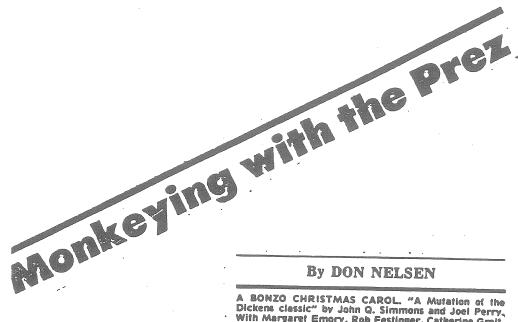
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NEW YORK, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1982

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Dickens classic" by John Q. Simmons and Joel Perry, With Margaret Emory, Rob Festinger, Catherine Greitzer, Caiflin Hicks, Elizabeth Keyishlan, Michael Mitchell, Stuart Rider, Timothy Wasner, Dennis Wit. Lighting and set design by John Conway. Directed by Simmons at the Raft Theater, 432 W. 42d St.



Is Ronald Reagan really the miserly dimwit portrayed in "A Bonzo Christmas Carol?" A man who can't remember the name of any Founding Father and who gets his history of China from

a pop-up cartoon book? If he is, we needn't worry about the economy: it and we will not be here for very long.

"Bonzo" is the "biography" of Ronald Reagan grafted onto "A Christmas Carol." While much of it is downright silly, playwrights John Q. Simmons and Joel Perry have woven the tales together cleverly. To many, of course, there are parallels, and the appearance of Richard Nixon as the Marley-like warning spirit, weighed down with tapes instead of cashboxes,

is a particularly humorous irony.

The characters—a Tiny Tim wit radiation sickness, Ron Jr., Nanc: Jane Wyman—are necessarily burle. ques and meant to be. Until just befor the redemptive finish, Stuart Ride portrays Reagan as a numbskull moving innocently throug national and international affair puppeting inane simplicities. He cap tures Reagan's voice pretty well, too.

Most of the other actors play mult ple roles, but Timothy Wagner as press secretary, photographer, GOI functionary and especially Nixon is a

authoritative player. who stretches the cartoon too far. If yo don't like Nancy Reagan, you will gloa over Caitlin Hicks' portrait. Catherin Greitzer offers a skillful contrast a Betty Scratchit and a smug environ mental chief named Anne Gorsuckkk

In the end, Reagan orders a 50% cu in defense spending, fires Interior Sec retary James Watt and broadcasts promise of jobs and housing to the American people. That this "Bonzo" is a fantasy of the most hallucinator kind should be quite apparent by now