

We have been reproached with failure to seize the centre, the middle ground. But what is the centre? It is simply a geometrical point between Conservatism and the extreme Left. In our own political life-time this centre has moved from the right of Mr Gaitskill to the position held by Mr Foot and his fellow Tribunites Alex Kitson, Joan Lester and Judith Hart. We cannot take this argument seriously. This shifting centre has nothing to do with the views values and aspirations of the British people. We take our stand on the common ground which we Conservatives share with the majority of people in this country. We stand for common decency, for common sense, for living within one's means, for the common decencies of life. This is the rock on which Conservatism is founded and I shall not leave its security for the shifting sands of the centre, here today, there tomorrow.