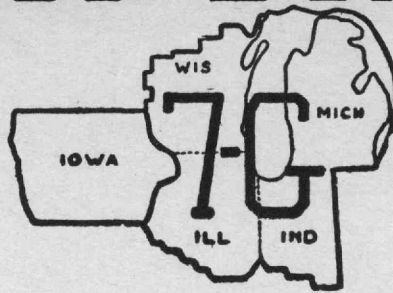


# BUSINESS CONDITIONS

SEVENTH  
FEDERAL



RESERVE  
DISTRICT

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## DISTRICT SUMMARY

WITH the beginning of fall, an accelerated rate of output was noted in several manufacturing as well as food-producing industries of the Seventh Federal Reserve district, some of the gains being contrary to trend for the season, while other industries were maintained at the comparatively high level of activity that prevailed throughout the summer months. In most reporting groups of wholesale and retail trade, September sales expanded more than usual over a month earlier and gains over the month last year were large. Thus, the third quarter of 1936 closed with production and sales volumes for the year to date substantially in excess of the corresponding months of 1935.

A continued heavy demand for steel maintained operations of that industry in the Chicago district at a high level through September and well into October, and September pig iron production was the largest for any month since June 1930. Activity at malleable casting foundries expanded in September as did that at stove and furnace factories, although steel casting foundries recorded a further decline. Shipments from furniture factories not only gained more than seasonally over August but were well above average for September. There was a noticeable drop in new building construction started in September, but the volume continued to exceed considerably the level of other recent years. The movement of building materials was well maintained through the month. Other industries to record expansion in September, as reflected in their payrolls, were wood products, chemicals, and paper and printing. Industrial employment in the aggregate in-

creased slightly during the month, while payrolls declined less than is usual.

Production in reporting food industries rose in September over a month previous; the gain in packing-house commodities and in Wisconsin cheese was counterseasonal and the volumes produced exceeded the average for September. Sales of meat-packing products and of butter also gained, but distribution of Wisconsin cheese declined in the month. The September movement of grains was generally small. October 1 forecasts of Seventh district corn and potato production were raised over those of a month earlier; practically all of the Seventh district corn crop is now safe from frost.

September improvement over August in the wholesale drug, hardware, and electrical supply trades was greater than seasonal and gains over a year ago were substantial. Wholesale grocery sales, however, showed a contraseasonal recession from a month earlier and were smaller than in September last year. The department store and retail shoe trades recorded above-average expansion in September, and the gain in the retail furniture trade was about average; exceptionally large increases were shown over the same month of 1935.

Between September 16 and October 14, total loans and investments of reporting member banks in the Seventh district declined slightly, the result of a decrease in loans on securities and in investments other than Government securities; commercial loans rose 12 million dollars further in this period. Demand deposits in these banks increased between the two dates, while time deposits declined.

## Credit and Finance

In the period September 16 to October 21, 43 million dollars was added to Seventh district funds from commercial and financial operations with other districts, largely reflecting a net inflow of capital funds from eastern markets, and the United States Treasury disbursed 53 millions here in excess of its receipts. From this accession of funds, 82 millions was added to member bank reserve balances—bringing them 17 million dollars above the September 9 high—and 6 millions to

currency circulation, while reserve bank credit outstanding was reduced 8 million dollars, largely through transactions in "float."

The bulk of loans to customers on prime commercial paper continues to be made at rates from 1½ to 4½ per cent, by down-town Chicago banks, and similarly situated Detroit banks report a range from 1 to 5 per cent. Rates on time loans secured by prime stock exchange or other current collateral range from 1½ to 5 per cent in the Chicago, and 1 to 6 per cent in the Detroit banks. The average rate earned on commercial

**TRANSIT OPERATIONS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF CHICAGO AND DETROIT BRANCH**

(Exclusive of Treasury checks and of non-transit items drawn on own bank)

	SEPTEMBER 1936	SEPTEMBER 1935
Total country and city check clearings:		
Pieces.....	9,832,717	9,457,112
Amount.....	\$1,969,690,179	\$1,614,686,965
Daily average clearings:		
Total items cleared—		
Pieces.....	393,309	394,046
Amount.....	\$78,787,607	\$67,278,623
Items drawn on Chicago—		
Pieces.....	63,629*	93,712
Amount.....	\$41,085,000	\$34,690,000
Items drawn on Detroit—		
Pieces.....	18,103	18,480
Amount.....	\$9,116,480	\$7,807,638

\*Decline in September 1936 is due to packaging of Chicago early clearings

loans by certain of the reporting down-town Chicago banks was 2.46 per cent for September, unchanged from August, but somewhat below the 2.93 per cent earned in September 1935.

The dollar total of acceptances created by banks in this district in September was seasonally less than in August, and though 50 per cent greater than a year ago, continued to be about 58 per cent below the ten-year average. Indications for October are more favorable, the total for the first fifteen days being considerably greater than for the same period last month and last year. Acceptances outstanding on September 30 totaled 8 per cent above a year ago, but were 57 per cent below the 1926-35 average for that date. Operations of bill dealers in this district were considerably heavier than in the preceding period, but again fell below a year ago, at rates which have prevailed in recent months.

Middle West sales of commercial paper dealers continued in September to show a more than seasonal decline as compared with the preceding month, and were 57 per cent less than the September average, 1926-35. No material improvement was reported for the first half of October, packers' paper being seasonally absent. Rates remain unchanged,  $\frac{5}{8}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  per cent for prime short-term paper, and  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 per cent for less well-known names. The bulk of sales was at  $\frac{3}{4}$  per cent.

Bond dealers in this district reported improved activity in September, some broadening of investment demand, particularly in second-grade obligations, and greater interest in lower-grade municipals. The general price level of bonds was well maintained, second-grade railroad bonds having appreciated markedly. New capital issues in the United States were somewhat greater in September than in August; refundings exceeded offerings for new capital. The Chicago Journal of Commerce average of twenty leading stocks on the Chicago Stock Exchange rose from \$57.22 on September 21 to \$60.72 on October 10, the highest point since September 12, 1931. On October 21 the average was \$59.73.

**FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF CHICAGO, SELECTED ITEMS OF CONDITION**

(Amounts in millions of dollars)

	OCTOBER 21, 1936	CHANGE FROM	
		SEPTEMBER 16, 1936	OCTOBER 23, 1935
Total Bills and Securities.....	\$286.0	\$ -5.3	\$ -72.1
Bills Discounted.....	0.0	+0.0	+0.1
Bills Bought.....	0.4	-0.0	-0.2
U. S. Government Securities.....	283.9	-5.2	-71.8
Total Reserves.....	1,750.2	+58.4	+419.1
Member Bank Reserve Deposits.....	1,058.9	+82.4	+245.1
All Other Deposits.....	18.7	-42.2	-7.8
Federal Reserve Notes in Circulation..	920.5	-4.1	+107.5
Ratio of Total Reserves to Deposits and Federal Reserve Note Liabilities Com- bined.....	87.5%	+1.0*	+7.0*

\*Number of Points.

**Agricultural Products**

The October 1 Government estimate of Seventh Federal Reserve district corn production was 544,144,000 bushels, which reflected a gain of 32 million bushels over a month earlier and of 61 million bushels as compared with the 1934 harvest, but a decline of 336 million bushels from the production of 1935. The forecast for potatoes in the district was raised to 46,299,000 bushels from 43,976,000 bushels indicated at the beginning of September. Practically the entire corn crop is now safe. Moreover, killing frosts in 1936 have thus far been confined principally to scattered northern areas of the territory. Late garden truck has done very well in October and there is a probability that the canning pack may be larger than indicated a month ago. An abundance of late forage is reported. A continuance of favorable weather would benefit seed corn.

Corn production in the United States was placed at 1,509,362,000 bushels on October 1, a gain of 51 million bushels over the September 1 estimate. A large acreage is being planted to winter wheat this autumn.

**GRAIN MARKETING**

The movement of wheat at primary markets in the United States declined more than seasonally in September to the lowest level since early spring. Imports of the grain continued much greater than a year ago and exports remained in limited volume, though exceeding those of August. Following earlier strength, prices of No. 2 hard winter for immediate delivery at Chicago weakened at the close of September—coincident with reports of good rains in the southern hemisphere—and had shown only partial recovery to \$1.18 $\frac{1}{2}$  and \$1.23 by October 21. The aggregate of farm and visible holdings of wheat in the United States was 11 per cent smaller on October 1 than a year earlier and 49 per cent below the 1928-32 average for the date.

Receipts of corn at these centers were less in September than for any month in the past year, and shipments were below any period subsequent to October 1935. U. S. farm stocks plus visible supplies on October 1 were 9 per cent above the 1928-32 average. After displaying weakness at the close of September and during the first week of October, due to some liquidation of long positions and to a continuation of Argentine offerings at United States seaboard points, quotations at Chicago firmed slightly in mid-October in sympathy with those of wheat, but again eased in the third week of the month.

The September 1936 movement of oats at primary centers of accumulation in the United States was under

**CONDITION OF LICENSED REPORTING MEMBER BANKS SEVENTH DISTRICT**

(Amounts in millions of dollars)

	OCTOBER 14, 1936	CHANGE FROM	
		SEPTEMBER 16, 1936	OCTOBER 16, 1935
Total loans and investments.....	\$3,041	\$ -7	\$ +417
Total loans on securities.....	244	-11	-1
To brokers and dealers:			
In New York.....	3	-6	-2
Outside New York.....	42	-2	+14
To others (except banks).....	199	-3	-15
Acceptances and commercial paper bought	31	-3	-3
Loans on real estate.....	70	0	-3
Loans to banks.....	8	0	-8
Other loans.....	523	+12	+192
U. S. Government direct obligations.....	1,611	+4	+206
Obligations fully guaranteed by			
U. S. Government.....	148	+1	-14
Other securities.....	406	-10	+36
Demand deposits—adjusted.....	2,293	+53	+344
Time deposits.....	809	-12	+60
Borrowings.....	1	+1	+1



that of other months subsequent to July last year. October 1 stocks on farms and in visible positions in the United States totaled 24 per cent below the 1928-32 average, although the visible supply increased in this comparison. Prices moved fractionally lower in September from August and eased further in the first three weeks of October.

**MOVEMENT OF GRAIN AT INTERIOR PRIMARY MARKETS IN THE UNITED STATES**  
(In Thousands of Bushels)

	SEPTEMBER 1936	AUGUST 1936	SEPTEMBER 1935	SEPTEMBER 1926-35 Av.
<b>Wheat:</b>				
Receipts.....	10,596	28,065	43,824	47,527
Shipments.....	10,627	18,151	15,826	28,461
<b>Corn:</b>				
Receipts.....	9,194	15,737	7,180	16,680
Shipments.....	4,308	7,768	3,035	9,429
<b>Oats:</b>				
Receipts.....	3,998	13,356	21,806	12,826
Shipments.....	3,742	4,493	7,901	7,269

**MOVEMENT OF LIVESTOCK**

Livestock receipts at public stockyards in the United States increased less than seasonally in September over August, although the volume of cattle, calves, and lambs was in excess of any month since last October and that of hogs was greater than at any other time this year since March. Hog and calf marketings remained above a year ago, but those of cattle and lambs declined in this comparison. With the exception of calves, the number of each decreased from the 1926-35 September average. Movement to inspected slaughter—inclusive of animals that did not pass through public stockyards—diverged in several instances from the trend of market receipts: the gain over August in cattle and lamb supply was greater than normal and in hogs and calves was counter to the usual tendency for the month; the volume of each exceeded a year ago and, with the exception of hogs, all gained over the 1926-35 average for September; furthermore, the slaughter supply of calves was heavier than at any time since the autumn of 1934, and the number of hogs was lower than in any previous month of 1936 with the exception of February and August.

September reshipments to feed lots were above those of subsequent periods to last autumn, but the movement of feeder cattle and lambs not only remained below the 1931-35 seasonal average but also was under a year ago.

