

Welcome to the 21st Century, Mr. Bush!

A Satire of Sorts by James Boyne

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If you are out of work here is all you need to do to find another good job---get in your car; drive over to your local community college (if you have one); walk into the admissions office; and tell them President Bush sent you and you are here to take Math and Science. Tell them you are here to prepare for the 21st century. This is George Bush's strategic plan to help the 9 million people that are counted as currently unemployed and the additional 11 million, uncounted, long term unemployed.

For now, forget the job-hunting process. Forget your resume. Forget preparing for interviews. Forget the employment classifieds. Forget about actually landing a job. If you lost your job you are obviously not prepared for the 21st century. The President said so.

You need to go back to Community College and take Math and Science. This is the 21st Century.

What? You are a Programmer. You are an Information Technology Specialist. You are a Computer Trainer. You're an Engineer, an Architectural Design Specialist, a Scientific Research Expert. You are a textile worker, a warehouse distributor, a machinist, an airline worker, a pilot, a telemarketer, an insurance company administrator, a Wall Street financial advisor, and executive assistant, a teacher. Fear not. Your local Community College is here to help.

What? You already have a college degree. You just graduated. Well, it must not be a 21st century degree.

What? You aren't good at Math or Science. You like to work with people. Too bad! President Bush says Math and Science are the key.

What? You are 50 years old; have a family and a mortgage and kids you were planning to send to college. You had a good job for the last 15 years before it was shipped overseas to India and you don't have time to go back to Community College and take Algebra and Earth Science. You just want a new job. Wake up! President Bush says you need to enter the 21st Century---at your local Community College.

Just think---at 30, or 40, or 50 years old---you can be counted as one of the "No Child Left Behind" children. It's never to late, and you are never too old to find out that you weren't left behind. Thank You Mr. President!

Here's the good news. President Bush has proposed spending \$250 million for Community Colleges. That sounds like a lot of money doesn't it? It's not quite clear what the \$250 million will be spent on---whether it is for paving the parking lots of the community colleges; buying new desks and blackboards; or paying for some nice new Math and Science books. Who knows. ***Let's just throw 'em some money---some bones to chew on. Let's smoke out the jobless and the unemployed. Let's go get 'em. They can run, but they can't hide. It's the right war at the right time---the war on the terror of being unemployed. It's Code Orange for the jobless.***

\$250 million for Community Colleges is not quite as much as the \$200 BILLION that President Bush has spent for Iraq . It's not quite as much as the \$350 BILLION in taxes that the President just gave back to Americans in a desperate attempt to garner votes. Its not quite as much as the \$130 BILLION allocated as windfall profits for the pharmaceutical industry under the \$550 BILLION sham called "Medicare Prescription Coverage". \$250 million is 1/4 of a BILLION.

He spent 800 times more than that killing people in Iraq which is stuck in the 7th century. And the President only wants to spend 1/4 of a BILLION to have 9 million American workers enter the 21st century. Could he spare it?

Here is the real impact of \$250 million on Community Colleges and the millions of people that are unemployed. Two well established figures are that there are approximately 9 million people currently counted as unemployed (that's the 5.4% figure that is talked about). Additionally, once 26 weeks of unemployment benefits expires for each individual they are no longer counted. This figure of the previously counted but currently uncounted is estimated to be 11 million (these are the long term unemployed, many of which also have no health insurance). That leaves a total of 20 million unemployed. In many inner city neighborhoods the chronic unemployment rate for African American males is as high as 50% and these are never figured into the count so the actual count of the unemployed in all likelihood is well over 20 million. And naturally the 3 million illegal immigrants crossing over our Southern borders into Texas , California , New Mexico , and Arizona , and seeking work are never counted. Yes, Mr. Bush, as you can see Math is important.

Here's the clincher. Here's the math. If only 1/3 of the 20 million unemployed realized they were not trained for the 21st century and took President Bush up on his program to retrain themselves in Math and Science for the 21st century, and they all went back to Community College here is what the \$250 million would do for them. Assuming the \$250 million was actually funded and then disbursed the \$250 million would be divided (in one way or another) among 7.3 million new job-seeking students that would amount to \$34.24 per student. This does not even take into account the impact of those already enrolled in Community Colleges so the actual amount per

student would be even less than \$34.24. Does President Bush know how to use a simple calculator?

