

Editorial

OUR appearance was certainly not ignored, nor are different opinions lacking on our merits and demerits, as the letter pages show.

We think readers will note technical improvement in this issue, which also gives a little more opportunity to get the "feel" of the magazine.

Despite the wishes of some and the fears of others, ALR lays no claim to be spokesman for all the Australian left. However, ALR does aim to serve the left as a whole, in the belief that a prime requirement for the achievement of socialism in this country is a consensus of views and action among these forces.

Important features are discernible today, stirring hopes that a new stage may be approaching in the development of the Australian socialist movement.

The perennial conflict between left and right is finding new expressions and calling for contemporary solutions, the trade unions face new situations and the Labor Party struggles towards self-understanding. The Labor Party left, probably stronger now than ever before, is searching for a coherent social theory. The right, always hostile to theory, is launching a new campaign to force Labor to take over conservative policies, attacking every socialist concept in that Party's domestic and foreign policy. This will bring questions of socialist theory into still sharper focus.

And what other socialist theory really is offering except marxism?

By no means all, but certainly the majority of Australian marxists are to be found in the Communist Party, so the extensive preparations already

begun by that Party for its 21st Congress in June next year are significant for the whole left.

This Congress is orientated towards demonstrating the present day relevance of marxism to Australian conditions on vital questions of ideology, strategy, policy and organisation in the fight for socialism.

A magazine can best assist by developing the understanding and active participation of its circle of readers, clarifying what the issues are, promoting the exchange of ideas and seeking to interest new people in socialist thought.

These complex objectives are not to be achieved by any one type of article on any set range of subjects, and inevitably what suits one may not appeal to another. The best balance of such conflicting demands must be discovered in experience, and editorial policy has a lot to learn in this respect.

ALR has what we think is a unique position among serious political journals in Australia — the bulk of its initial circulation of over 3,000 is among industrial workers and other trade unionists, sections without which the achievement of socialism will remain a dream.

We are naturally proud of this distinction and aim to develop it further, while striving to expand and improve in other directions also.

Besides new ideas and new contributors, additional publications may prove to be necessary to meet particular requirements in different fields. But the first step is the one before us — to make a success of Australian Left Review.

We appeal to our readers for assistance.