

Sydney Mayers

VIEWS THE NEWS

An Australian farmer named Lindsay Schmidt was recently granted an income tax deduction for the upkeep of his trained chimpanzee, after demonstrating that the talented simian actually drives a tractor and performs other helpful chores. Who says you can't monkey around with taxes?

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C. Northcote Parkinson, the sardonic British writer, who is famous for his "economic laws" (that expenditures rise to meet income, and that work expands to fill the time available), has formulated a new one: that all nationalized industries tend to go bankrupt. Parkinson's pronouncements are wonderfully witty, but as Molly used to say to Fibber, "It ain't funny, McGee!"

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Britain's Conservative party has apparently regained much of the strength it lost to the Laborites at the time of the cabinet scandal, and if the present trend continues, probably will win the next general election. The change in prospect is attributed to a substantial rise in prosperity since Sir Alec Douglas-Home took over as Prime Minister — indicating anew that a full dinner-pail outweighs an outraged conscience.

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An official decree recently issued in Moscow requires that hereafter the Russian word for "Communist" shall be spelled with only one "M," the purpose being to eliminate unnecessary letters and thereby conserve paper. Perhaps the money saved will be used to build more walls to restrain happy Soviet citizens from escaping to the

decadent (if somehow more appealing) western world.

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Premier Nguyen Khanh of South Vietnam has proclaimed a comprehensive political and economic reform program, the Vietnamese text of which covers fifteen pages, and has declared that the general and specific details of this voluminous "plan of action" are to be put into effect within one year. Anybody want to bet?

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The United Nations is sending a "peace-keeping force" to serve Cyprus, but has been stymied in its efforts because its member states show little urge to contribute the estimated \$6,000,000 cost involved. Even in international politics, economics cannot be ignored.

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To look askance at any tax reduction may seem cynical and rather un-Georgist (if not un-American), but we cannot help contemplating where the cash proceeds of the eleven billion dollar income tax cut will ultimately go. Particularly, we wonder how much will be appropriated as rent, and how much will sink in a sea of inflation.

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Though we do not suggest that either the kidnapping of Frank Sinatra, Jr. or the ensuing conviction of its perpetrators is a subject for mirth, we must permit ourself a modest smile concerning one aspect of these events. Even while young Frank was being held captive, it seems, there was much discussion as to whether the \$240,000 ransom his father paid for his release was a tax deductible expense.