

KEZ CALLS ON RUTH DAVIDSON TO END 'RAPE CLAUSE' SILENCE

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Below is Kezia Dugdale's [Daily Record column](#) calling on Ruth Davidson to end her shameful silence on the Tories' disgusting 'rape clause':

"SHE is different to other Tories".

It's a familiar refrain when people talk about Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson.

But if that really is the case, why hasn't Ruth spoken out against the disgusting 'rape clause' her Westminster colleagues have introduced to the tax credit system?

In a barbaric move that should shame and anger the Scottish Tory leader and every single Conservative MSP, victims of rape now must fill out an eight page form if they have a child conceived through such a sexual assault.

It's a policy that would have caused anger and astonishment if Margaret Thatcher had introduced it in the 1980s. But here in 2017, in an era when the fight for women's rights has made real strides, we have a female Prime Minister content to press ahead with a horrifically cruel and uncaring policy.

Months have passed since SNP MP Alison Thewliss first stunned us all by uncovering the details of the 'rape clause'.

As part of plans to restrict tax credits to families of just two children, the UK Government decided to force women to provide evidence of exceptional circumstances, such as rape, to claim the social security payment for a third child.

So now women who have been raped – possibly by their husbands – but who have perhaps not reported it to the police will have to sign a document saying their child is the product of rape.

Alison has led a powerful campaign against the heartless Tory government on this crucial issue, and has secured cross-party support. I have nothing but praise for her tireless campaigning, and she has and will continue to receive the support of Labour MSPs and MPs in the hope of forcing the Tories into a U-turn.

For Ruth Davidson has been silent on this issue. So today I make a direct plea to her: stand up for rape victims and tell Theresa May she is wrong.

You normally have the sharpest elbows when it comes to getting noticed, so don't remain silent when it comes to standing up to your own party.

Readers of this newspaper know just how keen the Tories are to attack our cherished welfare state.

The Daily Record has exposed time and again just how distressing the Conservative government's social security cuts can be.

The way to ensure that people's reliance on social security reduces is not to penalise the poorest but to ensure that work pays and living standards rise.

Labour is committed to rebalancing the UK's economy so that no one and no community is left behind, which is why Jeremy Corbyn has announced plans for a £10-an-hour minimum wage, which would benefit 430,000 workers in Scotland alone.

And we must also ensure that everyone claims the social security payments they are entitled to – with over £2 billion presently going unclaimed in Scotland.

The Vow delivered huge new powers for the Scottish Parliament, and an opportunity to radically reshape our country to be a fairer nation, and it's time to see real action on this.