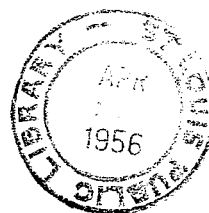


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Economic Indicators

APRIL 1956

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by the Council of Economic Advisers*

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JOINT RESOLUTION [S. J. Res. 55]

To print the monthly publication entitled "Economic Indicators"

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Joint Committee on the Economic Report be authorized to issue a monthly publication entitled "Economic Indicators," and that a sufficient quantity be printed to furnish one copy to each Member of Congress; the Secretary and the Sergeant at Arms of the Senate; the Clerk, Sergeant at Arms, and Doorkeeper of the House of Representatives; two copies to the libraries of the Senate and House, and the Congressional Library; seven hundred copies to the Joint Committee on the Economic Report; and the required number of copies to the Superintendent of Documents for distribution to depository libraries; and that the Superintendent of Documents be authorized to have copies printed for sale to the public.

Approved June 23, 1949.

Charts drawn by Graphics Unit, Office of the Secretary, Department of Commerce

Contents

TOTAL OUTPUT, INCOME, AND SPENDING

	Page
The Nation's Income, Expenditure, and Saving.....	1
Gross National Product or Expenditure.....	2
National Income.....	3
Sources of Personal Income.....	4
Disposition of Personal Income.....	5
Per Capita Disposable Income.....	6
Farm Income.....	7
Corporate Profits.....	8
Gross Private Domestic Investment.....	9
Expenditures for New Plant and Equipment.....	10

EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT, AND WAGES

Status of the Labor Force.....	11
Nonagricultural Employment.....	12
Average Weekly Hours—Selected Industries.....	13
Average Hourly Earnings—Selected Industries.....	14
Average Weekly Earnings—Selected Industries.....	15

PRODUCTION AND BUSINESS ACTIVITY

Industrial Production.....	16
Production of Selected Manufactures.....	17
Weekly Indicators of Production.....	18
New Construction.....	19
Housing Starts and Applications for Financing.....	20
Sales and Inventories—Manufacturing and Trade.....	21
Merchandise Exports and Imports.....	22

PRICES

Consumer Prices.....	23
Wholesale Prices.....	24
Prices Received and Paid by Farmers.....	25

CURRENCY, CREDIT, AND SECURITY MARKETS

Currency and Deposits.....	26
Bank Loans, Investments, and Reserves.....	27
Consumer Credit.....	28
Bond Yields and Interest Rates.....	29
Stock Prices.....	30

FEDERAL FINANCE

Budget Receipts and Expenditures.....	31
Cash Receipts from and Payments to the Public.....	32

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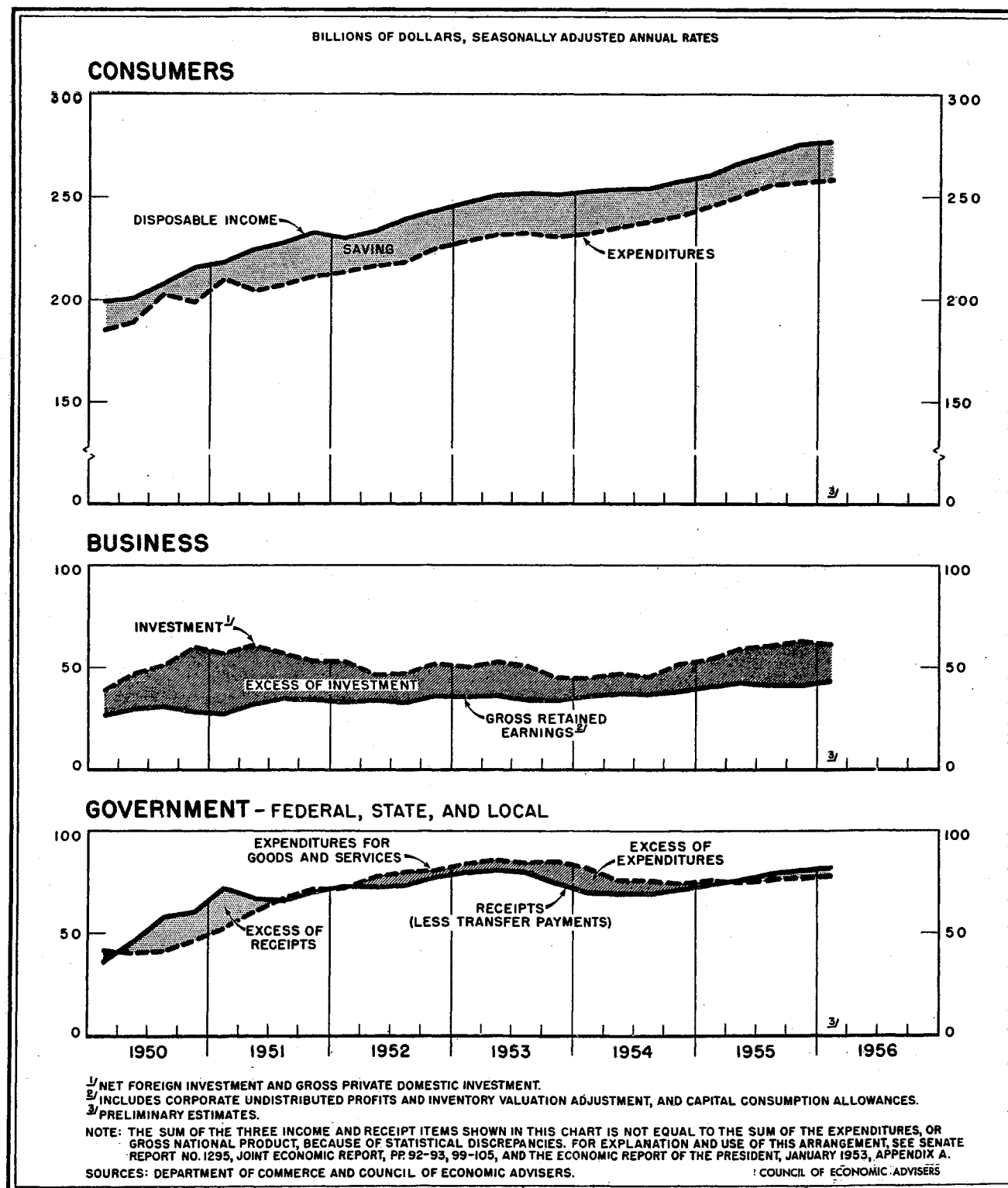
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TOTAL OUTPUT, INCOME, AND SPENDING

