr. Jenkin to meet a delegation on your behalf. In 1980, you and Messrs. Callaghan and Steel were asked to address the National Pensioners' Convention in November. You declined - it was the day of the State Opening - but Messrs. Foot and Steel accepted.

This time you, with Messrs. Steel and Foot, are asked to meet a delegation, following a lobby of Parliament, on Wednesday, 4 March. It is the day of your St. Lawrence Jewry address, followed by lunch in the City. The mid-afternoon period is still free, although there may be an E meeting at 4.00 p.m.. This time, would you be prepared in principle to see a delegation for half an hour, subject to Mr. Jenkin's advice?

12 February 1981

*No - ask Mr. Jenkins
to receive the National
Pensioners' Convention
delegation. The National
Pensioners' Convention
is a M.C. in some way
and perhaps has political
flavour.
M.P.*

file



cc DMS
Press Office

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

25 February 1981

The Prime Minister has asked me to reply to your letter of 9 February, about the National Pensioners' Convention lobby of Parliament on 4 March. I am afraid that it will once again not be possible for the Prime Minister to receive a delegation. As you will know, she will be in America until Sunday 1 March, and she has a major speaking commitment on 4 March. She has asked me to apologise for the delay in replying to you. She has, however, been in touch with the Secretary of State for Social Services, who will be ready to see a delegation if you would care to make arrangements direct with his office.

C. A. WHITMORE

The Rt. Hon. Lionel Murray, O.B.E.

JP

FILE

VLB

12 February 1981

I am writing on behalf of the Prime Minister to thank you for your letter of 9 February, about the National Pensioners' Day on 4 March.

I will place your letter before the Prime Minister, and a reply will be sent to you as soon as possible.

M A PATTISON

The Rt. Hon. Lionel Murray, O.B.E.

TRADES UNION CONGRESS

CONGRESS HOUSE · GREAT RUSSELL STREET · LONDON WC1B 3LS

Telephone 01-636 4030

Telegrams TRADUNIC LONDON WCI

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

YOUR REFERENCE

OUR REFERENCE
LM/PJ/BD/JB
DEPARTMENT
Social Insurance &
Industrial Welfare

R 11/2

February 9, 1981

Dear Mrs Thatcher

National Pensioners' Day, March 4, 1981
Lobby of Parliament

I write to you on behalf of the Steering Committee of the National Pensioners' Convention. The Committee has decided, on behalf of the organisations' representatives, to hold a lobby of Parliament on Wednesday, March 4, 1981, between 2.30 pm and 5.00 pm. The purpose of the lobby is to enable pensioners and those who support their demands, to express their views to Members of Parliament. In particular we wish to press for the early implementation of the improvements set out in the Declaration of Intent (copy attached) which was endorsed at the National Pensioners' Conventions held in 1979 and 1980.

The Steering Committee has also decided to ask each of the three main Party leaders to meet a group of representatives from the organisations involved. We should be grateful, therefore, if you would agree to meet such a delegation on the day of the lobby. Detailed arrangements will then, of course, have to be made. As you may be aware the organisations involved on the Steering Committee include the British Pensioners and Trade Union Action Association, the National Federation of Old Age Pensions Associations, the Scottish Old Age Pensions Association, the Trades Union Congress and the Transport and General Workers' Union Retired Members' Section.

I look forward to your reply and hope, in view of the considerable importance of the matters concerned, that you will be able to agree to our request.

Yours sincerely

Lionel Murray

General Secretary

GENERAL SECRETARY: RT. HON. LIONEL MURRAY OBE DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: NORMAN WILLIS
ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARIES: KENNETH GRAHAM OBE AND DAVID LEA OBE

National Pensioners' Convention

Declaration of Intent

This Convention declares that every pensioner has the right to choice, dignity, independence and security as an integral and valued member of society.

These rights require an adequate State retirement pension. There must be an immediate commitment to a pension level of not less than one half of average gross earnings for a married couple and not less than one third of average gross earnings for a single person, uprated at six monthly intervals.

In addition to an adequate income a pensioner should, as of right:

- live in accommodation which is appropriate to personal need and circumstance with a reasonable degree of choice including sheltered housing;
- be able to call on the full range of community and personal social services to give full support as need arises, including, for example, home helps, meals on wheels, chiropody, television and telephone;
- be able to use a National Scheme of substantial concessionary facilities on all public transport in all parts of the country;
- have ready access to comprehensive free health care on demand;
- be able to maintain a warm and well lit home with adequate heating allowances covering all fuels;
- have full access to a varied and extensive range of education and leisure facilities;
- be paid a regular tax-free Christmas bonus of £20, adjusted in future in line with inflation;
- be eligible for an adequate retirement pension on ceasing work at any time of his or her choice after the age of 60 years, without being subject to an earnings rule;
- be entitled to an adequate death grant irrespective of age.