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CLINTON'S NATIONAL SERVITUDE BILL

President Clinton's national "servitude" bill is a misguided effort which promises to make it easier for young people to afford college. Mounting evidence suggests that we are sending too many of them to college already.

At least 35 percent of recent college graduates now have to take jobs that don't require college degrees, up from 15 percent five years ago. The dismal job market has prompted many graduates to take factory or other blue-collar jobs. They would have been ahead financially if they had started to work right out of high school.

Career prospects for the college class of 1993 are the worst in decades. Successful job searches now take nine months to a year. Colleges had an average of only 23 corporate recruiters visit their campuses this year, compared to 42 in 1986.

From 1988 to 1992, the number of graduating college seniors grew 11 times faster than the number of full-time, non-farm jobs, according to the National Center for Employment Statistics and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Bureau warns that there will be 200,000 *fewer* jobs than graduates every year for at least the next decade.

If Clinton's generosity with our tax dollars sends more young people to college, he will only increase the number of dissatisfied twentysomethings. The *Wall Street Journal* recently profiled one such couple as they sat naked in a Portland, Oregon coed hot tub house, commiserating with each other about the menial jobs they have to take to earn a combined $20,000 a year.

It's not just hot bubbling water they are soaking in; they are wallowing in self-pity. Boo, hoo.

Just a few years ago, according to the *Journal,* they were hanging out in college pubs, living the easy life of a college student, confidently expecting their diplomas to be a ticket to the fast track.

The "Generation X," according to the *Journal,* now believes "there is little hope of matching their parents' standard of living." Translated, this means that these young people had foolish expectations of starting out in their twenties at the standard of living their parents achieved only after a lifetime of hard work.

Their parents didn't start out at the median wage, with a house, new car, household appliances, and other conveniences that today's young people seem to regard as necessities. Their parents had the quaint, old-fashioned notion that you start out with any job you can get and work your way up to the good things in life.

One of these hot-tub crybabies whined, "Sometimes I wonder why we haven't all committed mass suicide, because we don't have a hell of a lot to look forward to." If you were an employer, would you hire a young woman with that kind of attitude toward life?

While still in college, she acquired two credit cards on which she ran up charges of $5,000 for nice clothes, trips to Mexico, and gifts for friends. If you were an employer, would you hire someone who ran up such debts when she didn't even have a job?

This college graduate also complains about the indignity of not being rewarded for her 3.8 grade point average. But why should she be? Everybody gets good grades now.

Success and achievement, and sometimes even survival, are built on years of long hours of hard work. College life today does not prepare young people for the real world.

For most students, college means spending four years living on

somebody else's money (either their parents' or the taxpayers'), in beautiful surroundings on a well-manicured campus, enjoying a casual schedule that allows plenty of leisure time for "fun" and non productive activities, where their self-esteem is enhanced out of all proportion to their work and ability by the deception called "grade inflation," and where they develop the unrealistic expectation that they are entitled upon graduation to a well-paying job.

Of course, many students apply themselves diligently, make wise choices about courses, and get a first rate education. But thousands of others, who received the same diploma, were admitted to college when they weren't prepared even to take freshman English, then received college credit for courses that have no college-level academic content or career value, and were given high grades that they did not earn (because it has become Politically Incorrect to fail anyone).

Even at Harvard, the average grade exceeds B+ and, according to a recent issue of *Harvard Magazine,* "in some departments A stands for Average."

It's time for students, parents and taxpayers to wake up and realize how they've been ripped off by pricey colleges and universities that get half their money from hardworking taxpayers, most of whom themselves didn't go to college. Thousands of young people would be better off to get a job and continue their education on the side, by night classes, correspondence or video classes.