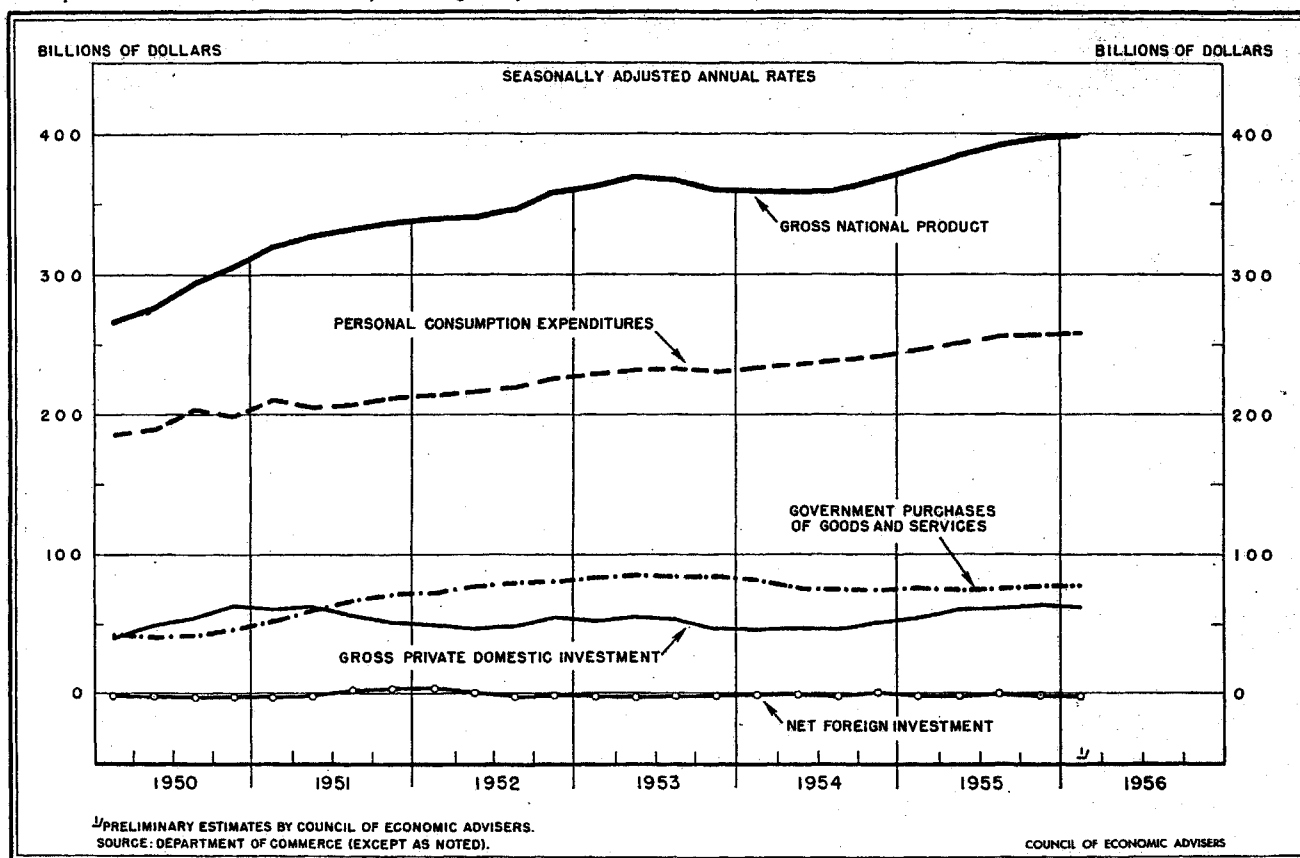
THE NATION'S INCOME, EXPENDITURE, AND SAVING

