

Kez writes to Ruth to urge her to oppose 'rape clause'

13 April 2017

The Tories have been responsible for many cruel welfare policies. The bedroom tax is an example of this.

But the recently introduced 'rape clause' is possibly the cruellest of them all.

Under Tory plans, tax credits will be limited to just two children. That means that if a woman conceives a child as a result of rape, she will have to fill in an eight-page form to claim an exemption from the two child tax credit limit.

Think about that. After suffering a horrific violent attack, a woman would then be put through the ordeal of having to apply to the government for the support that she is entitled to.

Labour is completely opposed to this policy, and we will continue to make the case against it.

But Scottish Tory leader Ruth Davidson isn't against it. Yesterday she used social media to reveal that she supported it. You can read that tweet [here](#).

It's a shameful position to adopt. But it should also act as an eye-opening moment for those who think that Ruth Davidson is a different kind of Tory.

Scottish Labour leader Kezia Dugdale has today written to Ms Davidson, challenging her to stand up to the Prime Minister and oppose this cruel policy.

Here's the text of Kez's letter:

Dear Ruth,

Across Scotland and the UK there is growing anger at the inhumane rape clause – a morally bankrupt piece of legislation your party has introduced in its continued campaign to dismantle our valuable welfare state.

Your government is cutting vital social security to the disabled, the poor, the low paid and to children across the UK.

And now you are asking women who have been raped to fill in an eight-page form to claim the money they need to help feed and clothe their child – just because he or she is their third baby.

You are asking traumatised women who have in all likelihood never reported the rape – especially if the perpetrator was their husband – to state that

their child was the result of a criminal act or that child gets no tax credit support.

This is, without doubt, one of the cruellest policies a Tory government has ever implemented.

People in Scotland – and in the rest of the UK – have been led to believe that you are a different kind of Tory; that you are not cut from uncaring Thatcherite cloth. They believe this because of your defence of Britain's place in Europe and because you have in the past criticised your own party's policies and its leaders.

You took Theresa May to task over her plans to scrap the ECHR, you are one of the few pro-immigrant politicians in your party, you spoke out about massive cuts to tax credits planned by David Cameron and George Osborne. So why the silence now?

It has been two days since I publicly asked you to give your personal view on this issue, yet you continue to hide behind your spokesperson.

The rape clause should shame every single Tory MSP.

Surely it is time to once again tell your colleagues in Westminster that you do not agree with them.

There is cross-party support against this policy in Westminster and Holyrood. Why don't you join with us and condemn this appalling act?

Yours sincerely,

*Kezia Dugdale
Scottish Labour leader*

We'll update this blog post whenever Kez receives a response from Ruth Davidson.