

Grey Power

New Zealand

Federation Incorporated

Report of Six Monthly
Lobby Trip to Wellington
held from March 21st-24th
2011



Report of the Grey Power NZ Federation (Inc) Lobby Visit-held March 21st-24th 2011

Grey Power Participants: Roy Reid, Miles Jackson, Dick Stark and Jan Pentecost attended almost all the appointments. V. McCowatt and Terry King attended several.

Purpose of the Lobby Visit: to meet with available politicians, Government Department officials and others to advance, support and protect the welfare and well-being of older persons in NZ, both directly, or in conjunction with other organisations or bodies with similar aims or purposes. (The Grey Power Constitution p.3).

On this visit to Wellington the Grey Power delegation met with the following:

Russel Norman-Green Party Co-Leader

The Right Hon John Key-Prime Minister

Chris Hipkins- Labour Spokesperson, ACC

Stuart Nash – Labour Spokesperson Revenue

Grant Robertson- Labour Health Spokesperson

Hon Phil Goff-Leader of the Opposition

Chester Borrows-Chairperson, Justice and Electoral Committee

Nathan Guy- Associate Minister of Justice-Associate Minister of Transport

Sue Kedgley Green Party-Spokesperson-Alcohol & other Drugs, Food, Older Persons etc

Clayton Cosgrove- Labour Spokesperson Earthquake Recovery, Law & Order, Police, SOE's, Finance.

Liz Baxendine-President- **Lisbeth Gronbeak**- Policy and Operations Manager- **Ann Martin** CEO-**Age Concern**

Phil Twyford- Labour- **Spokesperson**, Local Government and Environment Committee.

Hon Bill English- Deputy Leader, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance & Minister of Infrastructure

Hon Rodney Hide- Minister of Local Government, Minister of Regulatory Reform, Associate Minister of Education.

Hon Steven Joyce-Minister of Transport, Communications and Technology, Tertiary Education, Associate Minister of Finance and Infrastructure

Hon Annette King- Labour Deputy Leader, Spokesperson, Social Policy

Sue Moroney- Labour Associate Spokesperson Health (Aged Care)

Ross Robertson- Labour Spokesperson Senior Citizens

Hon Tony Ryall – Minister of Health, Minister of State Services

Hon Nick Smith- Minister of ACC etc

S. Primrose- Ministry of Health

Staff, Senior Services, Ministry of Social Development- D. Rogers (chair), L. Cousins, J. Hobbs, N. Lavery, D. Bromell, K. Wong, V. Jenner and S. Kirkiri.

Diana Crossan- Retirement Commissioner

Don McIver- National President NZ RSA

R. Trow Media Strategist

Hon John Carter Minister Senior Citizens (Was unavailable due to urgent Government Business)

Name of Politician & Other	Discussion/ Action
<u>R. Norman</u>	<u>ACC/Hearing Loss:</u> Re Grey Power's paper on ACC which requests a tax on fuel prices at the pump rather than in the ACC levy. Grey Power believes this is fairer for older people who often travel short distances/lower kms. He responded that it hinges on who has the most accidents- he will talk with Kevin Haig Green spokesperson for ACC-he believes ACC could be both pre-funded and pay as you go.
<u>C. Hipkins</u>	Re Grey Power's paper on ACC- he will investigate what the accident rate is between age/short trips and those who use their cars to travel further -Labour will consider change to the way the levy is collected if the present levy is unfair. Re Hearing loss and ACC- he believes that the current 6% measure for hearing loss is arbitrary and unscientific-he is working on a comprehensive policy to cover all hearing loss, including prevention and on how to support/fund those with hearing loss. He said that Work and Income (WINZ) are not informing clients of their entitlements and he thinks people are removed from ACC before they are fully habituated-problem is where does the ACC stop and the Health system begin. Grey Power suggested the need for business-like monitoring-a balance between fiscal accountability and social responsibility.
<u>S. Nash</u>	ACC is not broke and he suggested it was Grey Power's role to prove exactly what the case is. Re Privatisation of ACC- His opinion is that if the Govt privatise people will pay more for less service.
<u>R. Robert-</u>	Re Grey Power's paper on ACC-he will raise the issue with ACC, P. Goff and D.