**MEAT PACKING**

Late summer and early autumn slaughter of livestock in the United States was augmented this year by considerable liquidation of fat cattle, light-weight hogs, and of sows, owing to a smaller corn supply for winter feeding than a year ago. Therefore, production of packing-house commodities at inspected slaughtering establishments rose counterseasonally by 3½ per cent in September over August to a level 33½ per cent higher than a year earlier and 2 per cent above the 1926-35 average for the month. The tonnage sold failed

to show the usual seasonal excess over current production and was 3½ per cent below the ten-year average, but aggregated 30 per cent greater than last September and 9 per cent heavier than in August. Despite an advance in quotations for beef, veal, and a few pork cuts, the general price level of packing-house commodities declined in September from the preceding month. However, dollar sales billed to domestic and foreign customers totaled 3½ per cent more than in August, 13½ per cent larger than in the corresponding period of 1935, and 2 per cent in excess of the 1926-35 September average. Inventories of packing-house commodities in the United States decreased less than normally on October 1 from a month earlier and were 203,034,000 pounds above those of a year ago; furthermore, their margin under the 1931-35 average was reduced to 10½ per cent. Notwithstanding a recession of 1½ per cent from August, payrolls at the close of September reflected increases over the same date last year of 8½ per cent in number of employes, 16½ per cent in hours worked, and 14½ per cent in wage payments.

Shipments for export were reported as being somewhat lighter in September than in August, with the increase in lard forwardings to Cuba more than offset by a reduction in meat and lard tonnage to the United Kingdom. Competitive offerings from the European continent and from South America, at prices much below the Chicago parity and under current replacement costs in this country, continued to depress British trade in United States meats and lard. Demand from the remainder of Europe failed to show any noticeable improvement, except for a slight gain from Switzerland. On the other hand, Cuban and Porto Rican trade

**CROP PRODUCTION**

Estimated by the United States Bureau of Agricultural Economics on the basis of October 1 condition

(In thousands of bushels unless otherwise specified)

	SEVENTH DISTRICT		UNITED STATES		AVERAGE 1928-32
	FORECAST 1936	FINAL 1935	FORECAST 1936	FINAL 1935	
Corn.....	544,144	880,218	1,500,362	2,291,629	2,553,424
Oats.....	369,081	453,391	783,750	1,196,668	1,215,102
Barley.....	33,267(a)	47,713(a)	143,916	282,226	281,237
Soybeans.....	22,894(b)	34,533(b)	25,746(c)	37,691(c)	10,204(c)
Winter Wheat.....	62,938	57,807	519,097	464,203	622,252
Spring Wheat.....	2,195	2,134	108,136	159,241	241,312
Rye.....	6,705(a)	12,911(a)	27,095	58,928	38,212
Buckwheat.....	582(a)	1,226(a)	5,860	8,220	8,277
Flaxseed.....	240(d)	336(d)	6,276	14,123	15,996
Potatoes (white).....	46,299	57,484	322,263	387,678	372,115
Potatoes (sweet).....	1,050(b)	1,280(b)	67,520	83,198	66,368
Beans (dry edible)¹.....	2,548(c)	4,828(c)	10,737	13,799	11,858
Sugar Beets².....	850(f)	686(f)	9,241	7,908	8,118
Onions³.....	3,621(a)	2,559(a)	17,625	14,546	13,247
Cabbage for Market².....	110(a)	177(a)	783	797	845
Celery⁴.....	1,186(f)	1,090(f)	9,513	8,462	9,168
Tomatoes for Market.....	1,276(h)	1,301(h)	20,046	19,176	16,891
<b>Canning Vegetables:</b>					
Cabbage for Kraut².....	32(g)	44(g)	95	135	166
Green Lima Beans².....	2(f)	2(f)	21	16	13*
Sweet Corn².....	221(a)	438(a)	582	860	628
Tomatoes².....	379(h)	381(h)	1,739	1,689	1,293
Beets⁵.....	21(i)	20(i)	52	48	36
Apples (total crop).....	10,146(a)	23,303(a)	104,942	167,283	161,333
Peaches.....	1,671(h)	6,232(h)	45,715	52,808	56,451
Pears.....	978(h)	1,611(h)	23,936	22,035	23,146
Grapes⁶.....	47(a)	73(a)	1,879	2,455	2,200
Strawberries⁷.....	1,209(a)	1,437(a)	10,284	11,681	12,127
Cranberries⁸.....	55(j)	81(j)	531	520	581
Tobacco⁹.....	17,627	15,835	1,152,076	1,296,810	1,427,174
All Tame Hay².....	13,630	17,450	62,968	76,146	69,533
Broom Corn².....	14(k)	17(k)	41	63	47
Pecans².....	45(k)	265(k)	33,645	95,340	59,983
Cotton¹.....			11,609	10,638	14,667
Peppermint Oil¹.....	722(l)	1,267(l)	846	1,352	.....

\*1929-32 average.

¹In thousands of 100-lb. bags. ²In thousands of tons. ³In thousands of crates. ⁴In thousands of barrels. ⁵In thousands of pounds. ⁶In thousands of bales. (a) Five States including Seventh Federal Reserve district. (b) Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa. (c) Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, North Carolina, Ohio, and Missouri. (d) Iowa, Michigan, and Wisconsin. (e) Michigan and Wisconsin. (f) Michigan. (g) Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois. (h) Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa. (i) Wisconsin, Michigan, and Indiana. (j) Wisconsin. (k) Illinois. (l) Michigan and Indiana.

