

## The simple answer to economic woes

# 06

**with NORMAN ABJORENSEN**

**D**AWKINS and Reith and all the others have got it wrong. It seems that they're on the wrong track altogether about how to get the economy back into shape. The answer that has eluded them is international chain letters.

According to one now doing the rounds in Canberra, it does not even call itself a chain letter. No, it is a "mutual financial assistance program," a scheme to make \$500,000 "legally". It urges the recipient to pay money into the bank account of people named in the letter with the promise of receiving great riches in return.

It was passed to *The Canberra Times* by a reader in Chisholm who had received it in a hand-addressed envelope from Bega. The recipient does not know how she got on the list nor does she know any of the people named. Further, she knows no-one in Bega.

Under the alluring heading

Under the alluring heading "Would an Extra \$500,000 Come in Handy?" the blurb goes on to describe the "program" as "a unique self-help program which was developed to give people in financially difficult circumstances the opportunity to assist one another for their mutual benefit". All you do is pay \$50 into the named bank account of the next person on the list and spend a further \$100 photocopying the



"program" plus a new name and address list with your own name on it. And presto! — within "four to eight weeks" you will receive financial assistance of "\$500,000 or more" without any risk.

Now, if this were applied internationally, Australia wouldn't have to worry about such messy things as tariffs, enterprise bargaining and so on. All we would need is Australia Post, a good photocopier and an army of mailpeople to bring in the lucre. So simple!

## Alien abduction

*A typical example of an apparent abduction would be where an individual wakes during the night paralysed and feeling a sense of "presence" in the bedroom. An unusual being may be seen. The next conscious recollection of the individual is of being elsewhere, in a space or room where interaction between him/her and the being occurs. He/she is then returned home?*

Does any of that sound familiar? If it does you have most likely been abducted by aliens, but are too embarrassed to tell anyone about it. Fear not, for help is at hand. The above account is taken from a pamphlet issued by UFO Research Australia which is conducting a national phone-in service to assist Australians who believe they may have been abducted by aliens. The hotline number is (08) 251 2773 between 6 and 11 pm, and all calls will be in strict confidence.

■ WE'VE TRIED to nail down this following story, but there's a bit of a smokescreen around it. But we'll do our best to relate what we know, with a lurking suspicion that it might have grown a bit in the telling.

The smoke-free ANU had a few puffers in the Law Faculty who were not entirely happy about missing their nicotine fix, but under a bit of pressure one agreed to undertake counselling and try to kick the habit, the second agreed to assist with the

**COUNSELLING AND TRY TO KICK THE HABIT,** the second agreed to succumb only in the privacy of his room and then with his head out the window, but the third stood defiantly by his butt. It was, according to a reliable source, this very butt that was to cause problems because when flicked from a window it landed on a person closely associated with university occupational health and safety. No names, no pack drill — but the case has not yet been adjourned.

■ **A JOKER in Red Hill has a sick**

**sense of humour. The 40km/h school zone sign in Mugga Way has been overlaid with one reading 100km/h. But the person reporting it to 06 saw a possible upside to it in that only out-of-towners were likely to get caught — and one might be Richard Carleton.**

## **Course really clicks**

Have you ever wanted to grasp the shears in your thin, bony hands? Fix your gaze . . . , etc?

Well, a few years ago, when wool prices were high, and Alan Bond was still a hero, a lot of people did.

