LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters submitted for publication can be sent to: The Editor, Methodist Recorder, 3-5 Lambeth Road, London SE1 7DD (email: editorial@methodistrecorder.co.uk). Please remember to include a postal address when emailing. The Editor reserves the right to edit letters.

Minimum pricing not the answer

From Tim Mickleburgh:
I’m not convinced about the arguments for introducing a minimum price for alcohol (Recorder, December 16). I mean, “Recorder Comment” talks of the problems caused by the night-time economy, but chair of the Alcohol Health Alliance Prof Sir Ian Gilmore says such pricing will “leave pub prices untouchable”.

As further claims that ordinary drinkers will not be penalised, I should inform readers that it isn’t only super-strength beers and ciders which would increase dramatically in price, but wines such as lambri and lambrusco that are enjoyed by those with modest incomes, as well as being weaker than other wines.

Meanwhile, the middle-class home drinkers, who have the money to be able to be drinking more than ever, won’t be affected as their tipple costs well above any proposed minimum price.

To me, the two main measures to deal with excess alcohol consumption ought to be limiting sales outlets to pubs/clubs and traditional off licences and moving away from the open all hours culture that Tony Blair encouraged.

– Tim Mickleburgh, 11 Boulevard Avenue, Grimsby.

It’s more than ‘British’ values

From Tim James:
We are really living in concerning times. We now read that Prime Minister Theresa May wants an oath of allegiance to “British” values in a bid to curb extremism and radicalisation. Both laudable and, post our failed backing of Saudi interests in Syria, more than important as young British citizens involved in the conflict return.

However, once we attach the word “British” to values we need to look at what these have meant over the years, like the suppression of Catholic minority rights in the North of Ireland, the subversion of justice at Hillsborough and the BBC’s Savile culture.

Britain remains a tolerant and plural society and long may it remain so – our foreign aid is a real credit, as is our financial aid to Syrian refugees in Lebanon, but we are not perfect. We in the UK live in one of the best democracies in the world and this must be enshrined, but often in the UK we need to be critical if we wish to be a British state. This is our strength.

Surely it is better to make the pledge to uphold justice as enshrined in the European Convention of Human Rights.

Also, Minister for Communities and Local Government Sajid Javid is a strange choice to enable this, as he has called for the ending of the recognition and identity of the oldest ethnic group in the UK, the European Council-recognised Cornish community. Javid’s speech on this may yet trigger legal action.

Also, of course, I consider myself Cornish and European and British is not a nationality I feel too comfortable with, especially post the Javid speech. I guess many Scots and Welsh may also feel similarly.

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