**VOLUME OF PAYMENT BY CHECK, SEVENTH DISTRICT**

(Amounts in millions of dollars)

	PER CENT OF INCREASE OR DECREASE FROM		
	SEPTEMBER AUGUST SEPTEMBER		
	1936	1936	1935
Chicago.....	\$2,946	+3.7	+17.8
Detroit.....	773	-6.7	+25.3
Milwaukee.....	254	-5.0	+23.0
Indianapolis.....	171	-1.9	+21.6
<b>Total four larger cities.....</b>	<b>\$4,144</b>	<b>+0.8</b>	<b>+19.6</b>
<b>37 smaller cities.....</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>-3.8</b>	<b>+17.8</b>
<b>Total 41 centers.....</b>	<b>\$4,841</b>	<b>+0.1</b>	<b>+19.3</b>

in lard and fats from the United States was fair to good, with prices realized in those markets fully up to the Chicago basis. Total inventories of United States packing-house commodities in foreign markets—inclusive of stocks in transit—declined on October 1 from the beginning of September, although accumulation of American hams in England continued. Imports of animal products into the United States decreased in September from August.

#### DAIRY PRODUCTS

Following a more than normal decline in July and August from June and reflecting improvement in pasture conditions, creamery butter production in the Seventh Federal Reserve district increased 2 per cent in September over the preceding month; it was, however,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  per cent under a year ago and 5 per cent less than the 1926-35 average for the month. The district sales tonnage expanded  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent over August and showed a decline of only 3 per cent from last September and of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent from the ten-year average. Production of the commodity in the United States decreased less than is usual in September from a month earlier and approximated the 1926-35 average volume for September, though remaining considerably under the corresponding period of 1935. Subsequent to mid-summer price advances which attracted importations of butter and likewise were conducive to an increased consumption of oleomargarine, inventories of creamery butter in the United States declined less than seasonally on October 1 from a month earlier and the decrease in holdings as compared with the 1931-35 average was only 12 per cent. Moreover, quotations for the commodity dropped about 3 per cent in September from August and weakened further in the first three weeks of October.

American cheese manufacture in Wisconsin expanded contraseasonally by 5 per cent in September over August and was 16 per cent greater than the 1926-35 average for the month, though 9 per cent below the level of a year ago. Distribution of the commodity from primary markets of that State was rather sharply lower in all three comparisons and also showed more than a seasonal deficiency from current production. Total stocks of cheese in the United States accumulated more than is usual on October 1 over a month earlier and were  $9\frac{1}{2}$  per cent above the 1931-35 average for the date. After registering a decline of 4 per cent in September from August, quotations weakened further in the first half of October, but showed some strength in the third week of the month.

#### LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTER (In thousands)

	CATTLE	HOGS	LAMBS AND SHEEP	CALVES
Yards in Seventh District, September 1936.....	251	391	301	76
Federally Inspected Slaughter, United States: September 1936.....	1,072*	2,403	1,593	553
August 1936.....	1,015*	2,254	1,395	541
September 1935.....	886	1,453	1,549	458

\*Including a small volume of Government purchases.

#### AVERAGE PRICES OF LIVESTOCK (Per hundred pounds at Chicago)

	WEEK ENDED		MONTHS OF	
	OCT. 17 1936	SEPT. 1936	AUG. 1936	SEPT. 1935
Native Beef Steers (average).....	\$9.05	\$9.15	\$8.50	\$10.60
Fat Cows and Heifers.....	6.90	7.00	6.70	7.55
Calves.....	8.00	8.75	7.50	9.00
Hogs (bulk of sales).....	9.70	9.90	10.10	10.95
Lambs.....	8.60	9.30	9.50	9.50

## Industrial Employment Conditions

Seventh district industries maintained their employment volume in September with a fractional increase, but decreased wage payments by one per cent. This represents a better showing than is normally recorded for September, as seasonal curtailments in some of the manufacturing industries, prominent among them the vehicles and stone-clay-and-glass products groups, generally result in an aggregate recession which in the past ten years has averaged one-half per cent in number of workers employed and 3 per cent in their wage payments. The current volumes continued substantially above those of a year ago, the increases in this comparison approximating  $8\frac{1}{2}$  per cent in employment and 15 per cent in payrolls.

The durable goods industries continued in September to show a recession in both employment and payrolls, but it was at a slower rate than in either of the two preceding months. Activity in the metal and wood products industries which recorded further expansion served to some extent to offset the heavy losses within the vehicles and stone-clay-and-glass products groups. The non-durable industries increased employment materially but made practically no change in August payrolls. The losses in this latter item experienced by the leather, textiles, and rubber products industries were about as large as the gains recorded for the chemicals, food, and paper and printing industries. The result for all of the manufacturing groups combined was a practically stationary volume of employment as compared with August but a decrease of about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent in the amount of wage payments. Gains in both employment and payrolls, however, were contributed by the non-manufacturing groups. Merchandising recorded increases that were the heaviest since last December, though slightly below those of September a year ago. Public utilities concerns also showed a gain for the month, while coal mining and the construction industries registered minor decreases, the former contrary to the usual seasonal trend.

#### EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS—SEVENTH FEDERAL RESERVE DISTRICT

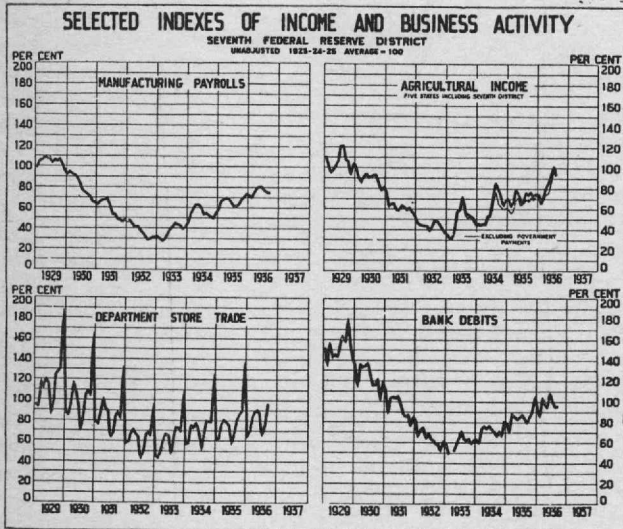
INDUSTRIAL GROUP	WEEK OF SEPT. 15, 1936			CHANGE FROM AUG. 15, 1936	
	REPORTING FIRMS	WAGE EARNERS	EARNINGS ('000 OMITTED)	WAGE EARNERS	EARNINGS
	No.	No.	\$	%	%
<b>DURABLE GOODS:</b>					
Metals and Products <sup>1</sup>	1,498	410,774	10,159	+2.1	+0.6
Vehicles.....	322	278,696	7,863	-6.9	-6.3
Stone Clay and Glass	245	21,650	476	-0.2	-2.1
Wood Products.....	416	44,537	899	+3.7	+4.2
Total.....	2,481	755,657	19,397	-1.4	-2.2
<b>NON-DURABLE GOODS:</b>					
Textiles and Products	325	62,653	1,084	+2.1	-3.3
Food and Products..	742	119,407	2,595	+6.9	+1.7
Chemical Products..	232	34,721	900	+3.4	+2.6
Leather Products....	137	26,630	485	-0.0	-9.4
Rubber Products....	31	13,580	302	+7.6	-1.2
Paper and Printing..	628	73,199	1,872	+1.5	+0.7
Total.....	2,095	330,190	7,238	+3.8	-0.2
<b>Total Mfg., 10 Groups.</b>	<b>4,576</b>	<b>1,085,847</b>	<b>26,635</b>	<b>+0.1</b>	<b>-1.7</b>
Merchandising <sup>2</sup> .....	2,499	110,554	2,263	+5.0	+3.9
Public Utilities.....	192	95,963	3,093	+0.1	+2.4
Coal Mining.....	27	6,235	148	-0.9	-1.4
Construction.....	303	13,797	314	-5.5	-5.9
<b>Total Non-mfg., 4 Groups.....</b>	<b>3,021</b>	<b>226,549</b>	<b>5,818</b>	<b>+2.0</b>	<b>+2.4</b>
<b>Total 14 Groups.....</b>	<b>7,597</b>	<b>1,312,396</b>	<b>32,453</b>	<b>+0.4</b>	<b>-1.0</b>

<sup>1</sup>Other than Vehicles. <sup>2</sup>Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin.



## Major Types of Income and Business Activity

The accompanying chart shows the trend by months of major types of income in the Seventh Federal Reserve district in comparison with department store trade and bank debits activity. From points which in the summer of 1929 were considerably in excess of the 1923-25 average level, these series had dropped by the spring of 1933 to a point below 50 per cent of that average for trade and debits activity and to approximately 30 per cent thereof for industrial payrolls and agricultural income. By midsummer of the current year 1936, debits and agricultural income had recovered to the 1923-25 average level and industrial payrolls and department store trade had reached a point within 25 per cent of that level.



## Manufacturing

### AUTOMOBILE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

The closing of automobile plants during change-over to new models brought production to the low level of the year in September, although it exceeded last year's September low. Output of passenger automobiles in the United States numbered 90,597 in the current period and that of trucks 44,533, or 57 and 28 per cent, respectively, under August production and 61½ and 42 per cent above a year ago. In the first three quarters of 1936, there were 2,717,900 passenger cars produced and 618,396 trucks, as compared with 2,358,998 and 516,306 in the same period of 1935.

### MIDWEST DISTRIBUTION OF AUTOMOBILES

	SEPTEMBER 1936: PER CENT CHANGE FROM		COMPANIES INCLUDED
	AUGUST 1936	SEPT. 1935	
<b>New Cars:</b>			
Wholesale—			
Number Sold.....	-76.0	-56.0	20
Value.....	-76.3	-54.8	20
Retail—			
Number Sold.....	-18.0	+56.3	37
Value.....	-23.3	+65.6	37
On Hand September 30—			
Number.....	-47.4	-3.0	37
Value.....	-46.8	-9.0	37
<b>Used Cars:</b>			
Number Sold.....	-13.9	+32.9	37
Salable on Hand—			
Number.....	+0.6	+17.1	37
Value.....	+0.8	+28.1	37

Wholesale distribution of automobiles in the Middle West again reflected production trends in September, being less than 25 per cent of the August volume. Although sales of new cars at retail likewise declined further, they continued to be considerably heavier than a year ago, and those of used cars maintained a substantially wide margin over last year. With new car stocks reduced by almost half between the close of August and September 30, they totaled for the first time this year under those for the corresponding 1935 date. On the other hand, the number of salable used cars on hand at the end of September was slightly greater than a month earlier and sharply above the number held a year ago. The ratio of deferred payment sales to total retail sales showed little change between August and September, but at 51 per cent in the latter month compared with only 42 per cent for September last year.

### IRON AND STEEL PRODUCTS

Expanding demand from the automotive and the heavy industries has continued to maintain a high level of activity in the steel industry of the Chicago district. Both sales and shipments of finished steel were heavier in September than a month previous, and the first part of October gave no indication of any decided change in trend. Steel ingot output had risen to 76 per cent of capacity by the first week of October and continued at that rate through the middle of it; last year at the same time the rate was slightly under 60 per cent. Production of pig iron in the Illinois and Indiana district rose in September over August and was the heaviest in the daily average for any September since 1929 and for any month since June 1930. Price advances on bars and sheets were announced on October 1, and certain scrap iron and steel items showed further increases at that time.

September reports from Seventh district foundries reflected an increase in demand for malleable castings, orders booked exceeding those of a month earlier by 13 per cent. Production and shipments also rose, by 12 and 5 per cent, respectively, above the volumes reported for August. Increases in dollar value were slightly higher than these gains expressed in tonnage units. At steel casting foundries, however, there was a continued decline in the volume of orders booked, that of 14 per cent from August marking the third consecutive one since the sharp increase of last June. Shipments and production of these castings likewise

### LUMBER AND BUILDING MATERIALS TRADE

CLASS OF TRADE	SEPTEMBER 1936: PER CENT CHANGE FROM		NUMBER OF FIRMS OR YARDS
	AUGUST 1936	SEPTEMBER 1935	
<b>Wholesale Lumber:</b>			
Sales in Dollars.....	-5.2	+15.0	8
Sales in Board Feet.....	-3.3	+21.7	6
Accounts Outstanding <sup>1</sup> .....	+0.8	+14.9	7
<b>Retail Building Materials:</b>			
Total Sales in Dollars.....	+9.0	+21.0	153
Lumber Sales in Dollars.....	+15.4	+26.7	50
Lumber Sales in Board Feet.....	+13.7	+29.8	64
Accounts Outstanding <sup>1</sup> .....	+5.9	+12.0	151
	RATIO OF ACCOUNTS OUTSTANDING <sup>1</sup> TO TOTAL DOLLAR SALES DURING MONTH		
	SEPTEMBER 1936	AUGUST 1936	SEPTEMBER 1935
Wholesale Trade.....	160.5	151.0	160.7
Retail Trade.....	232.8	239.2	251.2

<sup>1</sup>End of Month.

decreased during the month, the former by one and the latter by 4 per cent. Gains over a year ago continued heavy both for steel and malleable castings.

