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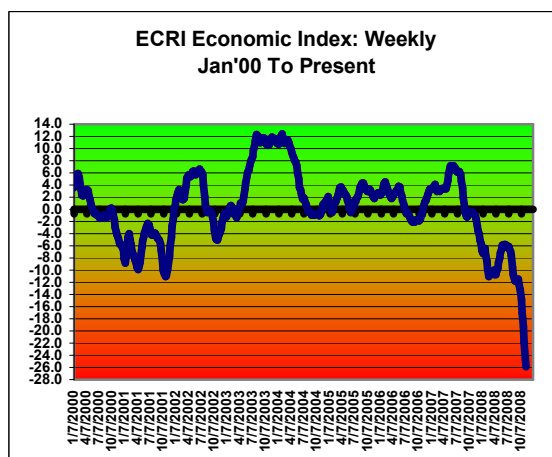
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November 17, 2008

Something wicked this way comes...

I'm not talking about the famous Ray Bradbury novel, but rather the wicked economic downturn that is unfolding. According to the economic forecasting group ECRI, we're in for a major recession.

This recession has teeth – It is already the lowest reading since WWII, when the folks at the Economic Cycle Research Institute (ECRI) started compiling economic data. That means, according to ECRI, this current recession will probably end up being worse than every economic downturn we've had since The Great Depression.



Here's ECRI's press release that tells it like it is...

WLI Growth Falling at Fastest Pace in 60 Yrs

November 14, 2008

(Reuters) - NEW YORK, Nov 14 (Reuters) - A measure of future economic growth in the United States edged up in the previous week but its annualized growth rate set a fresh record low, indicating the U.S. economy is falling at its fastest pace in at least six decades, a research group said on Friday.

The Economic Cycle Research Institute, a New York-based independent forecasting group, said the annualized growth rate of its Weekly Leading Index slid from minus 24.6 percent to negative 25.9 percent, its historic lowest, according to ECRI data recorded since January 1949.

"With WLI growth continuing to plumb new lows, not only is no economic recovery on the horizon, but the economy is falling off a cliff at its fastest pace in at least six decades," said Lakshman Achuthan, managing director at ECRI.

But the index inched up 111.3 in the week to Nov. 7, from 110.8 in the previous period, initially reported as 110.9.

The weekly index ticked up due to lower interest rates and higher stock prices, partly offset by weaker money supply growth and higher jobless claims, said Achuthan.

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It seems as though market volatility will be with us for some time to come. We continue to monitor the markets and make portfolio adjustments as needed. We're still being very careful and utilizing Inverse ETFs (i.e. bear market funds), money markets, T-Bills and Short-Term Government Bonds to manage risk. We'll continue to provide market updates and commentary to keep you informed.

Keeping watch,

Steve K. Rumsey
Eight Baskets Portfolios
Optimus Advisory Group

An Index is a portfolio of specific securities (common examples are S&P, DJIA, NASDAQ), the performance of which is often used as a benchmark in judging the relative performance of certain asset classes. Indexes are unmanaged portfolios and investors cannot invest directly in an index. Past performance is not indicative of future results.

Investors need to be aware that no investment plan/asset allocation can eliminate the risk of fluctuating prices and uncertain returns.

Figures quoted are for illustrative purposes only and are not necessarily indicative of past or future results of any specific investment. They do not include consideration of the time value of money, inflation, fluctuation in the principal of, and in many instances, taxes.

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