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STATEMENT BY ROBERT ORTNER
UNDER SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS,
ON LEADING INDICATORS IN MARCH

March's moderate 0.4-percent rise in the leading index followed a similar gain in February (revised down from 0.7 percent). During the last six months, the surge in stock prices accounted for a large share of the strong 9.0-percent annual rate of growth in the index. Excluding stock prices, the rate of increase was still a healthy 6.2 percent and is consistent with 3 percent or more overall economic growth during 1987.

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