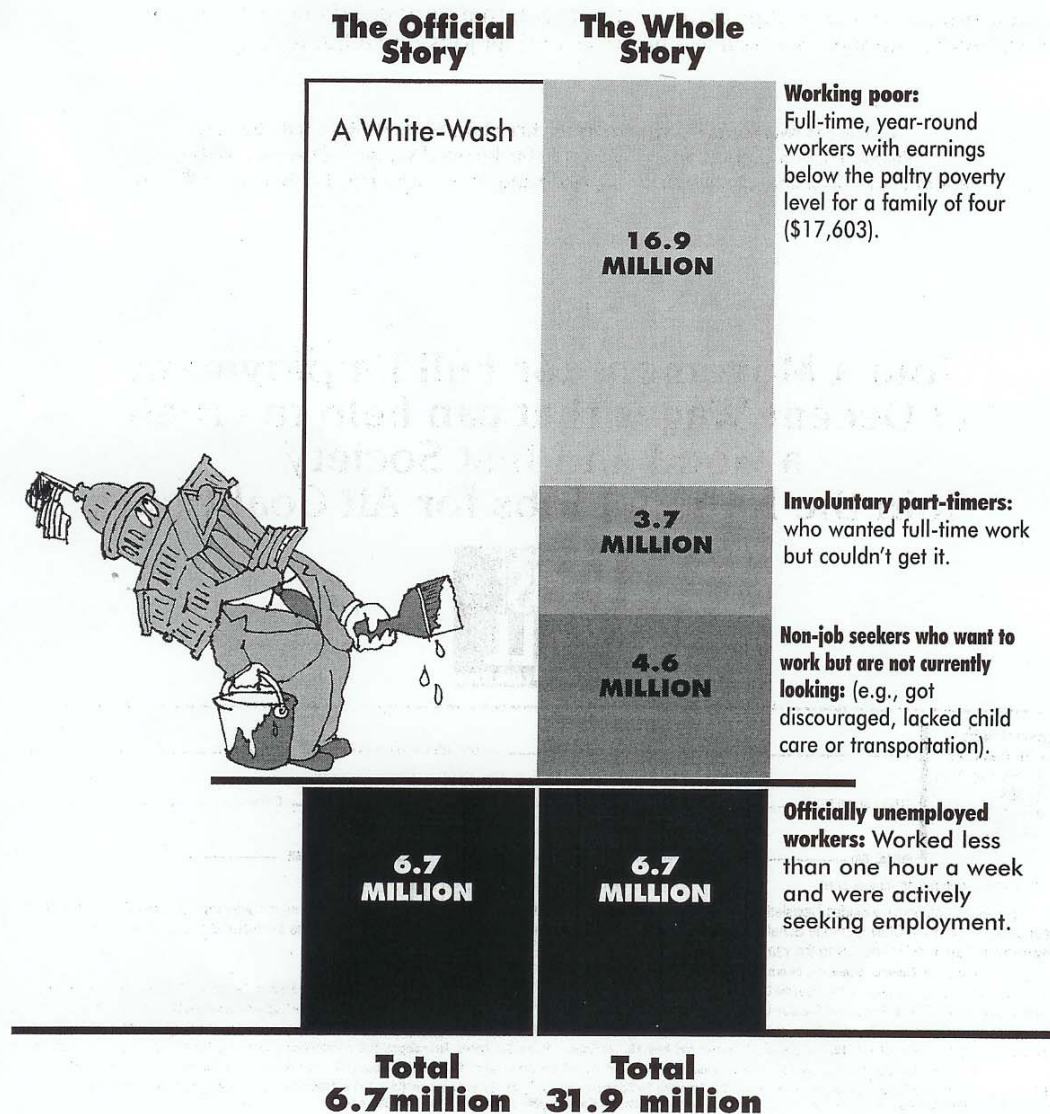


Unemployment Statistics: Not The Whole Story

In 2001, the official unemployment rate
reported by the government was 4.8 percent
or 6.7 million people.

These numbers don't tell the whole story.



Did You Know That?

- **Most of the unemployed do not collect unemployment insurance.** Only about two out of five unemployed workers receive benefits, and these benefits replace less than half of lost wages.
- **Low unemployment does not inevitably lead to inflation.** Many business and government leaders would like us to believe it does. The truth is that unemployment had been falling since 1992 (when it was 7 1/2 percent). It fell to a three-decade low of 4 percent in 2000. But lower unemployment was accompanied by lower, not higher, inflation.

What About Low Wages?

Leaders also fear that lower unemployment will lead to higher wages. In the 1990s, when we had relatively low unemployment, average wages did rise modestly, and that was *good* news for workers. But wages were still below their 1971 level in purchasing power.

What Should We Do?

Understanding the "real" extent of unemployment and underemployment enables us to see the need for policies that support JOBS FOR ALL at LIVING WAGES and essential support services such as affordable day care and national health care.

Even if unemployment falls again to 4 percent, that's not *good* enough. We can't stop before everyone who wants a job has one, and all jobs pay a living wage.

Adapted from *Uncommon Sense 4, Employment Statistics: Let's Tell the Whole Story* by Helen Lachs Ginsburg, Professor Emerita of Economics, Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, and Executive Committee, National Jobs for All Coalition and, Bill Ayres, Director, World Hunger Year, and Advisory Board, National Jobs for All Coalition

**Join a Movement for Full Employment
at Decent Wages that can help to create
a Good and Just Society.
Join the National Jobs for All Coalition.**

