

Numbers of Displaced Workers On Rise

From January 2007 through December 2009, 6.9 million workers were displaced from jobs they had held for at least 3 years, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported last Thursday.

This was nearly twice as many as were displaced for the survey period covering January 2005 to December 2007. In January 2010, about half of displaced workers were reemployed, down from about two-thirds for the prior survey in January 2008.

"The more recent period includes the recession that began in December 2007. In contrast, the prior survey covered a period of employment growth and declining unemployment," the government report said.

Since 1984, the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor has sponsored surveys that collect information on workers who were displaced from their jobs.

Displaced workers are defined as persons 20 years of age and older who lost or left jobs because their plant or company closed or moved,

there was insufficient work for them to do, or their position or shift was abolished. The period covered in this study was 2007-09, the 3 calendar years prior to the January 2010 survey date. The following analysis focuses primarily on the 6.9 million persons who had worked for their employer for 3 or more years at the time of displacement (referred to as long-tenured). An additional 8.5 million persons were displaced from jobs they had held for less than 3 years (referred to as short-tenured).

Combining the short- and long-tenured groups, the number of displaced workers totaled 15.4 million from 2007-09, up from 8.3 million for the period covered by the prior survey (2005-07).

Highlights from the January 2010 survey include:

--In January 2010, 49 percent of the 6.9 million long-tenured displaced workers were reemployed, down from 67 percent for the prior survey in January 2008. This is lowest reemployment rate on record for the series, which began in 1984.

--Forty-three percent of long-tenured displaced workers cited insufficient work as the reason for

their displacement, up from 24 percent for the previous survey.

--Nearly 1 in 4 long-tenured displaced workers lost a job in manufacturing.

--Among long-tenured workers who were displaced from full-time wage and salary jobs and who were reemployed in such jobs, 45 percent had earnings that were as much or more than those on the lost job.

This was lower than the proportion in January 2008, when 55 percent of those workers had earnings equal to or greater than those on the lost job.

As was the case in prior surveys, manufacturing accounted for the largest number of displaced workers. During the 2007-09 period 1.6 million factory workers were displaced from their jobs--23 percent of all long-tenured displaced workers. Manufacturing displacements were again concentrated within the durable goods component (1.1 million), particularly in transportation equipment and in computers and electronic products. Workers in wholesale and retail trade accounted for 14 percent, and construction made up 13 percent of all long-tenured displaced.

All these stats pretty much confirm the trends we have already recognized.

We know employers have laid off and eliminated positions in the last few years in response to the recession.

Fewer people are finding work, and when they do, it is often in a different field and at less money.

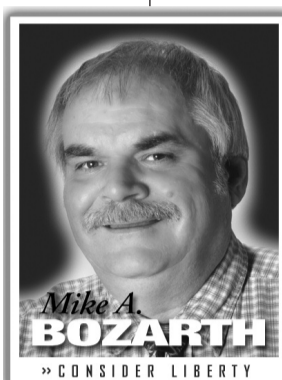
Good paying jobs with benefits are leaving--such as in the manufacturing industry--and they're not coming back.

What modest job growth we have seen has been in the service industry. While any job is welcome to most unemployed, many service jobs have been created or contracted by the federal government. Since they are broke, we just keep adding to our budget deficits and national debt.

I don't claim to know all the answers. I do believe that if we don't get federal spending under control, we may have darker days ahead.

We need people in public office who understand the Constitution and comprehend balanced budgets. That, common sense, and experience in running a business and/or a household is probably hoping for too much.

Happy Labor Day!



Mike A. BOZARTH
» CONSIDER LIBERTY

Glenn Beck's "Appeal"

Apropos the title: pun intended. On the one hand, Beck's "appeal" is crystal clear: "Send money! Be amazed at ME! Buy Goldline!" He has called himself a "rodeo clown," but this is an insult to real rodeo clowns who must be cool, courageous, physically fit, able to take a joke, willing to risk looking foolish in order to keep things light, and most importantly, ready to sacrifice their own safety and well-being in the interests of others. This is the exact opposite of Glenn Beck.

