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I take issue with your misuse of a quote from my critical letter published in your June issue.

Inside the back page of the October issue you use the concluding line "a load of hot cocky shit", attributed to me as an "ex-reader", and presented as an extreme negative estimate of the value of ALR in contrast to a positive quote by Janet Powell, advertising your laudable effort elsewhere in the issue to survey and evaluate detailed opinions of readers.

Firstly, as you see, I'm not an "ex-reader" - I merely said I would not renew my sub.

Secondly, your quote permits the assumption that I condemned ALR as a whole in terms that only a vociferous rightwinger may use, presenting an absolutely one-sided estimation. In fact, my letter was a condemnation of what I saw as trendy, academic, nonsensical rubbish that swamped the few serious articles and debates of issues facing the Left. It was this side of ALR that provoked my condemnation.

In justice, I concede that since penning my letter ALR has improved substantially, exhibiting a quality more desirable in an ALR.

I make no claim that my criticism sparked this desirable change, but take the opportunity of hoping that more pruning of the apolitical padding will strengthen ALR's appeal and purpose as a serious Left magazine.

Vic Bird,
Forster, NSW.

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