

# CORRESPONDENCE

Professors M. K. and R. L. Thornton write:

Any scholar who tries to develop macroeconomic insights will encounter difficulties in reaching micro-oriented people who are unwilling to widen their horizons. Professor T. P. Wiseman (*CR* 41 [1991], 255–6) provides an example of what a scholar of macroeconomics might face. In his review of our effort to develop a macroeconomically oriented understanding of the management of the Roman economy during the early Empire, he fails to see the purpose of the book because of his careful observations of details.

In our book *Julio-Claudian Building Programs: A Quantitative Study in Political Management* (Wauconda, IL, 1989) we create a sharply delineated pattern of public building which isolates the managerial objectives of the individual rulers. The pattern we develop in the book is resistant to changes in the original assumptions about secondary individual projects; a doubling or halving of any secondary project would have little impact on the contours of the pattern.

For example, had W. read further in the book, he would have recognized that Tiberius from a managerial point of view was a disaster and that his successor had learned not to follow his lead. Indeed there has already been a re-evaluation of the financial crisis during Tiberius' reign ('The Financial Crisis of A.D. 33: A Keynesian Depression?', *Journal of Economic History* Sept., 1990) made possible by our isolation of Tiberius' penurious spending habits in Rome.

Ever since Lord Keynes created the science of macroeconomics, scholars, wishing to use Keynesian approaches, have lamented the non-existence of quantitative data to re-evaluate historical periods. They lack usable data on public building for key periods of change. However tentative and subject to criticism newly created data are, they offer opportunities for re-evaluation of history. To ignore an opportunity would be a mistake: to this end criticism should be positively directed into enhancement of the results or into offering substitute approaches.

We appreciate the deeply relevant criticism of our ending and of our beginning sentences.

*Miami University*

Professor T. P. Wiseman writes:

I'm afraid the Professors Thornton and I must agree to differ. But I do assure them that I read their book from cover to cover.

*University of Exeter*