<p><u>son</u></p> <p><u>S. Primrose</u></p> <p><u>P. Bennett</u></p> <p><u>N. Smith</u></p>	<p>Cunliffe, ACC spokesperson- he will report back to Grey Power on any achievements. <u>Re After hours medical care-</u> he suggested that the bonding of doctors should receive more attention.</p> <p><u>Re Hearing Aids and ACC:</u> Grey Power asked about ACC cuts for those with hearing loss-she explained that the Ministry of Health and ACC jointly fund hearing aids but it was too early in the process to know how it will work-ACC manages everything therefore services are not duplicated= memorandum of understanding. She believes the assessment is as objective as possible and asked should ACC have to pick up age related hearing loss?-ACC is an accident based system. Grey Power to receive a copy of final notice re how the system is to work and when it comes into force people will require a quote-every relevant person will receive a hearing aid fact sheet which will give, amongst its information, the types of hearing aid for the degree of hearing loss and situation, plus advice on how to manage hearing loss. She supported Grey Power's suggestion that in the first instance people should consult a hearing therapist- a Ministry of Health staff member could write an article for Grey Power re this. Grey Power believes that some audiologists sell unsuitable devices to older people-they need to take more notice of what a particular person requires and can manage.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Re the Christchurch Earthquake and the hearing impaired-</u>Grey Power asked what help was given and could be provided for hearing impaired- suggested vibrating mobile phones-she did not give a positive response re this.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Re ACC and hearing loss-</u> the problem is, as above, injury v natural hearing loss- the test is the balance of probability and to apportion what is/was accident and what is natural illness. There are now entitlement documents to cover all areas which he undertook to send to the Federation Office. Ditto for a copy of the threshold paper. Different state agencies operate in this field and he wants a seamless situation to help clients- Grey Power supports this- they asked that the Govt support the use of hearing therapists as the first port of call for people. <u>Re ACC payments for injury-</u> the difficulty occurs where there is an underlying condition. Would the accident have occurred if no such condition existed? <u>Re restrictions in the health system-</u> He said the health system would never be able to cope with everything but cancer/cardiac/ life threatening conditions will always be treated. He asked us to let him know if any of our members were being inconvenienced by different state departments.</p>
<p><u>C. Borrows</u></p>	<p><u>Justice:</u> <u>Judges confined to using fines</u> for certain types of offending -Grey Power asked about the younger people who accumulate large fines but cannot pay them therefore they are sentenced to community service. He said the court has to carry out means testing before fining but the Police can issue fines without such testing. To prevent youth offenders from contact with more hardened criminals and to provide them with skills etc some Judges contract the former to a Limited Service Volunteer term or to Fresh Start Camps which include literacy, numeracy and wilderness components- he reported some real success stories from this type of treatment- he offered to talk to Grey Power Assns re this</p>