Preliminary estimates of total income and expenditures show a moderate rise in over-all economic activity between the last quarter of 1955 and the first quarter of 1956.



GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT OR EXPENDITURE

According to preliminary estimates, gross national product rose \$1.7 billion (seasonally adjusted annual rate) between the fourth quarter of 1955 and the first quarter of 1956. Consumption expenditures increased \$2.2 billion and government purchases rose \$0.3 billion, while gross private domestic investment declined \$0.8 billion.



[Billions of dollars]

Period	Total gross national product	Personal consumption expenditures	Gross private domestic investment	Net foreign investment	Government purchases of goods and services				
					Total ¹	Federal			State and local
						Total ¹	National security ²	Other	
1939.....	91.1	67.6	9.3	0.9	13.3	5.2	1.3	3.9	8.2
1947.....	232.2	165.0	29.7	8.9	28.6	15.8	13.3	3.8	12.8
1948.....	257.3	177.6	41.2	2.0	36.6	21.0	16.0	5.6	15.6
1949.....	257.3	180.6	32.5	.5	43.6	25.4	19.3	6.6	18.2
1950.....	285.1	194.0	51.2	-2.2	42.0	22.1	18.5	3.9	19.9
1951.....	328.2	208.3	56.9	.2	62.8	41.0	37.3	4.2	21.8
1952.....	345.2	218.3	49.6	-.2	77.5	54.3	48.8	5.8	23.2
1953.....	364.5	230.6	51.4	-2.0	84.5	59.5	51.4	8.5	25.0
1954.....	360.5	236.5	47.2	-.3	77.0	49.2	43.2	6.3	27.8
1955.....	387.2	252.3	59.3	-.4	75.9	45.8	40.8	5.4	30.1
Seasonally adjusted annual rates									
1954: Third quarter.....	358.8	237.9	45.9	-.7	75.8	47.7	42.1	6.1	28.1
Fourth quarter.....	367.1	241.0	50.7	.9	74.5	45.7	40.5	5.5	28.7
1955: First quarter.....	375.3	245.8	54.1	-.4	75.8	46.4	41.2	5.5	29.4
Second quarter.....	384.8	250.5	60.1	-.7	74.9	45.2	40.4	5.2	29.7
Third quarter.....	392.0	255.7	60.5	.0	75.8	45.5	40.6	5.2	30.2
Fourth quarter.....	397.3	257.2	63.2	-.3	77.2	46.3	41.0	5.5	31.0
1956: First quarter ³	399.0	259.4	62.4	-.3	77.5	45.8	40.9	5.2	31.7

¹ Less Government sales.

² Includes expenditures for military services, international security and foreign relations (except foreign loans), development and control of atomic energy, promotion of the merchant marine, promotion of defense production and economic stabilization, and civil defense. For further details, see *Economic Report of the President*, January 1955 (p. 137), and *National Income, 1954 Edition* (p. 148). These expenditures are not comparable with the "major national security" category in *The Budget of the U. S. Government for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1957*, and shown on p. 31 of *Economic Indicators*.

