takeover when in a majority as in Nigeria and Lebanon, among others. The Soviet Union, too, is experiencing this uncontrolled increase of population in the Muslim area.

Fundamentalists, because of their fanaticism, view other people’s tolerance as weakness, a trait to be despised. Already we have witnessed how strongly intimidated people feel. The Salman Rushdie affair exposed this intimidation across the world. Even the Left under the guise of religious tolerance seems to fall over backwards in what appears to be a ‘let’s not offend them’ attitude by going to the trouble of trying to analyse events to explain the upsurge of fundamentalism while ignoring the extremely threatening side of fundamentalism, be it Christianity, Judaism or Islam.

For how long will we delude ourselves by choosing to ignore what is happening world wide while continuing to appease the monster?

Fay Nishri, Port Macquarie, NSW.

Cocky S***

On the expiry of my ALR sub I will not be renewing. In my opinion, over the past year only occasional issues or articles rendered worthwhile while reading. There have been all too few articles contributing to debate of the vital problems of our times - these are buried in a hodge-podge of fancy verbiage that does violence to the English language and the already tortured brains of serious political thinkers. How the editors of a journal claiming to come from the ideology of the Left can waste space with unutterable rubbish is beyond my understanding. These high-falutin columns can only be described in the colourful language my brother uses to describe them - to wit: “a load of hot cocky shit”.

Vic Bird, Forster, NSW.

Clerical Error

April’s “Loose Cannon” (ALR 116) included a sustained attack on the “incompetent and conservative” leadership of the Federated Clerks Union. Your columnist rightly took issue with material published in the FCU national journal, The Clerk.

Unfortunately, “Loose Cannon” failed to point out that several branches of the FCU, representing a majority of FCU members, have progressive leaderships which do not support the Maynes national FCU leadership. These branches have been locked in a bitter battle with the Maynes group for control of the FCU nationally for almost a decade. Subject to possible amalgamations, this battle will culminate in August 1991 in the first ever direct membership elections of national FCU officials. The FCU is not a “lousy union” with “incompetent and conservative officials” in Victoria, Queensland and South Australia (other FCU branches can speak for themselves). I would suggest that your columnist does a bit more research before commenting on trade union affairs in future.

Lindsay Tanner, State secretary, FCU, Victorian branch.

Back up

Nearly every time my ALR arrives there is something in it that gets my back up. In February it was the cover and article “Death of Communism”. If I wanted to read what Murdoch’s hacks think about what is happening in the world I’d buy The Australian, not subscribe to ALR. And Brian Aaron’s article didn’t properly debate the issue raised by McGuinness.

In the March issue Carlotta McIntosh refers to Ho Chi Minh City as Saigon and calls the NLF ‘Vietcong’, a term which was used by the US invaders as a derogatory term. I don’t know how old or where she was during the ‘sixties, but surely the editorial collective should have picked that one up, especially after she did the same in a previous article. And this in the year that we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Vietnam Moratorium. I’m sure I’m not the only reader who found this offensive and upsetting in a journal that calls itself a LEFT review.

While I’m at it, here are a couple of other things I think ALR could do without. Like that silly article about Dian and Fergie, “Letter from Ephesus” (the significance of that title eludes me), Dr Hartman and the last page “Consuming Passions”. We can read about food and wine ad nauseam in the daily press and umpteen magazines. Can many of your readers afford the stuff anyway? I certainly can’t! It makes me wonder if ALR shouldn’t change its name to Middle Australia Review.

Ruth Berman, Middle Park, Vic.