Suffice to say, President Bush's proposal is bizarre. It is a sham and a hoax---just as the "Medicare Prescription for Seniors" is a hoax in that it is a \$130 billion windfall for the drug companies; and just has the "No Child Left Behind" program is a hoax in that it is substantially under funded---and just as the War in Iraq is a hoax in that it was launched and continues to be waged under false pretenses.

Our national unemployment goal should be to strive for an unemployment rate of between 0% and 1%. Full employment should be the ultimate goal. The minimum wage should be raised from \$5.15 to \$7.50 immediately, for everyone, including waiters and waitresses. We should have tens of thousands of National Guard and Reserves cutting off ALL illegal immigration into this country (especially in the wake of 9/11); and corporations that send significant numbers of jobs overseas in mass outsourcing of American jobs should be penalized with additional corporate taxes. And of course, as long as health care insurance continues to skyrocket, along with Workers Comp insurance, companies will continue to cut back, cut corners, and cut their payroll by hiring fewer workers and laying off the workers they have. Isn't there anyone, anywhere in the Bush administration who understands all this?

The solution to the health care crisis is simple---universal, low cost, single payer, health care for every American citizen. We don't have to worry about Socialized Medicine---we already have it. It is run by the giant, trillion dollar partnership of the drug companies and the health care insurance industry. It might as well be run by the Mafia and the Cosa Nostra. A perfect example of the incredible, insatiable appetite for money that exists is the current flu vaccine shortage whereupon some health care service distributors have jacked up the price tenfold from \$80 to \$800 in order to properly prey upon the sick, the ill, the suffering, and the dying. Perhaps if we had universal Medicare for all, the Federal Government could actually inject some honesty and integrity into the system. What the hell is our Federal Government for? Where the hell is it? In Iraq, no doubt, fine tuning our \$500 billion a year killing machine called our Department of Defense, which seems unable to defend us.

Community Colleges are great. They are truly a benefit to any community. They provide a great means to advance oneself and to get a cost effective education. However, it is absurd for the President to have as the cornerstone of his jobs creation strategy the idea that Community Colleges are going to be the main thrust in helping 9 million currently unemployed and 11 million long term unemployed Americans get decent jobs. Whoever thought up this grand strategy should have their head examined. How unfair to lay this burden at the doorstep of Community Colleges. What a copout by the President.

The President sees no problem with waving good-bye to hundreds of thousands and even millions of jobs to the practice of outsourcing American jobs to India , China , East Asia, and Latin America . He claims is good for America . How bizarre.

Come November 2nd, Election Day, President Bush will in all likelihood find himself getting a “pink slip” by fed up American voters. My suggestion to him is to seek out his local Community College in Crawford , Texas and sign up for some Math and Science courses. Possibly he can learn a little about balancing a budget in a good Math class and a good Science class may teach him about the benefits of a clean environmental policy and some basic understanding about the benefits of stem cell research.

I am sure that the tens of thousands of Republican political appointees that will find themselves out of work after Election Day will find solace in the very jobs creation program---the Math and Science Community College Initiative--- that their illustrious leader has so ingeniously devised and generously funded with \$ 1/4 Billion in small change.

I can't wait to see President Bush, Dick Cheney, Rumsfeld, Rice, Ashcroft, Carl Rove, Wolfowitz, Karen Hughes, and the entire current gang of misfits sitting in a classroom struggling with Algebra 101 and Earth Science 102 so they can prepare themselves for their next job in the new century.

Yes, Mr. President, welcome to the 21st Century.

James Boyne
98 Boulder Ridge
Canton , CT 06019
860-922-4436

dboyne@aol.com

James Boyne is a financial advisor, computer trainer, sales executive and freelance writer. He has been a Republican up until this year having voted for all Republicans since Barry Goldwater (remember AuH₂O) ran for President. He now sees Senator Kerry as the only hope of stopping the fiscal insanity being practice by the Bush administration; bringing an honorable end to the Iraqi quagmire that is sucking hundreds of billions of dollars out of our economy; controlling the spiraling, out-of-control, health care system; and Bush's wanton destruction of the central core of America's job base---both our manufacturing and service industries. What else will be left? If you are a Republican and are planning to vote for Senator Kerry, Mr. Boyne would like to hear your brief comments at the above email address about why you are ready to switch for 2004.