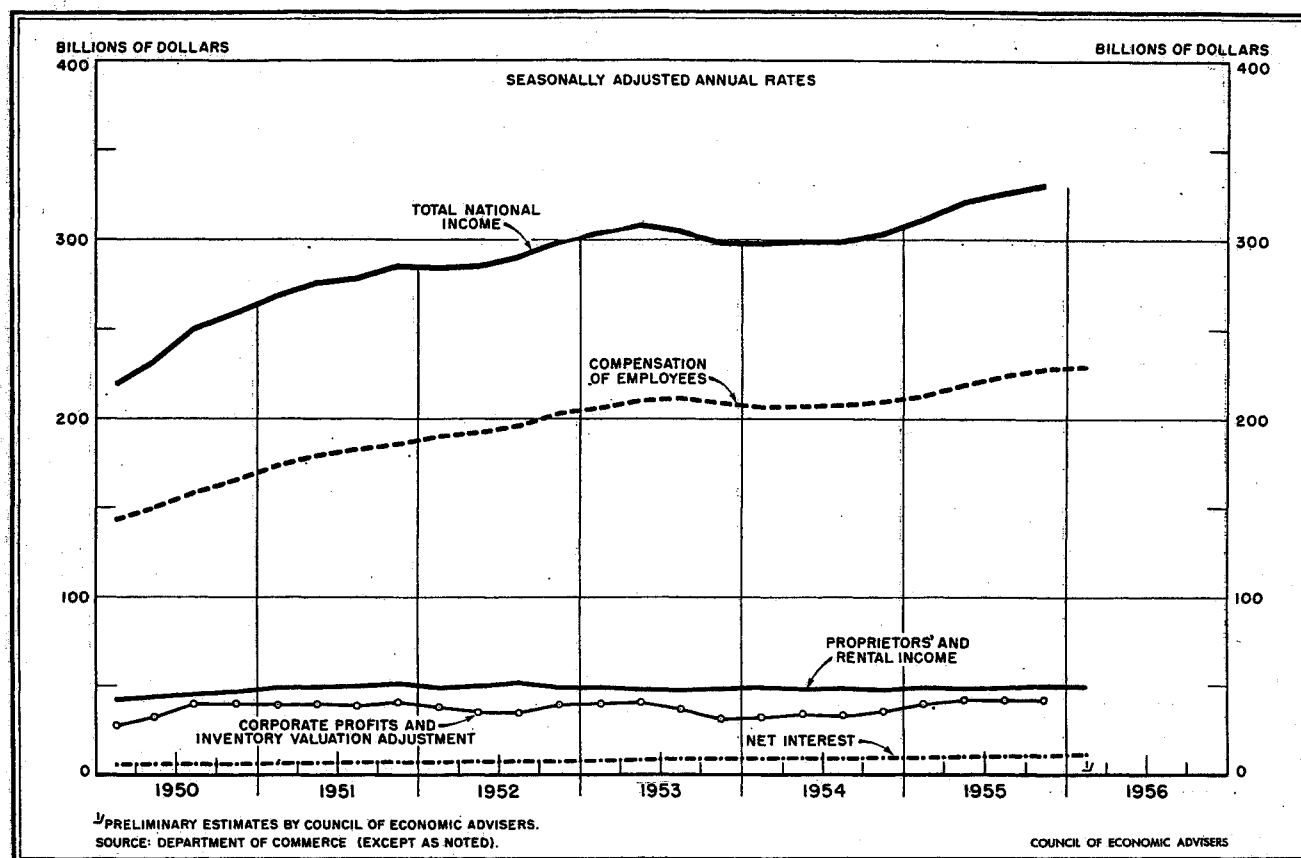
³ Preliminary estimates by Council of Economic Advisers.

NOTE.—Detail will not necessarily add to totals because of rounding.

Source: Department of Commerce (except as noted).

NATIONAL INCOME

According to preliminary estimates, compensation of employees rose about \$2 billion (seasonally adjusted annual rate) between the fourth quarter of last year and the first quarter of this year. Business and professional income, rents, and interest rose slightly, while farm proprietors' income declined.



[Billions of dollars]

Period	Total national income	Compensation of employees ¹	Proprietors' income		Rental income of persons	Net interest	Corporate profits and inventory valuation adjustment		
			Farm	Business and professional			Total	Profits before taxes	Inventory valuation adjustment
1939.....	72.8	48.1	4.3	7.3	2.7	4.6	5.7	6.4	-0.7
1947.....	197.2	128.8	14.5	19.9	6.5	3.8	23.6	29.5	-5.9
1948.....	221.6	140.9	16.7	21.6	7.2	4.5	30.6	32.8	-2.2
1949.....	216.2	140.9	12.7	21.4	7.9	5.2	28.1	26.2	1.9
1950.....	240.0	154.3	13.3	22.9	8.5	5.9	35.1	40.0	-4.9
1951.....	277.0	180.4	16.0	24.8	9.1	6.8	39.9	41.2	-1.3
1952.....	289.5	195.3	14.3	25.7	9.9	7.4	36.9	35.9	1.0
1953.....	303.6	209.2	12.3	25.9	10.3	8.8	37.2	38.3	-1.1
1954.....	299.7	207.9	12.0	25.9	10.5	9.5	33.8	34.0	-0.2
1955.....	322.3	221.3	11.0	27.3	10.7	10.5	41.4	43.4	-2.0
Seasonally adjusted annual rates									
1954: Third quarter.....	298.7	207.8	11.7	26.0	10.6	9.5	33.1	33.5	-0.5
Fourth quarter.....	303.2	209.8	11.2	26.3	10.7	9.7	35.5	36.0	-0.5
1955: First quarter.....	311.4	213.1	11.5	26.6	10.7	9.9	39.6	40.9	-1.3
Second quarter.....	320.7	219.5	11.0	27.1	10.7	10.3	42.2	43.0	-0.8
Third quarter.....	325.7	224.3	10.6	27.6	10.7	10.7	41.9	44.5	-2.6
Fourth quarter.....	² 330.6	228.0	10.8	28.0	10.7	11.2	² 41.9	² 45.0	-3.1
1956: First quarter ²	(³)	230.1	10.4	28.1	10.8	11.6	(³)	(³)	-2.5

¹ Includes employer contributions for social insurance. (See also p. 4.)

