

The Ministry of Truth Has Spoken - 04/03/2004

The Economy is Robust and Unemployment is Low
By Ernie Whiteside

Winston Smith and others at the Ministry of Truth have just published the revised numbers for new jobs in the United States. It is just as I suspected, the economy is robust, unemployment is low and I'm voting for Bush ... NOT!

There are two more things that the Ministry of Truth would like you to believe: ONE, President Bush did NOT tell Mr. Clarke to find a connection between 9/11 and Iraq so that he could go to war and make big money for his family in the defense and oil industry and TWO, President Bush did NOT tell the folks at the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Statistics to alter the record to make it look like more jobs were being created than originally reported or expected.

As I watched the parrots get up, on-by-one, in front of the camera to tell the American people the rosy good news about employment, I couldn't help but wonder where all of those unexpected jobs came from. If you listen closely, some of them are letting little bits of information slip. Here are the two that I caught.

1. California Grocery Strike. The government counted all of the people that went back to work after the California grocery strike as if they had NEW jobs. There is a statistical problem with this. The job positions of strikers were not written off as lost jobs but they were written in as created new jobs. This accounts for 70,000 of the new jobs created.
2. Government hiring. One of the pundits slipped and let us know that while the jobs "appeared" to have been created in all business sectors, a large percentage of new jobs were government jobs.

Let's look at this another way. In the previous nine months, the largest increase in jobs was 97,000 and the biggest loss was 45,000. What is the chance that over 300,000 jobs were created last month?

I think there is another group of people out there that have been slipping us a clue also. Many media people are now floating the fact that 150,000 new people enter the job force every month. A quick visit to the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Statistics web site reveals that this has been true, right up until last November. Since then the numbers have been either down or flat. Has somebody failing to count the 150,000 new monthly job entrants for the last three months? Did a trend that was consistent for the last ten years suddenly come to an end? Are aliens abducting these prospective new job entrants?

Let's look at it yet another way.

In February there were 8,170,000 unemployed people and in March there were 8,352,000 unemployed people. That's 182,000 new unemployed people in a workforce that grows by 150,000 every month. There should be a corresponding loss of 32,000 jobs, not a gain.

More reasoning ...

In March of 1994, 62.1% of all adults in the United States were employed and the unemployment rate was 6.5%. This is the lowest percentage employed and the highest percentage unemployed in 10 years.

In June of 2000, 64.7% of all adults in the United States were employed and the unemployment rate was 4.0%. This is the highest percentage employed in 10 years. The lowest rate of unemployment in 10 years was 3.8%.

In March of 2004, only 62.1% of all adults in the United States were employed. This matched the lowest percentage employed in 10 years. Oddly, the unemployment rate is reported as only 5.7%, which is 0.8% lower than the same month 10 years ago which also had a 62.1% employment rate for adults.

The estimated adult population of the United States is 209,128,094. If June of 2000 represents the best employment month in ten years, with an unemployment rate of 4.0%, then the total percentage of employable people in the United States is 67.2% of the adult population. If we use the March 1994 statistics of 64.1% employed and 6.5% unemployment rate, then we find that 66.2% of the population was then considered employable. We should be able to safely say that at least 66.7% or 139,488,438 people are potentially employable. The report is that 8,352,000 people are unemployed and another 514,000 have given up on finding work. This puts the unemployment rate at 6.3%, not 5.7%. If, as we suspect, the government ALWAYS spins the numbers to look better than they are, AND they are spinning things more today than they ever have, then we could probably guess that unemployment is as high as it has been in the last 10 years and probably well over 7%.

I know that was a bit dry, but the Orwellian Ministry of Truth needs to be exposed and the record needs to be set straight. There is absolutely no way in the whole universe that 308,000 new jobs were created in March. We probably lost 32,000 jobs in March.

As I rethink this, I seem to recall a number of the pundits saying things like, "Doesn't the unemployment rate seem a bit low with the number unemployed going up so much?" "It seems kind of unusual that the number of new jobs would go so high after such a long period of much lower numbers." and "How is it that with so many new jobs created that the number of unemployed actually went up?" But then the answer would come back sounding reasonable and they would just move on. I think that there are some in the media that want us to know but just can't say anything out loud.

What do you think?

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