<p><u>N. Guy</u></p> <p><u>R. Norman</u></p> <p><u>S. Kedgley</u></p> <p><u>P. Goff</u></p>	<p><u>Alcohol Law Reform:</u></p> <p>Re <u>The re-introduction of Licensing Trusts</u>- Grey Power supports this- he replied that the Govt does not and the control will go to Local Bodies. Grey Power asked if local councils have the expertise to handle this responsibility and pointed out that what is required is a specialised group to do the job. The Govt has produced an Alcohol Reform Package and N. Guy will send more info re this to Grey Power- to go to the Chair, Grey Power Law, Order and Justice Portfolio. He told Grey Power that the Govt has adopted the majority of the Law Commission's recommendations. Grey Power requested that we be informed of pending Bills to go before the House that would be of interest to us.</p> <hr/> <p>Re the <u>Green Party's policy on alcohol</u>. His response = the harm minimisation approach, e.g. remove alcohol TV advertising, restrict liquor licenses.</p> <hr/> <p>Told Grey Power that the Govt or anyone else is prevented from limiting the amount of alcohol in RDTs because of CER agreements. She sees problems if Local Bodies control liquor licenses because the industry could pressure Local Bodies or they could stack them. Also the industry and other commercial interests offer funds to political parties. Grey Power suggested provision of education programmes on alcohol damage- NGO's and the Liquor Industry could be involved in this.</p> <hr/> <p>Re the <u>Alcohol Law Reform Bill</u> -he said he is voting conservatively on this.</p>
<p><u>R. Norman</u></p> <p><u>C. Cosgrove</u></p> <p><u>L. Baxendine-</u></p>	<p><u>The Christchurch Earthquake:</u></p> <p>He believes ACC has the \$ to pay for earthquake injuries-ACC is cutting costs because the Govt tells them to. He says the Govt will borrow to pay for the earthquake –the Greens prefer a temporary targeted tax levy on taxpayers who earn from \$48,000-\$70,000 and a higher levy for the more highly paid.</p> <hr/> <p>Grey Power asked about the <u>possibility of priority repairs to damaged houses</u> so people could stay in their own homes or if houses involved were rentals they could provide much needed accommodation- C. Cosgrove to get back to Grey Power re this. <u>Re the problem of tardy payment to contractors from the EQC</u>-Grey Power pointed out that some contractors require payment up-front from property owners and sometimes the latter do not have any available funds to pay-if this is a problem or if a contractor is unobtainable people should phone the earthquake helpline. Grey Power asked <u>where the Red Cross funds were going and how they were accounted for</u>-C. Cosgrove replied that he had complete confidence in the well known charities.</p> <hr/> <p>Grey Power spoke of <u>the extra cost to older people of having family/friends living with them</u>. One suggestion from L. Baxendine was the provision of interest free loans to help the evacuees pay their way (see below re billeting allowance). Re <u>the problems of those in rest homes who have been displaced</u>- their family may not be able to visit –they are preventing local people from entering a nearby rest home because all the places are being utilised by those displaced.</p>

<p><u>P. Bennett</u></p> <p><u>Ministry of Social Development</u></p> <p><u>Senior Services</u></p> <p><u>S.S- (MSD)</u></p>	<p>Re the Ministry of Social Development’s action re the Christchurch earthquake= they contacted 19,105 people over the age of 65 to assess their needs, they provided staff from outside the region to assist clients in Recovery Assistance Centres, Work and Income Centres or mobile vans. They are also working closely with the DHB and other social agencies.</p> <p>She requested that Grey Power inform her of people who require repairs to make their homes weatherproof and also if they are aware of people being refused repairs by contractors who require payment up front rather than through EQC- her Executive Assistant is to confirm the criteria for repairs under \$2000. The MSD is also looking at options for winter heating for affected people and will provide Grey Power with info on what is available for people with no money. They will also let Grey Power know if there a specific areas where it could help. They are concerned for older people who will not ask for help and they will continue ongoing contact with older people at risk.</p> <hr/> <p>Re billeting payment from civil defence- this is available for those who have friends/relatives living with them-there is a 13 week window before the living alone allowance is cut off.</p> <p>Automated telephone system discussed-utilised to contact people after the earthquake- to explain how the system works to Grey Power.</p> <p>Re contact of older people by WINZ -Grey Power expressed their thanks for the huge effort expended by staff in contacting older people and for their ongoing support for this group.</p>
<p><u>J. Key</u></p>	<p>Re The problem of tardy payment to contractors from the EQC- J. Key will look into this but he believes it is no longer a problem.</p>
<p><u>S. Kedgley</u></p> <p><u>J. Key</u></p> <p><u>B. English</u></p> <p><u>L. Baxendale</u></p> <p><u>S. Nash</u></p>	<p><u>Superannuation/Cost of Living/Milk, Food Prices etc:</u></p> <p>Re milk prices- She stated that there is no competition in the domestic market-Producer Board required to sell product overseas-she is writing to the Minister of Commerce to enquire whether there is a monopoly situation domestically.</p> <p>Re food prices- Green Party policy is to remove the GST component from fruit and vegetables- A mechanism is required to ensure that supermarkets prove they take off the GST and not put up other products to compensate- she promotes a supermarket Ombudsman & believes that supermarkets sell alcohol below cost & load up other products including fruit and vegetables.</p> <p>She spoke of a report ‘Labelling Logic’-labels should provide basic nutritional information, not be a marketing tool-the Greens will be raising this with the Prime Minister.</p> <hr/> <p>Re tax balance- J. Key believes the tax balance is about right.</p> <p>Re superannuation adjustment: Grey Power reported that many older people believed that the CPI adjustment came on top of the October GST increase but he pointed out that he could not pay it twice and that he would write to Federation Office to explain this- B. English also explained the situation as above.</p> <p>Re Grey Power’s affordability survey- V. McCowatt to provide J. Key with the results.</p> <hr/> <p>Re review of superannuation payments-Age Concern agree with Grey Power that this should be reviewed 6 mthly by a politically independent body.</p> <hr/> <p>Re Income Policy- the first \$5000 of income would be tax-free</p>