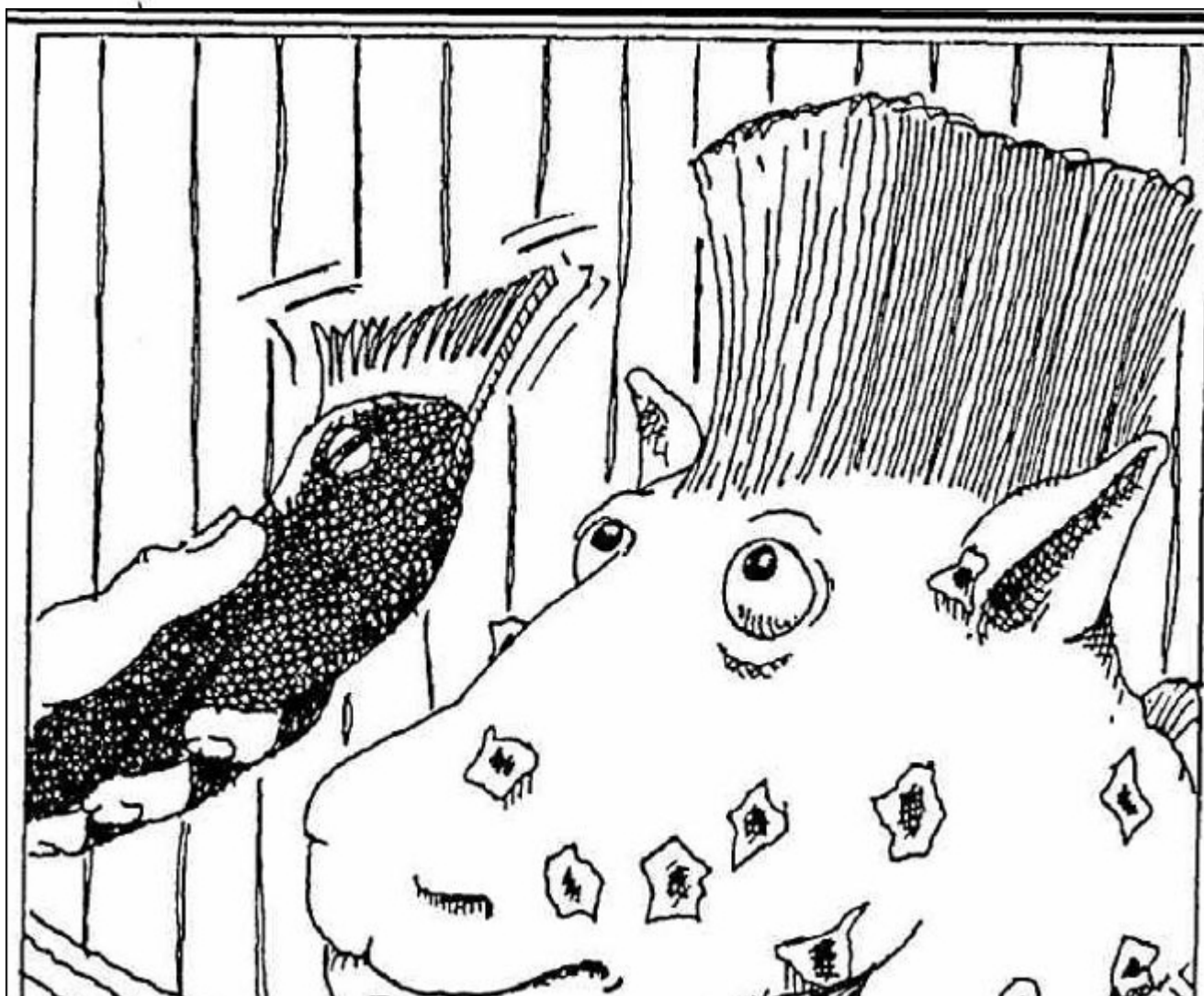
In fact, Southern Adult Education Centres had so many people wanting to learn to shear a jumbuck that they had to put some on a waiting list.

Now, with wool no longer commanding such prices, interest has waned — but you can still learn how

waned — but you can still learn how to do it, even if it is only to understand what those strange words in *Click Go the Shears* really mean.

A new class begins on Thursday, and, while organiser Elizabeth Waddell says it won't turn you into a gun shearer overnight, you will at least learn the basics such as where to place your feet, how to hold the sheep and how to adjust the handpiece.

Most of the people enrolling are fathers and sons and hobby farmers — but a number of women have also wanted to give it a go.





"It's always very enjoyable, and very hands-on," Elizabeth says.

The owner of the property, Mountain View, on the Barton Highway, where the classes are held is Bob Wilson, who has wielded the shears for 35 years, and has some very experienced old sheep which are willing to entrust their fleece and limbs to novices.

Elizabeth says you can learn enough to shear two to three sheep an evening, and some former students

have gone on to become full-time shearers.

The course takes seven weeks, and classes are one night a week for three hours.

The cost is \$150 and more details can be provided by Elizabeth Waddell on 226 2223.

■ **Good morning to Ansett Australia's sales and marketing manager, Jeff Eager — and to Ansett Express's publicity and promotions manager, Andrew Wise.**