In the wartime army, they used to tell the story, apocryphal I am sure, about the regular army officer at the end of the first world war saying, ‘thank goodness now the war is over we can get back to real soldiering’.

In the same way, some of us will be tempted to say, ‘now the election’s over, we can get back to real politics, Tory politics’.

Perhaps I should explain. I mean ‘politics’ instead of an exclusive diet of economics, and I mean Tory politics, all the things we Tories stand for, and have stood for long before Socialists came on the scene. Yes, we have to get economics back into proportion, as one aspect of politics, important but never really the main thing. This may be unfashionable, indeed anti-fashionable, because it is the current intellectual fashions which have wrought so much havoc in this country.

During the elections, discussion focussed almost exclusively on economics; and we lost the election. Were these two facts unconnected? I don't think so. The voter has faced three parties all of who claimed that they alone had the secret of fighting inflation, of achieving economic growth, of keeping down prices and providing benefits. This was the kind of auction in which Labour was bound to outbid us, because they are quite uninhibited [sic], in promising the earth.

Over the years, this auction has raised expectations which cannot be satisfied, generated grievances and discontents. Far from bringing well being, this economics-first approach has aggravated unhappiness and social conflict, as well as over-straining the whole economic system to a point where it is beginning to seize up.

Would it not now be better to approach the public, who know that economics is not everything, as whole men rather than economic men? Should we not deal with matters which concern the nation; respect for other people and for law, the welfare of young people, the state of family life, the moral welfare of all the people, cultural values, public-spiritedness or its lack, national defence, the tone of national life? These are at the centre
of the public's concern. The economic situation is not an independent variable; it reflects
the state of political life, the degree to which people are aware of realities, and the
climate of opinion. You will only have a healthy economy in a sound body politic.

In the same way, our Tory approach to economics as party, as a tradition reflects our
total approach to life and society. Our approach emphasises liberties, decentralised
power, individual responsibility and interdependence. It differs substantially from that of
Socialists. I am not talking about people who happen to vote socialist, but the active
Socialist members and the socialist intellectuals, those who have shaped current
fashions regarding the economy, education, the arts, social welfare, the family.

And the opposite of socialist is not capitalist. Our party is older than capitalism, and
wider than any class. It grew up in the first place out of concern for liberties, traditions
and morals. It has evolved a good deal in the past three centuries yet it has retained its
essential character; its area of concern is the whole of public life and all matters which
should be of public interest down to the treatment of every man, woman and child.

When we oppose nationalisation and increased state control over economic life - or at
least I hope we oppose them - we do not take this stand out of concern for the interests
of a class of owners - and ownership is increasingly widespread - but because excessive
state control and ownership limits the liberties of all citizens as well as leading to
impoverishment.

When we oppose the imposition of a uniform state monopoly over education, it is not for
the sake of privilege, but, on the contrary, in order that the area of choice can be
widened and made available to more citizens, that the talented children of the poor may
have the best education in the environment most suited to them. We are opposed to
using children as guinea pigs or spare parts for social engineers to experiment with. We
are opposed to any policy that denies to parents the right to spend their own money on
their children's education if they so choose.

Our view of ourselves as a national party has always meant basing ourselves on what the
nation has in common notwithstanding the many distinctions which characterise it and
which will continue to do so. We do not believe that national unity implies homogeneity.

The aspect of the Tory approach which I wish to discuss here tonight relates to the family
and to civilised values. They are the foundation on which the nation is built; they are
being undermined. If we cannot restore them to health, our nation can be utterly ruined
- whatever economic policies we might try to follow. For economics is deeply shaped by
values, by the attitude towards work, thrift, ethics, public-spirit.

We do not follow that interpretation of Rousseau's concept of the noble savage that
teaches that man, left to himself, is innocent and pure. We take the more traditional and
still widely held view that men and women are born with a capacity for good and evil, to
make the best use of their talents or to waste them; and that upon our early upbringing - the standards and the self-discipline to which we are brought up first at home and then at school - much of our whole future depends.

Such words as good and evil, such stress on self-discipline and on standards have been out of favour since the war with the new establishment. They have preferred the permissive society, and, at the same time, the collectivised society. At first sight this paradox might seem inexplicable. Why should people who believe in strict state control over economic life, who disfavour private enterprise, independent education, private pension schemes, private medicine, so strongly favour what they call permissiveness in social life? How is it that those who claim to oppose the exploitation of man by man and what they call commercialism should favour the commercial exploitation of indecency, the commercial exploitation of woman by man?

Or why, you may ask should those of us who favour private property and free enterprise in the economic sphere show concern at what our new establishment would call the ‘liberation from outworn conventions’ in social matters?

There is no inconsistency; it all fits into an underlying pattern. The Socialist method would take away from the family and its members the responsibilities which give it cohesion. Parents are being divested of their duty to provide for their family economically, of their responsibility for education, health, upbringing, morality, advice and guidance, of saving for old age, for housing. When you take responsibility away from people you make them irresponsible. Hand in hand with this you break down traditional morals, the framework of behaviour, concepts of right and wrong; it is easier to subvert the social framework and replace it by their new monolithic edifice.