<p><u>R. Robert-son</u></p>	<p>The tax burden is carried mostly by the middle-class-S. Nash very anti people who roort the system – he wants NZers to take responsibility for themselves but for the state to provide help for those who need it.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Re price of milk</u>- he believes a ceiling is required on domestic prices and that free milk in schools should be re-instated. Grey Power pointed out that children need adequate affordable milk now to prevent calcium deficiencies later in life.</p> <p><u>Re review of superannuation payments</u>: he agrees with Grey Power’s stance for 6 monthly reviews and non-political involvement etc- Grey Power discussed its proposal for a lower salaries commission to set benefits/superannuation/minimum wage. He is to take this up.</p> <p><u>Re GST free fruit and vegetables</u> – same as Green’s policy-Grey Power asked how the consumer would know if this cost was added to other consumer products. He replied that Labour cannot police that.</p> <hr/> <p><u>A. King</u></p> <p><u>Re cost of living</u>-She said that people who did not receive big tax cuts are vulnerable- superannuitants will be behind.</p> <hr/> <p><u>S. Joyce</u></p> <p><u>Re price of milk</u>- He said that the price of basic commodities was challenging-milk and timber exports keep the country going- he does not see an immediate answer to this and the challenge is to make New Zealand a much wealthier place so prices are not of so much concern.</p>
<p><u>S. Kedgley</u></p> <hr/> <p><u>L. Baxen-dine</u></p> <hr/> <p><u>P. Goff</u></p> <hr/> <p><u>R. Robert-son</u></p> <hr/> <p><u>A. King & S. Moroney</u></p>	<p><u>Aged Care:</u></p> <p><u>Re The Report into Aged Care</u>-Grey Power assured S. Kedgley that it will keep the pressure on- the momentum going re this subject-we pointed out that Health Minister Ryall has failed to keep his promise that telephone assessment for home help would cease- S. Kedgley is concerned that budget cuts will adversely affect this area.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Re Review of home based care standards</u>-Discussion occurred on the inconsistent DHB policies across the country, the problems of social isolation and elder abuse. Age Concern said that the Ministries of Social Development and Health contract out elder abuse services but that these may be cut- Grey Power Health Portfolio Chair replied that older person’s health budget is under-spent.</p> <hr/> <p>Grey Power to provide P. Goff with details of an unfair case of loss of home help-he is to bring this up in the house.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Re Cuts to home care</u>:He asked how many complaints had Grey Power received. He likes the Abbeyfield concept and has spoken to the Housing spokesperson about this- he believes it cures social isolation. He appeared to be in favour of closing small rural rest homes- discussed the Positive Ageing Strategy and said we should check whether councils are following this.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Re Aged Care meetings</u>-they want Grey Power assistance with report back meetings re the Aged Care report results-they are offering to meet with Grey Power to report on the findings-asked does Grey Power want feedback on the report? Grey Power pointed out that they will be having a political forum re this at the AGM in May with speakers from the main political parties.</p> <p><u>Re rest home workers and home care provision</u>- S. Moroney said there was a need for</p>

