College Not Necessary for Many New Careers

by Phyllis Schlafly January 2, 2008

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U.S. News & World Report, which has made a name for itself by ranking and announcing the Best Colleges every year, is now ranking and listing the Best Careers for young people. A comparison of the latest lists shows a shocking disconnect and makes for dispiriting holiday reading.

While the price of a college education has skyrocketed far faster than inflation, many careers for which colleges prepare their graduates are disappearing. U.S. News' Best Careers guide concludes that "college grads might want to consider blue-collar careers" because B.A. diploma holders "are having trouble finding jobs that require college-graduate skills."

Incredibly, U.S. News is telling college graduates to look for jobs that do not require a college diploma. Among the 31 best opportunities for 2008 are the careers of firefighter, hairstylist, cosmetologist, locksmith, and security system technician.

Where did the higher-skill jobs go? Both large and small companies are "quietly increasing offshoring efforts."

Ten years ago we were told we really didn't need manufacturing because it can be done more cheaply elsewhere, that auto workers and others should move to

Information Age jobs. But now the information jobs are moving offshore, too, as well as marketing research and even many varieties of innovation.

The flight overseas includes professional as well as low-wage jobs, with engineering jobs offshored to India and China. Thousands of bright Asian engineers are willing to work for a fraction of American wages, which is why Boeing just signed a 10-year, $1-billion-a-year deal with an Indian government-run company.

Society has been telling high school students that college is the ticket to get a life, and politicians are pandering to parents' desire for their children to be better educated and so have a higher standard of living. John Edwards wants the taxpayers to guarantee every kid a college education, and Mitt Romney says more education is the means for Americans to compete in a global economy.

But it doesn't make sense for parents to mortgage their homes, or for students to saddle themselves with long-term debt, in order to pay overpriced college tuition to prepare for jobs that no longer exist. Tuition at public universities has risen an unprecedented 51 percent over the past five years.

President Bush calls the loss of U.S. jobs "the pinch some of you folks are feeling." I guess his words are designed to show his "compassionate conservatism," but the reality is far more than a pinch.

U.S. News offers this advice for the nerds who still spend five to six years earning an engineering degree despite increasingly grim prospects of a well-paid engineering career: "Look for government work." Or maybe you can be an "Offshoring Manager" and be part of the process of shipping your fellow graduates' jobs overseas.

A Duke University spokesman said that 40 percent of Duke's engineering graduates cannot get engineering jobs. A Duke University publication suggests that the best prospect for good engineering jobs is for the U.S. government to start another major project like going to the moon.

U.S. News warns us that "government is becoming an employer of choice." Corporations are getting leaner, but government can continue to pay good salaries, with lots of vacation days, sick leave, health insurance and retirement benefits, because government rakes in more tax revenue in good times and can raise taxes in bad times; and if the Democrats win in 2008, we can expect government to expand even more.

Presidential candidates have gotten the message from grassroots Americans that we want our borders closed to illegal aliens. Headlines now proclaim "Immigration Moves to Front and Center of G.O.P. Race" and "G.O.P. Candidates Hold Fast on Immigration at Debate."

But G.O.P. candidates haven't yet gotten the message that jobs are just as big a gut issue as immigration. The Wall Street Journal/NBC News survey conducted December 14-17 reports that, by 58 to 28 percent, Americans believe globalization is bad because it subjects U.S. companies and employees to unfair competition and cheap labor.

Where are the limited-government fiscal-conservatives when we need them to refute the notion that the best an engineering graduate can hope for is a job with the government? Are the fiscal-conservatives too busy chanting the failed mantra of "free trade" even though it has resulted in millions of good American jobs being shipped overseas?

When are we going to call a halt to the way globalism is destroying U.S. jobs by foreign currency manipulation, theft of our intellectual property, shipping us poisonous seafood and toys, and unfair trade agreements that allow foreign

subsidies (through the so-called Value Added Tax) to massively discriminate against U.S. producers and workers?