² Preliminary estimates by Council of Economic Advisers.

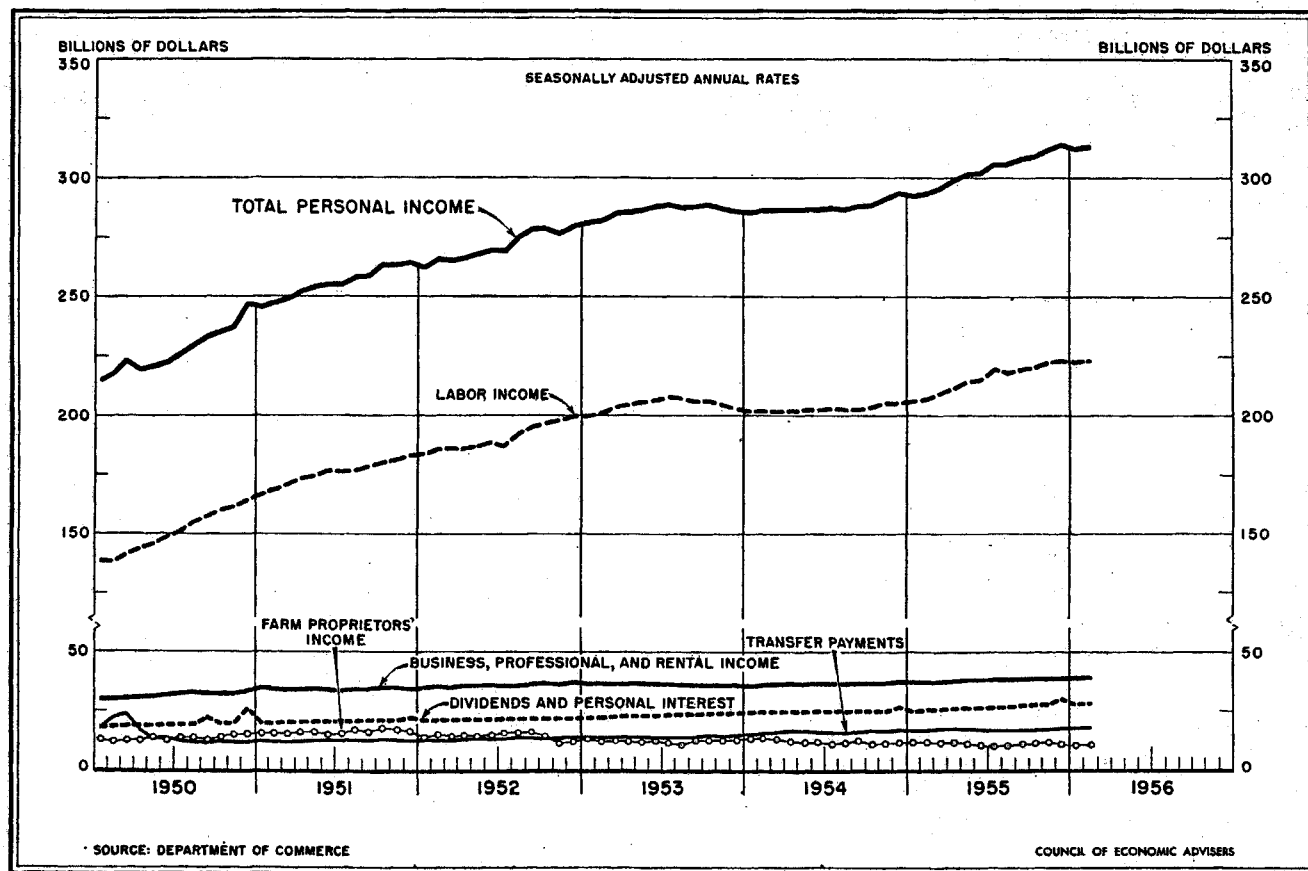
³ Not available.

NOTE.—Detail will not necessarily add to totals because of rounding.

Source: Department of Commerce (except as noted).

SOURCES OF PERSONAL INCOME

Personal income rose about \$1½ billion (seasonally adjusted annual rate) in February.