<p><u>T. Ryall</u></p>	<p>qualifications for those workers who provide personal care and decent wages for rest home workers.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Re Funding/care synergy he said there is a the need is to get an even high quality standard across the sector</u></p>
<p><u>J. Key</u></p> <p><u>L. Baxendine</u></p>	<p><u>Electricity Prices:</u> <u>Re The Cost of Electricity-</u> he said there had been low increases over his time in Govt-costs go up because of the costs of bringing new supply on stream and there was not enough competition.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Re Concern = Electricity Prices-</u> Grey Power explained their policy re this. L Baxendine responded that people have to see the need for power price increases and power companies should be required to justify these.</p>
<p><u>R. Norman</u></p> <p><u>J. Key</u></p> <p><u>G. Robertson</u></p> <p><u>A. King</u></p>	<p><u>Health & Associated Matters:</u> <u>Re the problem of the cost of hospital treatment as a result of an accident when tourists do not pay.</u> His response was that it is quite good for the tourist industry.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Re The Cost of Health Care-</u> Grey Power believes that basic health needs are neglected and that money is wasted in the system. He replied that Health Minister Ryall has increased front line staff and cut administration- they have merged admin systems, put more \$ into subsidies and can deliver more operations because they buy bulk services from the private sector. <u>Re the Voting System for DHB's-</u> he agreed that this could be confusing. <u>Re the problem of Rural Pharmacy opening hours-</u> D. Stark to provide him with details re this and his office will follow it up. <u>Re the cost of visiting a doctor-</u> Grey Power believes it is too expensive- he replied that it varies around the country-he is improving the number of doctors in training</p> <hr/> <p>Re Grey Power's disquiet at: <u>the Closure of rural rest homes-</u> he said that the question hinges on the cost savings between large commercial rest homes and small friendly rest homes. <u>the cost of podiatrists-</u> he replied that they are not treated as specialists therefore their services have to be paid for. <u>Re Grey Power support for the Nurse Practitioner model-</u> he said that they provide primary care which needs to be encouraged. He is interested in accessibility and affordability in the health system and said we need to ask ourselves what services do we want? How do we provide the services? What structure should we use? He does not believe changing the structure e.g removing the DHB's and PHO's is important-He thinks prevention is better than cure therefore good overall access to primary health care and to oral health treatment is important. He informed that the Auditor General has done an audit on elective surgery and concludes that access depends on where one lives rather than on when surgery is needed. He provided a campaign suggestion 'Care not Cuts'- this is a Google site= David Choate and he discussed the Health Quality Commission, the requirement for DHB's to provide accessible 24 hr care and he is investigating duplication of health services.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Re Nurse Practitioners:</u> She is interested in supplying affordable after hours medical care through this system or through a general practitioner located at the local hospital.</p>

<p><u>T. Ryall</u></p>	<p><u>Re Dental Health-</u> Grey Power asked about money for a dental school but he responded that none was ever allocated. Govt to look at older persons' oral health for the budget. <u>Grey Power mentioned DHB voting system</u> but he did not provide a positive response. <u>Re loss of after hours medical service in outlying areas-</u> he replied that it occurs because doctors want a change of life style-in some areas St Johns will go to a residence to treat patients- problem is that after hours service doesn't pay for doctors-they get very few patients.-whose responsibility is it to provide affordable, accessible 24 hr health care- it appears it is the PHO. <u>Re free hospital treatment of overseas visitors</u> who are not entitled to it- he explained that the National Health Board is working on an electronic system which will confirm or otherwise New Zealand citizenship. He informed that older people are a DHB priority. Grey Power wants better value in the system for the health dollar.</p>
<p><u>MSD-SS</u></p>	<p>Grey Power conveyed the following issues to the MSD: <u>Re identification for hospital admittance-</u> MSD to work with DHBs re the possibility of utilising the SuperGold card for this purpose. <u>Re release of older people from hospital without any community support in place-</u>MSD aware of the issue and will work with DHB's to alleviate the problem. <u>Re-application for the combination SuperGold card/Community Services Card-</u> MSD working with the Ministry of Health in an attempt to simplify the renewal process.</p>
<p><u>J. Primrose</u></p>	<p><u>Re Integrated Family Health Centers in smaller Communities-</u> The Minister is supporting the formation of these centers which will amalgamate Health services under one organization within the individual communities ie Community Hospital, Rest Home and Medical Centre. <u>Re Public Health Organizations (PHO)-</u> There has been a reduction in the number of PHO's – there were 82 now there are 45 resulting in savings. <u>Re Immunisation of children-</u> the improvement in increasing the number of immunisations occurring was discussed. There is very good progress being made in areas such as Hawkes Bay. <u>Re Oral Health-</u> A good exchange occurred on the need for the elderly to have access to affordable dental care and it is suggested that we meet with the Chief Dental Officer. <u>Re Corneal Transplants</u> were discussed as was the cost of administration. <u>Re After hours Doctor Services</u> are a complex and challenging concern and the Ministry is looking at ways to improve the delivery of after hour's services.</p>
<p><u>P. Twyford</u></p> <p><u>R. Hide</u></p>	<p><u>Local Body Affairs:</u> <u>Re rates expenditure-</u> Grey Power's policy is that local body expenditure should be confined to core issues. He believes rates are not fair, he disagrees with how rates are funded and is against GST because it hurts those on fixed incomes- and he said that most council services are focussed on core services. It does not work for central Govt to tell councils what to do.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Re Rates-</u> he says that Govt legislation costs are falling on local councils but the Govt is not providing funds to cover this. Core services require ring fencing and an average 70% of council spending is on core services, 7% on statutory obligations and 23% on non-core services-his most important contribution has been to gain a legislative change which defines core and non-core business and which has streamlined consultation/plans</p>