In the manufacture of stoves and furnaces, seasonal activity was, as is customary, carried over into September; molding-room operations were accelerated 6 per cent, orders accepted expanded 34 per cent, and shipments rose 49 per cent. Increases over a year ago in these items were slightly higher than those recorded in August.

#### FURNITURE

Furniture manufacturers of the Seventh district booked orders and made shipments during September that were well above average in volume. New orders gained 7½ per cent over the preceding month, exceeded those of a year ago by 41 per cent, and were 26 per cent above the 1927-35 September average, while shipments showed gains of 25, 32, and 14 per cent in the respective comparisons. Despite the substantial increase in shipments over August and a moderate volume of cancellations, the two combined failed to equal the amount of new orders, so that unfilled orders on hand had expanded 4 per cent further by the end of September and totaled 84 per cent heavier than on the same date last year. At 81 per cent of capacity, September operations were 6 points higher than a month earlier and 13 points above a year ago.

### Building Materials, Construction Work

Demand for building materials was well sustained during September, sales of lumber by wholesale and manufacturing firms of the district decreasing less than seasonally, while retail distribution of lumber increased contrary to the usual trend. Sales of all materials handled at reporting retail yards, which generally rise in September, increased this year to a greater than customary extent. Cement moved into consuming channels within the district at a little slower rate than in either July or August, while brick deliveries were reported as slightly higher than in the preceding month. All building materials continued to show substantial gains in comparison with the corresponding month a year ago. Although collections were reported as generally fair, outstanding accounts of wholesale lumber dealers at the close of September were somewhat larger in ratio to total dollar sales for the period than a month earlier and about the same as a year ago. At retail yards this ratio was lower in both comparisons.

#### BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

There was a noticeably smaller volume of building construction started in the Seventh district during September than in either of the two preceding months, according to data on contracts awarded. Although a substantial falling-off in residential building, following the sharp expansion of a month previous, contributed to the decline shown in the total, other types of construction likewise recorded considerable recession in the month. The 28 per cent increase over a year ago in

total contracts awarded was the smallest in this comparison since June 1935, but the gain in residential contracts continued large.

### BUILDING CONTRACTS AWARDED\* SEVENTH FEDERAL RESERVE DISTRICT

PERIOD	TOTAL CONTRACTS	RESIDENTIAL CONTRACTS
September 1936.....	\$37,257,118	\$11,300,679
Change from August 1936.....	-29.5%	-34.2%
Change from September 1935.....	+27.8%	+80.4%
First nine months of 1936.....	\$359,887,656	\$87,970,260
Change from same period 1935.....	+78.2%	+117.2%

\*Data furnished by F. W. Dodge Corporation.

Prospective building, as reflected by building permits issued, showed an increase in September over August and was well above September last year. The estimated cost of permits issued in 99 cities of the district exceeded that of the preceding month by 29 per cent and was 113 per cent greater than a year ago, while the number of permits gained 7 and 27½ per cent in the respective comparisons.

### Merchandising

The wholesale drug, hardware, and electrical supply trades were in more satisfactory volume in September, subsequent to the unfavorable trends of the preceding month. Sales in these groups increased 12, 15, and 7½ per cent, respectively, over August, all of which gains were greater than seasonal in extent. The grocery trade, however, recorded a further recession, the decline of 4 per cent from a month earlier being contrary to trend for September; furthermore, sales totaled 8 per cent below those of the corresponding month a year ago. In the other lines, gains over 1935 were among the best of the year to date. As a result of the decline in the grocery trade from last September, sales in that group for the first three quarters of 1936 aggregated only fractionally above those for the same period of 1935; drug sales were 3 per cent larger in this comparison, while hardware and electrical supply sales were heavier by 24 and 33 per cent, respectively. Ratios of accounts outstanding to net sales were lower for September in all groups than a month previous, and except in groceries were under a year ago.

The 18 per cent increase recorded this September over last in department store trade of the Seventh district represented the largest gain in the yearly comparison since April 1934. However, this favorable showing is modified to some extent by the fact that in the month last year sales had expanded less than seasonally and there was one less trading day in the period, daily average sales this September totaling only 13 per cent in excess of those a year ago. As compared with August, sales expanded 29 per cent in the current

#### DEPARTMENT STORE TRADE IN SEPTEMBER 1936

LOCALITY	PER CENT CHANGE SEPTEMBER 1936 FROM SEPTEMBER 1935		PER CENT CHANGE FIRST NINE MONTHS 1936 FROM SAME PERIOD 1935	RATIO OF SEPTEMBER COLLECTIONS TO ACCOUNTS OUTSTANDING END OF AUGUST	
	NET SALES	STOCKS END OF MONTH	NET SALES	1936	1935
Chicago.....	+17.3	+3.7	+14.0	31.3	31.2
Detroit.....	+19.4	+6.3	+9.9	47.2	44.4
Milwaukee.....	+18.4	+13.1	+13.1	36.8	36.6
Other Cities.....	+16.1	+6.0	+10.3	31.8	29.9
7th District.....	+17.6	+6.1	+12.2	36.7	35.2