[Billions of dollars]

Period	Total personal income	Labor income (wage and salary disbursements and other labor income) ¹	Proprietors' income		Rental income of persons	Dividends	Personal interest income	Transfer payments	Less: Personal contributions for social insurance	Nonagricultural personal income ²
			Farm	Business and professional						
1939.....	72.9	46.6	4.3	7.3	2.7	3.8	5.8	3.0	0.6	67.1
1948.....	208.7	137.9	16.7	21.6	7.2	7.2	9.0	11.3	2.2	188.5
1949.....	206.8	137.4	12.7	21.4	7.9	7.5	9.8	12.4	2.2	190.8
1950.....	227.1	150.3	13.3	22.9	8.5	9.2	10.6	15.1	2.9	210.5
1951.....	255.3	175.6	16.0	24.8	9.1	9.1	11.6	12.6	3.4	235.7
1952.....	271.1	190.5	14.3	25.7	9.9	9.0	12.3	13.2	3.8	253.1
1953.....	286.2	204.6	12.3	25.9	10.3	9.3	13.8	14.0	3.9	270.2
1954.....	287.6	202.8	12.0	25.9	10.5	10.0	14.7	16.2	4.5	271.9
1955.....	303.2	215.5	11.0	27.3	10.7	11.2	15.6	17.2	5.2	288.4
Seasonally adjusted annual rates										
1955: February....	293.2	207.1	11.7	26.4	10.7	10.2	15.1	17.0	5.0	277.7
March.....	295.7	209.4	11.1	26.7	10.7	10.4	15.2	17.4	5.1	280.9
April.....	298.9	211.5	11.4	26.9	10.6	10.6	15.3	17.6	5.1	283.7
May.....	301.4	214.2	10.9	27.2	10.7	10.7	15.4	17.5	5.2	286.6
June.....	301.6	214.9	10.5	27.3	10.7	10.8	15.5	17.1	5.2	287.2
July.....	305.3	219.4	9.8	27.5	10.7	10.8	15.6	16.9	5.3	291.7
August.....	305.3	218.2	10.6	27.5	10.7	11.0	15.7	16.9	5.3	290.8
September.....	307.9	219.5	11.2	27.8	10.6	11.3	15.8	16.9	5.3	293.0
October.....	308.7	220.4	10.7	28.0	10.7	11.5	16.0	16.9	5.3	294.4
November.....	311.5	222.4	11.1	27.9	10.7	11.5	16.1	17.1	5.3	296.6
December.....	314.3	223.0	10.6	28.1	10.6	13.7	16.2	17.4	5.4	299.9
1956: January.....	312.7	223.4	10.3	28.1	10.8	11.6	16.5	17.7	5.7	298.6
February.....	313.1	223.2	10.6	28.1	10.8	11.6	16.7	17.8	5.7	298.8

¹ Compensation of employees (see p. 3) excluding employer contributions for social insurance.

² Personal income exclusive of net income of unincorporated farm enterprises, farm wages, agricultural net interest, and net dividends paid by agricultural corporations.

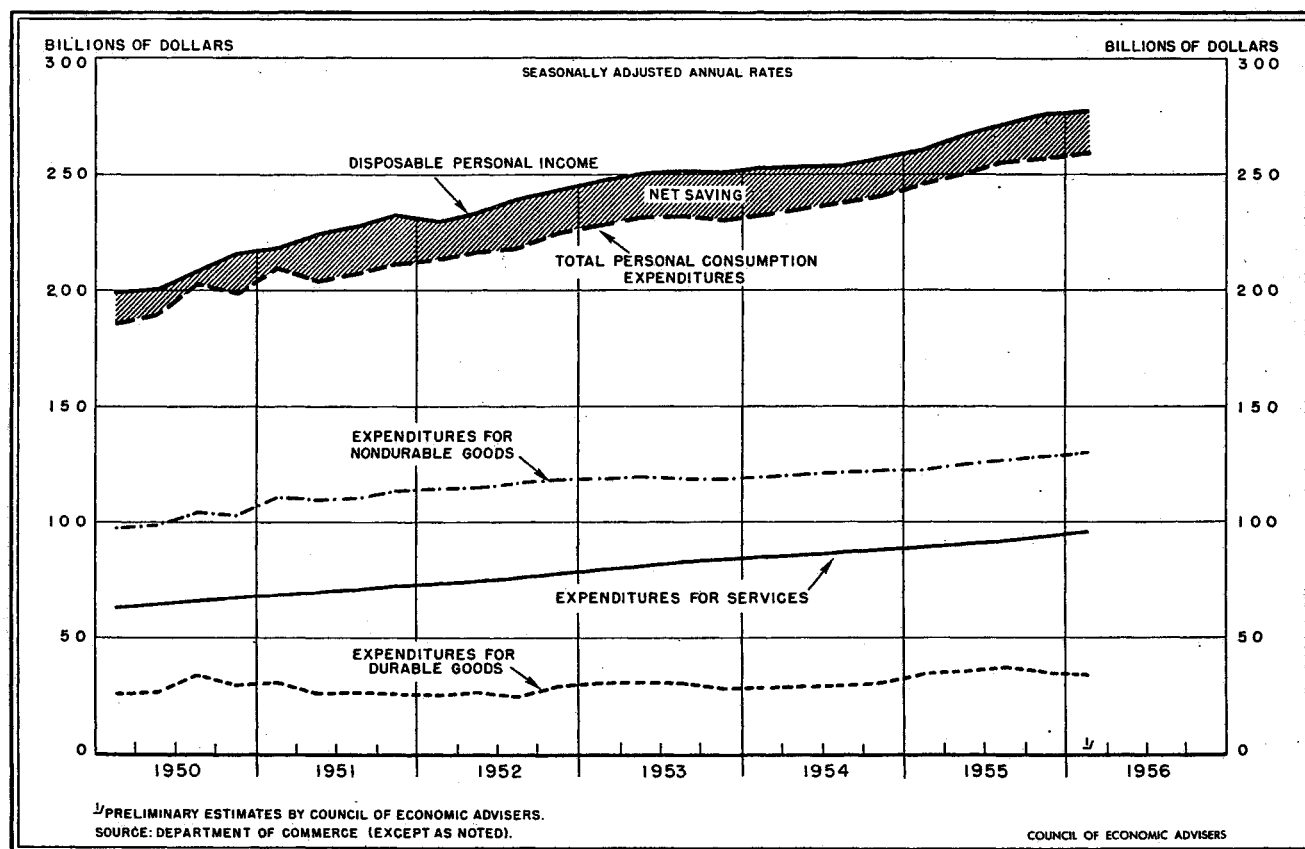
NOTE.—Detail will not necessarily add to totals because of rounding.

