

Q&A

BILL CLINTON

Gov. Clinton takes a breather from campaigning to discuss the job market, AIDS and why he thinks he owes students a better future.

Democratic presidential nominee Bill Clinton met with editors from U. The National College Magazine - Mark Charnock, Kelley Tuthill and Molly Williams - and college newspaper editors - Andrew Levy from the U. of Michigan and Kris Mayes from Arizona State U. At a campaign stop Sept. 1 in Greensboro, N.C., Clinton spent more than 30 minutes talking about the issues of greatest concern to college students. The following are excerpts from the interview:

Q: I want to hit first on the tax and spend fear that George Bush seems to be playing in the last couple of weeks, saying it will fall short of a lot of the goals for raising capital for the programs that you have proposed. If you were to raise taxes, and specifically on corporations, he claims it is going to force employers to lay off the work force rather than increasing the work force.

A: First of all, I don't propose to raise taxes on corporations. The only thing that I have proposed is a small fee that corporations would have to pay if they don't spend 1 percent of their payroll to retrain their work force every year. What they're pretending, one of the many things that they're misrepresenting, [is] that I've proposed a 1 percent payroll increase on every company in America. The average corporation in America spends more than 1 percent of their payroll retraining their work force. So what my plan does is basically an incentive. It says: If you spend at least 1 percent of your payroll on training and you spend it roughly over all your employees, you get a tax deduction for that and you don't owe the government anything. But if you don't spend any money on training, then you pay that 1 percent into a trust fund, which will be used 100 percent to retrain workers who are going to be thrown out of work and who don't have the skills that they need in the global economy. So most companies will not pay anything under my proposal. But the companies that choose not to spend any money on training or not to spend any money on their front-line workers, are increasing the likelihood that those workers will be put out of work. And we're asking them to contribute to a fund to retrain them.

Q: Governor Clinton, college graduates are less likely to find a job than any of their predecessors since

World War II. Aside from manufacturing jobs, what do you propose to increase the opportunity for jobs for college grads?

A: First, I want to do more for small business. Keep in mind, most jobs are created in America by smaller businesses. In the last 12 years, about 85 percent of the new jobs have been created in units of under 50. And most of those were

technologies. Now there will be a lot of work like that in the '90s because if we cut back defense in the proper way, we will still continue to invest in technological advances. That's very important. But if we take all the defense cuts and put them into domestic technologies, then you will be generating in commercial areas the kinds of jobs that once were provided for, by and large, by defense employers. So those are the other two areas that I think are very important.

Q: Senator Gore has clearly articulated proposals to ensure the future of our environment, but you've stopped short of endorsing many of the proposals he's outlined, including the long-term phase out of the internal combustion engine. What will you do, including increased allocation, restructuring federal agencies and international agreements, to make the senator's proposals a reality?

A: Let me respond to two things. First with regard to internal combustion engines. Al believes, and I do, too, that the biggest global problem is global warming. And that it's also a big American problem. And he was embarrassed, for our country, when he was down in Brazil at the Earth Summit at Rio, when the other advanced nations wanted us to sign off on a global warming treaty which would have committed us to

reduce CO2 emissions to the 1990 levels by the year 2000. And all these other countries said "fine" and we said "no." And so we had thought about what kinds of things we can do to reduce global warming at home and around the globe. Let me just mention two things; first of all, I think we should raise the mileage standards on automobiles and I think we should convert more automobiles to burn natural gas as opposed to gasoline. There are all kinds of environmental benefits from that. But in every major area, from pollutants [to] emissions, they go way down if you burn natural gas. I think we ought to burn more natural gas in power plants. You could have the same thing to the extent that gas displaces oil. In new plants if you take gas instead of coal in new power plants, you have that impact. To me, those things are very important. [The] next issue I'd like to mention is I think we ought to do a lot of development with renewable resources in this country. We still have only scratched the

Continued on Page 16



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"I think access to a college education should be universal... I don't think the money should keep them from getting and staying in."

created by small businesses. It's relatively rare now for a company to hire 1,000, 2,000, 3,000 people at one time. Most of the job generation in America is from small businesses. So one of the things I have proposed is that we provide a special incentive in our tax code, a long-term capital gains tax for people who invest in small businesses. If you hold the investment for five years, then you would pay taxes on only half the normal gain. That will encourage people to flow money into business ventures as opposed to short-term financial manipulation. I think that's very important. The other thing that I propose to do that will generate a lot of jobs for college graduates is to reinvest all the defense cuts in domestic technologies. Some of them, basically straightforward things like building new highways and bridges and water systems. Some of them, things that will take advantage of new technologies, new high-speed rail networks, new waste recycling networks, alternative energy development, natural gas, solar energy and new energy conservation