#### WHOLESALE TRADE IN SEPTEMBER 1936

COMMODITY	PER CENT CHANGE FROM SAME MONTH LAST YEAR				RATIO OF ACCOUNTS OUT- STANDING TO NET SALES
	NET SALES	STOCKS	ACCOUNTS OUT- STANDING	COL- LECTIONS	
Groceries...	-8.2	+20.3	-11.3	-2.2	81.0
Hardware...	+28.5	+32.5	+19.1	+28.0	162.2
Drugs.....	+9.2	-2.6	-3.5	+9.9	145.8
Electrical Supplies...	+43.6	+34.5	+24.9	+37.6	136.5



month, which gain is somewhat greater than average for the period; increases ranged from only 16 per cent in the aggregate for stores in smaller centers to 63 per cent in Detroit where special sales affected the trend. It will be noted in the table that the volume of business done by Chicago stores in the first three quarters of 1936 recorded the greatest increase over the same period of 1935—14 per cent—and that Detroit showed the smallest gain—a little under 10 per cent. A rise of 9 per cent took place in stocks between the close of August and September 30, and they totaled 6 per cent above those on the same date last year. Stock turnover for the first nine months this year was 3.35 times as compared with 3.09 times in the corresponding period of 1935.

An exceptionally sharp expansion took place during September in the retail shoe trade, sales of reporting dealers and department stores totaling 86½ per cent in excess of those a month previous. This gain compares with one of 52 per cent in the 1926-35 average

for September and is larger by far than recorded in any of those years. As a result, sales were 21 per cent greater than in the month last year, the increase being the heaviest over a year ago so far in 1936 and comparing with one of only 3 per cent shown in August. In the first nine months of this year, the dollar volume sold exceeded that for the same period of 1935 by 11 per cent. At the end of September, stocks were 3½ per cent higher than at the close of August and 7 per cent above those held on the corresponding date of 1935.

The retail furniture trade recorded about a seasonal rise in September. Aggregate sales of furniture and housefurnishings by reporting dealers and department stores exceeded those of the preceding month by 30½ per cent; the 1927-35 average gain for the period is 32 per cent. As compared with the corresponding month of 1935, sales totaled 28 per cent larger in September this year. Stocks, which increased 3 per cent during the month, were 12½ per cent heavier than at the same time last year.

## MONTHLY BUSINESS INDICES COMPUTED BY FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF CHICAGO

(Index numbers express a comparison of unit or dollar volume for the months indicated, using the monthly average for 1923-1924-1925 as a base, unless otherwise indicated. Where figures for latest month shown are partly estimated on basis of returns received to date, revisions will be given the following month. Data refer to the Seventh Federal Reserve district unless otherwise noted.)

	No. of Firms	Sept. 1936	Aug. 1936	July 1936	June 1936	May 1936	Apr. 1936	Sept. 1935	Aug. 1935	July 1935	June 1935	May 1935	Apr. 1935
<b>Meat Packing—(U. S.)—</b>													
Sales (in dollars).....	47	97	94	91	91	85	85	86	84	82	83	86	82
<b>Casting Foundries—</b>													
Shipments:													
Steel—In Dollars.....	12	85	86	77	74	64	59	39	38	33	27	34	38
In Tons.....	12	94	96	85	80	68	60	39	37	32	25	31	38
Malleable—In Dollars.....	21	50	48	53	56	56	61	37	36	38	39	43	48
In Tons.....	21	73	69	77	82	81	89	56	53	55	57	65	72
<b>Stoves and Furnaces—</b>													
Shipments (in dollars).....	8	274	183	154	170	176	156	196	133	100	117	127	115
<b>Furniture—</b>													
Orders (in dollars).....	12	91	89	100	60	67	62	61	61	74	43	50	43
Shipments (in dollars).....	12	89	72	65	61	59	64	64	56	44	39	46	54
<b>Output of Butter by Creameries—</b>													
Production.....	59	103	101	114	145	140	89	112	131	153	173	144	99
Sales.....	61	104	98	111	133	120	99	107	130	134	141	130	94
<b>Wholesale Trade—</b>													
Net Sales (in dollars):													
Groceries.....	28	74	77	85	70	65	66	81	72	74	68	69	66
Hardware.....	11	96	84	90	94	102	88	75	71	71	76	76	72
Drugs.....	12	83	74	76	77	76	78	76	77	70	70	74	73
<b>Retail Trade (Dept. Stores)—</b>													
Net Sales (in dollars):													
Chicago.....	27	84	72	63	87	86	84	73	63	55	76	73	75
Detroit.....	5	134	81	72	93	100	102	110	74	58	78	92	96
Indianapolis.....	4	116	83	73	93	97	94	95	77	64	79	88	88
Milwaukee.....	5	94	77	68	87	90	93	80	69	59	75	76	85
Other Cities.....	41	83	71	59	79	86	81	71	69	52	71	75	75
Seventh District—Unadjusted.....	82	96	75	65	87	90	89	81	68	56	76	78	81
Adjusted.....	82	94	93	91	89	88	84	79	85	78	77	77	76
<b>Automobile Production—(U. S.)—</b>													
Passenger Cars.....		31	72	127	128	132	142	19	62	94	100	104	132
Trucks.....		118	163	182	205	199	227	83	149	153	165	147	175
<b>Building Construction—</b>													
Contracts Awarded (in dollars):													
Residential.....		39	59	36	43	40	35	21	17	20	26	18	16
Total.....		54	77	72	58	61	54	43	42	38	34	33	36
<b>Iron and Steel—</b>													
Pig Iron Production:*													
Illinois and Indiana.....		103	97	101	101	100	94	68	65	53	59	67	65
United States.....		93	89	85	88	87	82	60	58	50	53	57	57
Steel Ingot Production—(U. S.)*.....		120	121	113	115	117	114	85	81	66	68	73	76

\*Average daily production.

# NATIONAL SUMMARY OF BUSINESS CONDITIONS

(By the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System)

VOLUME of industrial production was maintained in September and employment at factories increased seasonally. Distribution of commodities to consumers increased. Commercial loans of city banks showed further growth.