	<p>etc-councils will also now be required to have consistent accounting reporting across councils.</p> <p>Grey Power has received an explanation of the Smarter Government, Stronger Communities review. Its purpose is to consider and address questions that relate to the structure, functions and funding of local government (including the usefulness of unitary authorities for metropolitan areas) and the relationship between local and central govt (including the efficiency of local government’s participation in regulatory regimes.) The Dept of Internal Affairs will engage with stake holders, including Grey Power to seek their views and perspectives on the challenges facing local govt.</p>
<p><u>C. Hipkins</u></p> <p><u>P. Goff</u></p> <p><u>A. King</u></p>	<p><u>Privatisation:</u></p> <p>C. Hipkins observed that if state assets are privatised it is extremely difficult to bring them back into state ownership.</p> <hr/> <p>Grey Power reminded him that it was a Labour Govt which started the social change re privatisation-he replied that they learnt from the 1980’s and that we should judge them on the things they did in their last term</p> <hr/> <p>She asked “what would wake Kiwis up to privatisation?” Grey Power pointed out that its policy re this= a stand against privatisation except for Kiwi Bank which it believes could be floated partially with other conditions- she replied that Labour would not sell Kiwi Bank</p>
<p><u>C. Cosgrove</u></p> <p><u>P. Bennett</u></p> <p><u>MSD-SS</u></p>	<p><u>Miscellaneous:</u></p> <p><u>Re a Register of Wills-</u> Grey Power suggested a national register to record where wills are lodged- C. Cosgrove agreed –he will look into this.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Re Disabled WINZ clients:</u> Grey Power asked if there was special assistance available for disabled older people when they had to wait in line to access a receptionist in WINZ offices- she replied that the Ministry of Social Development will look into this and follow it up.</p> <p><u>Re Work tests for 60-65 yr olds-</u>she said that those on invalids/ sickness benefits would not be pushed as hard as those on the unemployment benefit</p> <hr/> <p><u>Re The Positive Ageing Strategy (PAS) -</u> the Senior Services section is working on the website re this-they are changing from hard publishing to website form. Grey Power to provide link on their website= http://positiveageing.msd.govt.nz . Grey Power commented that older people, in the main, would be unlikely to read the page. The MSD explained the web page was primarily for policy makers, planners & older person’s non-government organisations. The web site can also be utilised by interested parties re local councils’ progress towards the achievement of the PAS goals.</p> <p><u>Re priorities for the Minister of Senior Citizens=</u> employment of older workers, changing attitudes about ageing and protecting the rights and interests of older people</p> <p><u>Re the Linkage workbook=</u> an intergenerational school resource on attitudinal change- MSD to place this online next month-website address to be sent to Grey Power.</p> <p><u>Re a civil defence and emergency pamphlet</u> for disabled or vulnerable people and carers plus info re plug in phones and opening a garage door manually etc-Grey Power to comment on draft of latter- Grey Power to be provided with the Linkage website when available.</p> <p><u>Re funeral grants-</u>MSD explained they are attempting to publicise the grant more widely.</p>

