

From: Jackie Lee

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Dear Sir

In response to your visit to the UK regarding Poverty & Human Rights in the UK of which I give my permission for my words to be used & published at any time.

Can I tell you my story of how our Human Rights are abused & we of a certain age are left in Poverty.

I was born in 1957 - we are called 'Baby Boomers' which is an insult to our parents.

We do not decide when we are born but 1950's women have worked all their lives for the UK to thrive.

I was born into a family of 6 children & being the eldest was a second 'mum' to all my siblings. I had a happy childhood even though I had to take care of my brothers & sister & had a Saturday job (from 13 years old) as well as going to school. When I left school on the Friday in July 1972 I started work the following Monday. I left home & got married in October 1976 - I signed the NI1/CF9 form, which was the form to sign if you were paying full National Insurance contributions & wanted a pension in your own right at 60 (This form is available to view)

I carried on with my life working, looking after my home & husband, bringing up & nurturing 3 children. Even when they were small I found work in supermarkets, cleaning wherever was needed any job I could do even if it was menial - I worked when my husband had finished his work for the day. So not only was I looking after young children, keeping my house in order & making sure my husband had a good meal when he came home I then went out to work. It was what we did, so no problem I did it. When my children started full time education I could work for slightly longer... then we did not have maternity leave, nursery places, I had no family around so had to look after my children myself.

I gradually increased my working time as my children grew & then was back working full time. Always paying my full NI contributions. I had a life but always in my mind I was retiring at 60..... In 2015 I was made redundant, but I had no worries as myself & my husband had little savings & he was still working so we could afford it with no problem. I then sent off for my State Pension forecast from DWP.

You could have knocked me over with a feather when the forecast was that instead of me retiring in 2017 - I was now retiring in 2023!!

I could not believe it that I now have a retirement age of 66.. after all these years of doing what is right, not being a burden on the state, paying for everything myself through working my whole life.

I am now 61 going on 62 - I have not been able to find another job.... even though I have send many applications off, even for Apprenticeships, as our MP from the Department of Work & Pensions; Guy Opperman stated we of the age over 60 should apply: I have & I can imagine what the conversation is when they are read by the company who want a young 16/17/18 year old to train & not a 60+ woman. So now I have no income as my husband is obliged to look after me (as per DWP).... so now we hardly see each other as he has to take on more work to earn more for us to live. Our savings have gone to 0, our bills are going ever higher & we do not have any spare money for anything we had planned to do in our retirement. My husband will have to stay at work for an extra 3 years to be able for us to live. Our government call this Equality! we are pensioners living hand to mouth - exact words we are living in Poverty & our human rights have most definitely been abused. Our Government have admitted that 1950's women did not get any notice of the pension age rise in 1995. The next 2 rises were in 2011 & 2015. If you go through life knowing you are going to retire at 60 & they stated the pension rise would start in 2020... why would you think any different. We did not have the pleasure years ago to join a company pensions scheme... we were relying on our state pension for our old age. My cousin who at 65 retired March 2017 & he died in August 2017 (1 year ago) he had started work at 14 paid in all his life & had 5 months pension. Where does all this money go? His wife has an extra £6 a month... makes you laugh. I hope that you can see that our Government has not been fair to it's over 60's - they are waiting for us to die so they do not have to pay us our pensions that we have already paid for. State Pension is not a Benefit, we have paid into it all our working life & we would like some justice.

Thank you for your time if you read my letter

Kind Regards

Jackie Lee