## PRODUCTION AND EMPLOYMENT

Industrial output in September, as measured by the Board's seasonally adjusted index, was 109 per cent of the 1923-1925 average, approximately the level of the two preceding months. Output of steel was about the same as in August and in the first three weeks of October the rate of activity rose to a higher level than at any time since 1930. Automobile production showed a sharp seasonal decline in September and a considerable seasonal advance in the first three weeks of October. Production of lumber and cement showed a further rise and increases in activity were also reported at meat-packing establishments and at cotton and silk textile factories. At woolen mills there was little change in production, although an increase is usual in September. Output of coal increased more than seasonally, and crude petroleum production continued in large volume.

Factory employment increased seasonally in September and payrolls were maintained at the August level. The number employed in most industries producing durable goods continued to increase, while at automobile factories there was a seasonal decline. Employment decreased at woolen mills and showed a smaller increase than is usual at this season at cotton mills and at establishments producing women's clothing.

Value of construction contracts awarded, as reported by the F. W. Dodge Corporation, declined somewhat further in September from the relatively high level reached in the middle of the year. There was a decrease in awards for residential building, reflecting chiefly a smaller volume of contracts for apartment construction which in August had included several large publicly-financed projects. Awards for non-residential work declined, partly as a result of a reduction in contracts for public works and utilities which have been in large volume during recent months.

## AGRICULTURE

Crop conditions improved somewhat from September 1 to October 1, according to the Department of Agriculture, but estimates for corn and many other crops are still considerably below the harvests of last year. The cotton crop is estimated at 11,600,000 bales, an increase of 500,000 bales from the estimate made a month earlier and of 1,000,000 bales from the 1935 crop. Total cash farm income, including all Government payments, is estimated by the Department of Agriculture at \$7,850,000,000 for the calendar year 1936 as compared with \$7,090,000,000 in 1935.

## DISTRIBUTION

Distribution of commodities to consumers increased by more than the usual amount in September, following a less than seasonal rise between July and August. Sales at department and variety stores and by mail order houses serving rural areas were in larger volume in September.

Volume of freight carried by railroads increased, reflecting larger shipments of coal, ore, and miscellaneous freight and a decline in loadings of grain.

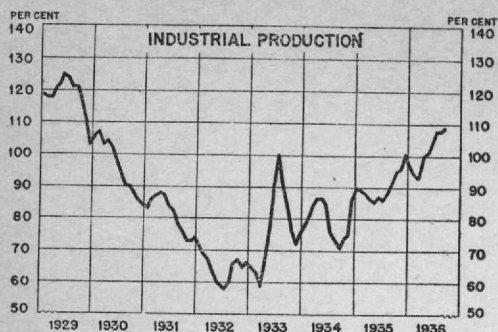
## COMMODITY PRICES

The general level of wholesale commodity prices has shown little change in the last two months. From the middle of September to the third week in October sugar and butter prices declined, and there were decreases also in prices of hogs and pork, as is usual at this season. Price advances were reported for leather and coke and higher prices for some finished and semi-finished steel products became effective on October 1.

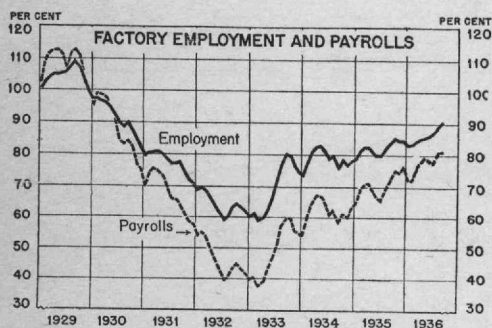
## BANK CREDIT

Loans of reporting member banks in leading cities, other than loans on securities, continued to increase in September and the first half of October. On October 14 the volume of these loans was more than \$400,000,000 larger than on July 29. About half of this increase was at New York City banks and the remainder principally at banks in western and southern cities. Holdings of United States Government obligations have declined in recent weeks at New York City banks and have increased somewhat at other banks. Deposits of reporting banks have continued to increase.

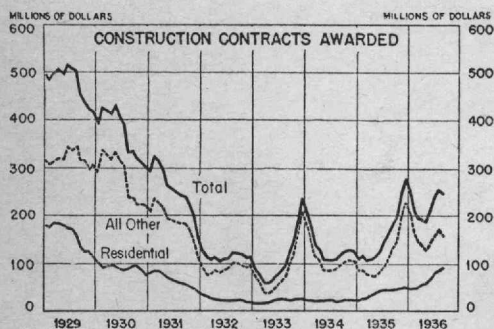
Excess reserves of member banks increased by \$410,000,000 in the five weeks ending October 21, reflecting a reduction of \$300,000,000 in Treasury holdings of cash and balances at the reserve banks and an increase of \$250,000,000 in monetary gold stock, the effects of which were partially offset by a seasonal increase in money in circulation and a further growth in required reserves.



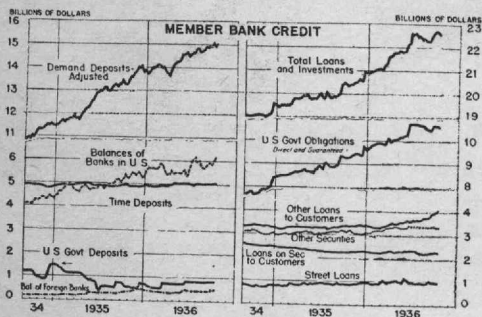
Index of physical volume of production, adjusted for seasonal variation, 1923-1925 average=100. By months, January 1929 to September 1936.



Indexes of number employed and payrolls, without adjustment for seasonal variation, 1923-1925 average=100. By months, January 1929 to September 1936. Indexes compiled by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.



Three-month moving averages of F. W. Dodge data for value of contracts awarded in 37 Eastern States, adjusted for seasonal variation. Latest figures based on data for August and September and estimate for October.



Wednesday figures for reporting member banks in 101 leading cities. September 5, 1934, to October 14, 1936. Loans on real estate, loans to banks, and acceptances and commercial paper bought included in total loans and investments but not shown separately.