	<p><u>Re the SuperGold Card Special Deal Website</u>-new work is being done by the MSD to extend the number of discounts available-a small trial with Progressive Enterprises is occurring-Grey Power to receive the address of this website, a list of new businesses that have been recently added to the special deal page and MSD to work out a means by which Grey Power can be kept up-dated of new additions to the website.</p> <p><u>Re the Social Assistance Amendment Bill</u>-Grey Power was up-dated on the progress of the Bill and of the changes MSD have proposed to the Select Committee.</p> <p><u>Re Chinese Pensions</u>- MSD has provided Grey Power with an explanation of this issue-members who need more information are requested to contact Grey Power President-Roy Reid r.mh.reid@xtra.co.nz or Jan Pentecost, National Secretary, jan.pentecost@gmail.com</p> <hr/> <p><u>P. Goff</u> <u>Re Parenting</u>: Grey Power asked for labour policy re this- he replied that early intervention, preventing unwanted pregnancies, good early childhood education, parenting assistance and the need for an intrusive state were issues that required consideration.</p> <hr/> <p><u>S. Joyce</u> <u>Re compulsory third party insurance</u>- Grey Power are concerned at the number of people who do not have insurance. He replied that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - surveys disclose that approximately 92%-94% are insured. - it is not possible to ensure that everyone is insured-there will always be renegades - it would put young drivers off the road because premiums cost \$400-\$500. - it would be too costly to administer <p><u>Re rail</u>: he believes there is a necessity to keep rail going – he supports rail for major hauls and trucks for short haul but the country has insufficient rail stock and it also requires rail maintenance.</p> <p>Smaller lines are due for review and he thinks rumours of moth balling these lines could stimulate their use-he has to have customers to use these rail lines-all lines require several core carriers and some do not have these.</p> <p>Grey Power asked whether a commuter rail around Christchurch was possible- his reply- it depends how things evolve, he will ask Kiwi Rail but it has to pay for itself.</p> <p><u>Re the SuperGold Card</u>- discussion included the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it was good for alleviating social isolation, - provides alternative transport for older ex-drivers, - the possibility of abuse of the system by transport companies- answer = we need a better overall ticketing system – a swipe card with a chip to register the number will take about 3 yrs to roll out. - the use of the card by non-entitled persons = the possibility of a photograph on the card. <p><u>Re the cost of fuel</u>- nil road user charges on electric cars- high fuel charge could encourage use of public transport</p>
<p><u>Diana Crossan</u></p>	<p><u>Re the SuperGold card</u>-she believes it is discriminatory because it cannot be used by all superannuitants-they should all receive extra \$ per week..</p> <p><u>Re the universality of NZ pensions</u>- she said it is admired world-wide.</p> <p><u>Re Financial education for schools</u>- this is ready to be rolled out to schools but is delayed because of a lack of finance</p> <p><u>Re saving for retirement</u>- 50-65 yr olds need to be encouraged to look at this- Grey Power could campaign for this-the Retirement Commission’s website provides lots of information.</p>

	<p>Re <u>older beneficiaries especially those unemployed</u>- she agreed with Grey Power that there should be a special policy for this group because of the difficulty they face obtaining employment.</p> <p>Re <u>information from the Retirement Commissions office</u>- Grey Power to be provided with this for the Grey Power Quarterly magazine.</p>
<u>R Trow</u>	<p>Re <u>Publicity</u>-he explained how to get momentum and get heard- Grey Power requires a realistic, attainable publicity campaign- it needs to provide personal stories for the media and to look at what politicians promise and whether they carry out those promises-this can be used to challenge politicians= a stocktake of the election-which promises have been delivered on and which have not.</p>
<u>Don McIvor</u>	<p>Re areas of common interest between Grey Power and the RSA-mutual support could be considered re the Law Commission Report on the War Pension Act1954</p>