³ Includes \$2.7 billion National Service Life Insurance dividend, most of which was paid in the first half of the year.

Source: Department of Commerce.

DISPOSITION OF PERSONAL INCOME

Although personal income rose by about \$2 billion (seasonally adjusted annual rate) in the first quarter, disposable income increased only \$1 billion, according to preliminary estimates. The difference was due mainly to year-end personal tax payments on 1955 income. Consumption expenditures increased more than \$2 billion and the personal saving rate declined.



Period	Personal income	Less: Personal taxes ¹	Equals: Disposable personal income	Less: Personal consumption expenditures				Equals: Personal saving	Saving as percent of disposable income
				Total	Durable goods	Non-durable goods	Services		
Billions of dollars									
1939-----	72.9	2.4	70.4	67.6	6.7	35.1	25.8	2.9	4.1
1947-----	190.5	21.5	169.0	165.0	20.6	93.1	51.3	4.0	2.4
1948-----	208.7	21.1	187.6	177.6	22.2	98.7	56.7	10.0	5.3
1949-----	206.8	18.7	188.2	180.6	23.6	96.9	60.1	7.6	4.0
1950-----	227.1	20.9	206.1	194.0	28.6	100.4	65.0	12.1	5.9
1951-----	255.3	29.3	226.1	208.3	27.1	111.1	70.1	17.7	7.8
1952-----	271.1	34.4	236.7	218.3	26.6	116.0	75.7	18.4	7.8
1953-----	286.2	35.8	250.4	230.6	29.8	118.9	81.8	19.8	7.9
1954-----	287.6	32.8	254.8	236.5	29.3	120.9	86.4	18.3	7.2
1955-----	303.2	33.9	269.4	252.3	35.3	125.9	91.2	17.1	6.3
Billions of dollars, seasonally adjusted annual rates									
1954: Third quarter-----	287.3	32.8	254.5	237.9	29.4	121.5	87.0	16.6	6.5
Fourth quarter-----	290.8	33.1	257.8	241.0	30.4	122.5	88.1	16.8	6.5
1955: First quarter-----	293.6	32.6	261.0	245.8	34.4	122.4	89.0	15.3	5.9
Second quarter-----	300.5	33.4	267.1	250.5	35.1	125.3	90.2	16.6	6.2
Third quarter-----	306.1	34.4	271.7	255.7	36.9	127.0	91.8	16.0	5.9
Fourth quarter-----	311.5	35.4	276.0	257.2	34.8	128.8	93.6	18.8	6.8
1956: First quarter ² -----	313.6	36.5	277.1	259.4	34.1	130.0	95.3	17.7	6.4

¹ Includes such items as fines, penalties, and donations.

