

letters

Let's stop promoting fear

Photograph: Jamie Simpson



and embrace diversity

Topic of the week: **the politics of inclusion**

I FEEL great sympathy for Paigham Mustafa as he has to live under fatwa and I sincerely hope that it's lifted in the near future (Scots Muslim writer sparks new Islam row despite living under fatwa, Culture, September 3).

There are historical parallels with Christianity and the Bible in that the teaching of Jesus is less about rules and dogma, the letter of the law as in the Judaic Old Testament, and solely to do with the spirit of the law, as in the New Testament. Its new commandment "to love one another" is conveniently forgotten under layers of differing interpretations between the divisive and damaging denominations a) because it is too simplistic and b) because of the patriarchal power base.

It has taken more than 2,000 years for the Christian Church to have its grip loosened on people's minds but evolutionary change, though painful for many, has been occurring, for which I am very grateful.

Islam might be going through the same revolutionary changes which would undoubtedly bring fear and thus a hardening of attitudes toward non-Muslims and other perceived threats. It's imperative that we show respect and consideration to peace-loving neighbours while any difficult transition takes place. As John Donne wrote: "No man is an island." We are one in all of our rich diversity.

*Janet Cunningham
Stirling*

I WAS pleased and encouraged to read Jonathan Southerington's letter highlighting the need for Scotland to award citizenship to all who reside here (Anti-immigration? Not in my name, Letters, September 3). We need migration if we are to grow as a country. Indeed, if we are to prosper, Scotland needs more migrants, not fewer. The UK Government is taking us down the wrong road, implementing an immigration policy which seems rooted in racism and prejudice. All our citizens should be free from fear and threat, and feel confident about building their future.

The White Paper on Scotland published in 2014 called for "an inclusive approach to citizenship and a humane approach to asylum seekers and refugees". I think we would all like to live in a grown-up country that incorporated those values in an immigration policy.

The recent Programme for Government in Scotland stresses commitment to a fairer, more inclusive nation. Having written to our elected representatives calling for a more flexible immigration system, I've been assured that: "Scottish ministers will push for an immigration system that meets Scotland's needs, recognises individual circumstances, and provides a welcoming environment for new Scots and their families."

I think the wording currently in use is a differentiated immigration system for Scotland. I urge readers to write to their MPs, MSPs and MEPs to lobby and indeed support them in bringing that about.

*Robert Brian MacLeod
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policy on Iran

trials before a hastily assembled "death commission" lasted two min

Last days of the

shortbread). When war with Germany started I was told they were now Empire biscuits. Soon therea