

Restrictions on aid are absurd solution

Earlier this year, Congress approved changes in higher education funding, increasing restrictions on Pell Grants and guaranteed student loans. The new restrictions are bad.

Many students who applied for federal pell grants this term found they were no longer considered "independent" unless they were 24 years old or earned more than \$4,000 a year.

This will limit severely many students' ability to attend the University, because their eligibility for financial aid will have changed, regardless of whether their parents included them as dependents in their tax returns, or whether their parents have contributed anything to their college expenses.

Students will also find that in order to receive guaranteed student loans, they must prove financial need, a strategy Congress adopted from White House proposals.

This change in the guaranteed student loan program, with others passed by Congress in September and approved by Reagan, reduces projected outlays by \$445 million over three years.

This amount is more than the \$395 million cut mandated by the fiscal 1987 budget resolution. The obvious question is, of course, why is spending on education being cut at all.

Higher education affects everything from the balance of trade with other nations who have made a greater commitment to education to the basic standard of living of American society.

The growing awareness in the country is of the need for access to higher education, rather than the opposite. Only in the White House and on Capitol Hill is reducing support for higher education a good idea.

The Reagan administration's assertion that the students themselves are the principal beneficiaries of financial aid ignores that one of the basic strengths of American society — social mobility — is based on education.

The new restrictions are another blow, in particular, to middle class students' ability to afford a college education. The Reagan administration intends to go to work on more students next year by wiping out the \$882 million vocational-education program, and making loans even more inaccessible and expensive.

Allan Ostar, president of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities was right on mark when he commented that the administration was trying to "shift responsibility to college students for bringing down the federal deficit."

Our representatives in Congress must be made aware of the high price they are paying to make a small dent in the deficit. As a long-range solution to the deficit, cutting higher education funds is absurd.



Letters

Scrutiny

Invariably, the serious intellectual scrutiny of traditional religious beliefs tends to generate a "fork in the road" choice-point. When that awareness juncture is reached, one has the option of remaining loyal to irrational faith assertions or changing one's perspective in the direction of carefully reasoned inferences.

For example, some of us who were born into Christian families have since become "post-Christian agnostics." As we learned to think critically for ourselves, the irresolvable conflict between religious faith and secular reason gradually fostered our turning away from the implausible doctrines of Christianity.

The modes of inquiry we've come to rely on in our efforts to better understand the human condition involve the scientific study of the natural world and critical historical analysis.

I found myself thinking about all of this upon reading the featured Christmas-time article on the modern study of Jesus in the December 1986 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*.

Among the questions posed in that rather comprehensive overview is: Was Jesus "simply another of those charismatics who appear from time to time, destroy some complacency, do

some good and bequeath to the human race the symbol of an exemplary life?"

Dispassionate intellectual analysis suggests an affirmative reply to that query, since there are no substantiated grounds for holding that Jesus was other than human.

The point of this brief discussion is that liberal higher education should encourage consistent critical analysis. If the realm of religious belief represents an exception, then surely "psychological compartmentalization" will be the undesirable consequence.

Ron Rousseve
Counseling psychology professor

Proud

I am proud to live in America; however, I see a trend happening we must all be aware of.

The Bagwhan Shree Rajneesh gave us a good example on a local (statewide) level: Move into an area, with much needed money as bait and a very well-organized master plan and tell the people what they want to hear. Once they are in they can and will change the rules.

We do have problems: the huge national debt, the huge personal debts we each have and the trade deficits for our country. To buy a product (with perhaps less shiny paint, and a higher price maybe), I believe is cheaper in the long run. We need our people working.

We are having prime land bought up at an alarming rate, to be put to use, and of course providing some much needed jobs. Sounds great! Already the rules are changing, we are losing more, including our dignity.

We must do these same things — within our great country — somehow. No one is going to look after us, we have heard the same promises over and over, we must each look out for ourselves and work together.

I love the rising sun, however, I would not want to see it set our flag.

George G. Merrick
Bend

Traffic

One year ago I asked President Olum to consider placing benches along 13th Avenue so students could sit instead of relaxing at the edge of the gutter.

I think the problem and the solutions are obvious.

Secondly, I think that a study could be done to close the area of 13th to automobiles. There are just too many people in the streets here.

Last but not least, the University could build a ramp north of the Department of Motor Vehicles on Franklin Avenue or over it. It's just bad news trying to cross there to link up with the trail systems.

Dennis Stankie
Graduate student

Human race

Through all recorded history humanity, as a general form of life, has been engaged in destroying Earth.

I refer to probably all racial or ethnic groups. For while it's true some racial and ethnic groups traditionally brought less harm than others, it hinged more on technical capabilities than principles and beliefs.

As the technologies and techniques of greater destruction were introduced to these folks, they all adopted them with a vengeance.

The human race is unworthy of inhabiting this fabulous, beautiful planet in a mobile, physical form.

The human race is willing to kill or damage itself. It does so in order to acquire and/or maintain frivolous conveniences and health-destroying luxuries.

We have been converting the Garden of Sanity and Abundance into the Hell of Want and Disease.

There are a few remnants of the Garden remaining here and there, therefore there are rational grounds for hope and continued efforts at battling the forces of destruction and death.

Work for peace and love for life.

Tommy Walen
Eugene

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Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, typed, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style. Letters to the editor should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300, EMU.

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