Look at the results of this new utopia. We were taught that crime, violence, wife-beating, child-beating, were the result of poverty; abolish poverty, and they would disappear. Well, we may have been naive to believe it, since when you look back, some of man’s most sublime moral achievements took place against the background of great economic stringency; but at least we acted in good faith.

By now, we are, in a position to test all these fine theories in the light of experience. Has anyone of them stood the test?

Real incomes per head have risen beyond what anyone dreamed of a generation back; so have education budgets and welfare budgets, so also have delinquency, truancy, vandalism, hooliganism, illiteracy, decline in educational standards. Some secondary schools in our cities are dominated by gangs operating extortion rackets against small children. Teenage pregnancies are rising; so are drunkenness, sexual offences, and crimes of sadism. For the first time in a century and a half, since the great Tory reformer Robert Peel set up the metropolitan police, areas of our cities are becoming unsafe for peaceful citizens by night, and even some by day.
The decline is spreading. We know that some universities have been constrained to lower their standards for entrants from comprehensives, discriminating against more the talented [sic] because they come from grammar or independent schools. We see how the demand for absolute equality turns into the new inequality.

In the universities, which should be sanctuaries for the pursuit of truth, the bully-boys of the left have been giving us a foretaste of what leftwing dictatorship would endeavour to achieve, actively cheered on by the casuistry of some members of the university staffs, cuckoos in our democratic nest, and by the pusillanimity of others, by the apathy of many and, I must add, by moral cowardice in public life.

And since these universities are financed mainly by the taxpayers, only a minority of whom will have had access to them, it is the right of the public to pass judgment on how its money is spent. Whatever we may have thought fifteen years or so back, it is our right and duty to question, in the light of experience, the rapid expansion of the universities, and the belief that by increasing the number of undergraduates we necessarily multiply the benefit either to the young people concerned or to the nation.

I remain a passionate advocate of education. But blind partisanship is the worst enemy of a cause.

If equality in education is sought at the expense of quality, how can the poisons created help but filter down?

When young people are taken away from their home milieu, in late adolescence, crowded together in age groups, with diminished parental, and indeed, adult influence, and without the social disciplines which the need to earn a living impose, is it surprising that their late-adolescent rebelliousness should feed on itself, and seek ideological rationalisations? Left-wing ideology is so convenient for this purpose; it requires little knowledge and less analytical thought, just a compendium of all-purpose phraseology.

No doubt many will grow out of it when the leave for the world, [sic] but not all. Some will carry on an extended adolescence as teachers in schools and in polytechnics and in universities, helped by the like-minded, where they will co-operate with the left-wing gangs.

But worse still is the effect of these winds of change in the schools, particularly in poorer districts among less gifted children, and in social work.

Some abuse their power and authority to urge or condone antisocial behaviour either on political grounds - against an 'unjust society', against 'authority' or as 'liberation from the trammels of the outmoded family'. But what has been the result? Drugs, drunkenness, teenage pregnancies, vandalism, an increase in drifting - now called by new names, but basically vagrancy. None of these phenomena is at all modern, or liberated; they are the very opposite of freedom which begins with self-discipline.
The facile rhetoric of absolute liberty has become a cover for irresponsibility; instant social protest an excuse for antisocial behaviour.

The old virtues of patriotism and national pride have been denigrated in the name of internationalism, love of all our fellow-men. But no one can love mankind if he does not love his own countrymen.

It was the radical Socialist writer and patriot, the late George Orwell, who described the left-wing intellectuals as men motivated primarily by hatred of their own country. Socialists who spoke most about brotherhood of man [sic] could not bear their fellow-Englishmen, he complained. Their well-orchestrated sneers from their strongpoint in the educational system and media have weakened the national will to transmit to future generations those values, standards and aspirations which made England admired the world over.

It is just because their message is that self-discipline is out of date and that the poor cannot be expected to help themselves, that they want the state to do more. That is why they believe in state ownership and control of economic life, education, health. Their wish to end parental choice in where and how their children shall be educated, in spending their money on better education and health for their children instead of on a new car, leisure, pleasure, is all part of the attempt to diminish self and self-discipline and real freedoms in favour of the state, ruled by socialists, the new class, as one disillusioned communist leader called them.

Of course, I shall be misrepresented, but let me ward off what misunderstanding I can. I am not saying that we should not help the poor, far from it. But the only really lasting help we can give to the poor is helping them to help themselves; to do the opposite, to create more dependence is to destroy them morally while throwing an unfair burden on society. The populist rulers of Rome thought they had hit on a foolproof method of achieving a permanent curb on their patrician rivals when they created a dependent proletariat relying on them for bread and circuses; but in the end it destroyed the political stability of Rome, and so Rome itself fell, destroyed from inside.