He is, at best, a kind of narcissistic carnival barker. He is the guy who stands in front of "Boomba, The Wild Woman's" tent shouting "She walks! She talks! She crawls on her belly like a reptile!" appealing to the lowest common denominator of every human characteristic in order to squeeze a dime from some passing sucker, and there are suckers aplenty. According to reasonable estimates, his "rally" in Washington, D.C. on the last Sunday in August attracted somewhere between fifty and a hundred-twenty-five thousand people... and you just have to wonder how it is in this world of worthy projects in need of assistance that so many people couldn't find something better to do. Nevertheless, there they were, listening to Beck "channel" "the spirit" and turn what at one time looked like it was going to be a fairly predictable national Tea-Party type Obama-bashing rally into a national camp meeting

for the confused, desperate, and disappointed.

(It is worth noting in the margins here that other entertainers masquerading as sages and politicians made more interesting estimates. Sarah Palin, who never met a mirror she didn't like, reckoned there were several hundred thousand attending in awe and - if there is such a thing - raucous reverence, and the unfailingly giddy Michelle Bachman, the unparalleled queen of hyperbole, had it up to at least million. At least.)

Aside from the painfully undeniable fact that there are large numbers of Americans willing to listen to Beck's irrational meanderings, however, one cannot choose but consider: what, exactly, did he say? Did he in fact, say anything? Apparently about the only substantive content that can be accredited to his remarks are that (1) White people really did the lion's share of the work on Civil Rights during the Sixties and Seventies (and Dr. Martin Luther King, who once spoke from the same steps Beck used but two tiers up, sort of helped), and (2) White people must, and with the help of The Deity will, "take the movement back."

(Oh, pun intended again... it will be taken BACK, alright, if we follow the lead of such as Glenn Beck! It will be taken WAY back to about 1895 and the good old days of the Robber Barons when there were no such horribly Socialistic things as women and

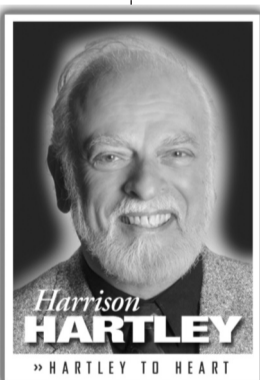
ethnic minorities voting, and workplace safety rules, and paid sick leave or health care or vacation days, and a young fellow of six or seven could get ahead with hard work in the local factory if he didn't mind loosing a finger now and then and skipping a few frivolous amenities like learning to read and add or having enough to eat and if he was really committed to that perfectly manageable seventy-two hour work week. Who would not long for such a paradise? Perhaps someone who had been on drugs and was an alcoholic college dropout might, but then, he wouldn't know better. The rest of us should.)

Well, that was undiplomatic, mentioning Mr. Beck's credentials like that, but it's hard to resist because it leads to the secondary exposition of the title. What in the world IS Glenn Beck's appeal? Entertainers like Palin and Bachman are at least on some kind of par with Boomba, the Wild Woman, but Beck... well, it would be better to avoid discussing physical appeal. Perhaps one might say, he's not repulsive, but he's no George Clooney either, so what is it disappointingly large numbers of people find attractive?

Perhaps he reminds them of a kind of psychological or spiritual dwarf of themselves; what Lincoln would recognize as the "evil angels of our natures" in contrast to the "better" ones. We all experience periods of petulance (this editorial writer is having one right now) when we just can't refrain from castigating the cruel irrationalities of the universe. But if one is going to castigate something,

should there at least not be some alternative offer?

And here is the great failing of Glenn Beck and his pals: they offer nothing in place of whatever they attack in the heat of the moment, or worse - they really do offer to take us back a hundred years or more. In place of general health care reform, what? So far, nothing; OR "privatize" it... just like it was in 1895. Create jobs? Not through economic stimulus, but by giving huge tax breaks to people who make more than a quarter million dollars a year. Social Security? Privatize that, too, so the Wall Street magicians can work miracles again... just like they did during all the previous depressions caused by greed and lack of regulation and oversight. Glenn Beck's appeal? It's to the little self-deluded dwarf that lives in each of us hoping to find a scapegoat for it's disappointments, failures, and bitterness. He, and those like him, appeal to irrational emotionalism, bigotry, and pure, shameless exhibitionism. That is Glenn Beck's appeal, and it is a lucky thing that it is lost on most of us, and a little frightening that it is not lost on the rest.



Harrison HARTLEY
» HARTLEY TO HEART

VERSE of the WEEK

But he knoweth the way that I take; when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

- JOB 23 : 10