Are we to be destroyed from inside, too, a country which successfully repelled and destroyed Philip of Spain, Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm II, the Kaiser, Hitler, are we to be destroyed by ideas, mischievous, wrong-headed, debilitating, yet seductive because they are fashionable and promise so much on the cheap?

It is up to us. History is not made by abstract forces, or classes. It is made by people. If we have the moral courage to say what we believe to be true, right and good, the people will be with us.

Let us take inspiration from that admirable woman, Mary Whitehouse. I do not accept all her ideas, she will not accept all mine. Yet we can see in her a shining example of what one person can do single-handedly when inspired by faith and compassion. An unknown
middle-aged woman, a schoolteacher in the Midlands, set out to protect adolescents against the permissiveness of our time.

Look at the scale of the opposing forces. On the one side, the whole of the new establishment, with their sharp words and sneers poised. Against them stood this one middle-aged woman. Today, her name is a household word, made famous by the very assaults on her by her enemies. She has mobilised and given fresh hearts to many who see where this current fashion is leading. Her book, *Who Does She Think She Is?* took its title from the outraged cry of an acolyte of the new hierarchy, who asked how an unknown woman dare speak up against the BBC, the educators and false shepherds.

We too can take courage from her, and dedicate ourselves to fighting back on issues which will decide the nation's future far more than economics, however important it remains. And I welcome the opportunity to express my admiration for another brave woman with us tonight, Mrs. Jill Knight, who speaks up when others prefer discretion in public and speak their mind only in private.

What are we to do? Are we to place it all in the lap of the Government, the police, the courts? No, not all.

Gladstone, who entered politics as a field for moral endeavour, and never forgot the supremacy of the moral over the expedient, put the matter cogently: He argued that his colleagues were right in thinking that ‘there are great evils in the State of Society, but wrong in thinking them so superficial that they can be cured by legislation.’ How well he understood matters too serious to be left to government!

We must do more as Tories to make our voices heard and our influence felt, as a party, as people in public life, high or lowly, in religious life, on councils, voluntary bodies, educational institutions. The arguments are on our side and we have good friends among the teachers, the sociologists, the psychologists, if only we will call on them, give the lead for them to follow.

We must fight the battle of ideas in every school, university, publication, committee, tv studio even if we have to struggle for our toe-hold there; we have the truth, if we fail to make it shine clear, we shall be to blame no less than the exploiters, the casuists, the commercialisers.

There is much for government to do as well. But we shall need intellectual as well as moral courage to grapple with the dilemmas inherent in the remoralisation of public life.

I shall confine myself to one example here, because I have been talking longer than you may have bargained for already.

The balance of our population, our human stock is threatened. A recent article in *Poverty*, published by the Child Poverty Action Group, showed that a high and rising proportion of children are being born to mothers least fitted to bring children into the world and bring them up. They are born to mothers who were first pregnant in adolescence in social
classes 4 and 5. Many of these girls are unmarried, many are deserted or divorced or soon will be. Some are of low intelligence, most of low educational attainment. They are unlikely to be able to give children the stable emotional background, the consistent combination of love and firmness which are more important than riches. They are producing problem children, the future unmarried mothers, delinquents, denizens of our borstals, sub-normal educational establishments, prisons, hostels for drifters. Yet these mothers, the under-twenties in many cases, single parents, from classes 4 and 5, are now producing a third of all births. A high proportion of these births are a tragedy for the mother, the child and for us.

Yet what shall we do? If we do nothing, the nation moves towards degeneration, however much resources we pour into preventative work and the over-burdened educational system. It is all the more serious when we think of the loss of people with talent and initiative through emigration as our semi-socialism deprives them of adequate opportunities, rewards and satisfactions.

Yet proposals to extend birth-control facilities to these classes of people, particularly the young unmarried girls, the potential young unmarried mothers, evokes entirely understandable moral opposition. Is it not condoning immorality? I suppose it is. But which is the lesser evil, until we are able to remoralise whole groups and classes of people, undoing the harm done when already weak restraints on strong instincts are further weakened by permissiveness in television, in films, on bookstalls?

The worship of instinct, of spontaneity, the rejection of self-discipline, is not progress - it is degeneration.

It was Freud who argued that repression of instincts is the price we pay for civilisation. He considered the price well-paid. So can we, now. But we must see the dilemmas, we must argue it out among ourselves, to find a way through these moral dilemmas, while we fight for our ideals in wider fora through words and deeds. But you may ask what can fallible politicians in short-lived governments do in the face of all these tidal forces? Most of what needs to be done, I have stressed, is for individuals as themselves and as members of all manner of bodies. But some tasks are for government, and to these I will return on a future occasion.

This could be a watershed in our national existence. Are we to move towards moral decline reflected and intensified by economic decline, by the corrosive effects of inflation? Or can we remoralise our national life, of which the economy is an integral part? It is up to us, to people like you and me.