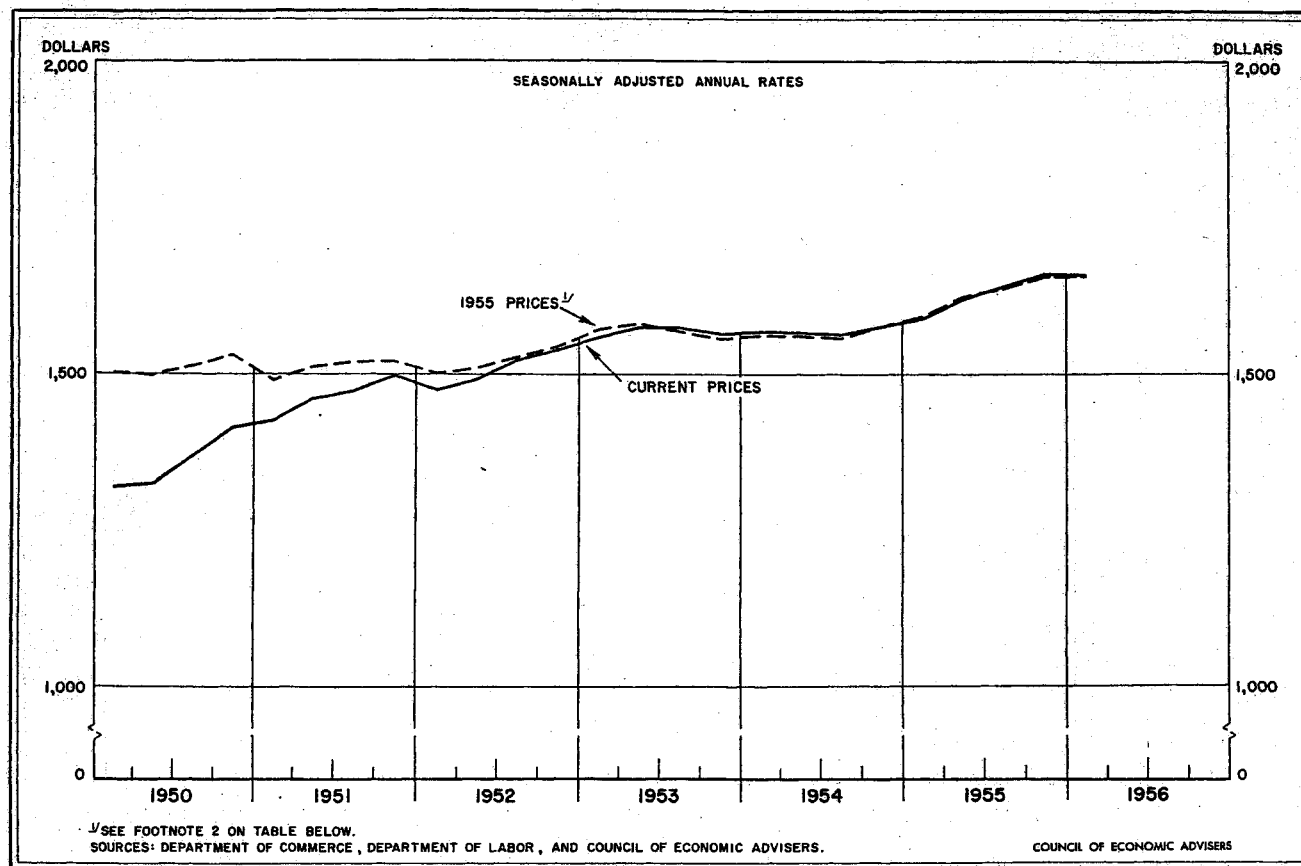
² Preliminary estimates by Council of Economic Advisers.

NOTE.—Detail will not necessarily add to total because of rounding.

Source: Department of Commerce (except as noted).

PER CAPITA DISPOSABLE INCOME

Per capita disposable income (seasonally adjusted) was practically unchanged between the fourth quarter of 1955 and the first quarter of 1956, according to preliminary estimates.



Period	Total disposable personal income (billions of dollars) ¹		Per capita disposable personal income (dollars) ¹		Population (thousands) ²
	Current prices	1955 prices ³	Current prices	1955 prices ³	
939.....	70.4	135.6	538	1,037	131,028
947.....	169.0	202.6	1,173	1,406	144,126
948.....	187.6	208.9	1,279	1,424	146,631
949.....	188.2	211.7	1,261	1,418	149,188
950.....	206.1	229.5	1,359	1,513	151,683
951.....	226.1	233.3	1,465	1,512	154,360
952.....	236.7	238.8	1,508	1,522	157,028
953.....	250.4	250.7	1,568	1,570	159,643
954.....	254.8	254.0	1,569	1,564	162,409
955.....	269.4	269.4	1,630	1,630	165,248
Seasonally adjusted annual rates					
954: Third quarter.....	254.5	253.5	1,563	1,557	162,806
Fourth quarter.....	257.8	257.8	1,576	1,576	163,582
955: First quarter.....	261.0	261.5	1,589	1,592	164,262
Second quarter.....	267.1	267.6	1,620	1,623	164,911
Third quarter.....	271.7	271.2	1,640	1,637	165,628
Fourth quarter.....	276.0	275.2	1,659	1,654	166,396
956: First quarter ⁴	277.1	276.8	1,659	1,657	167,074

¹ Income less taxes.

² Dollar estimates in current prices divided by consumer price index on a 1955 base.

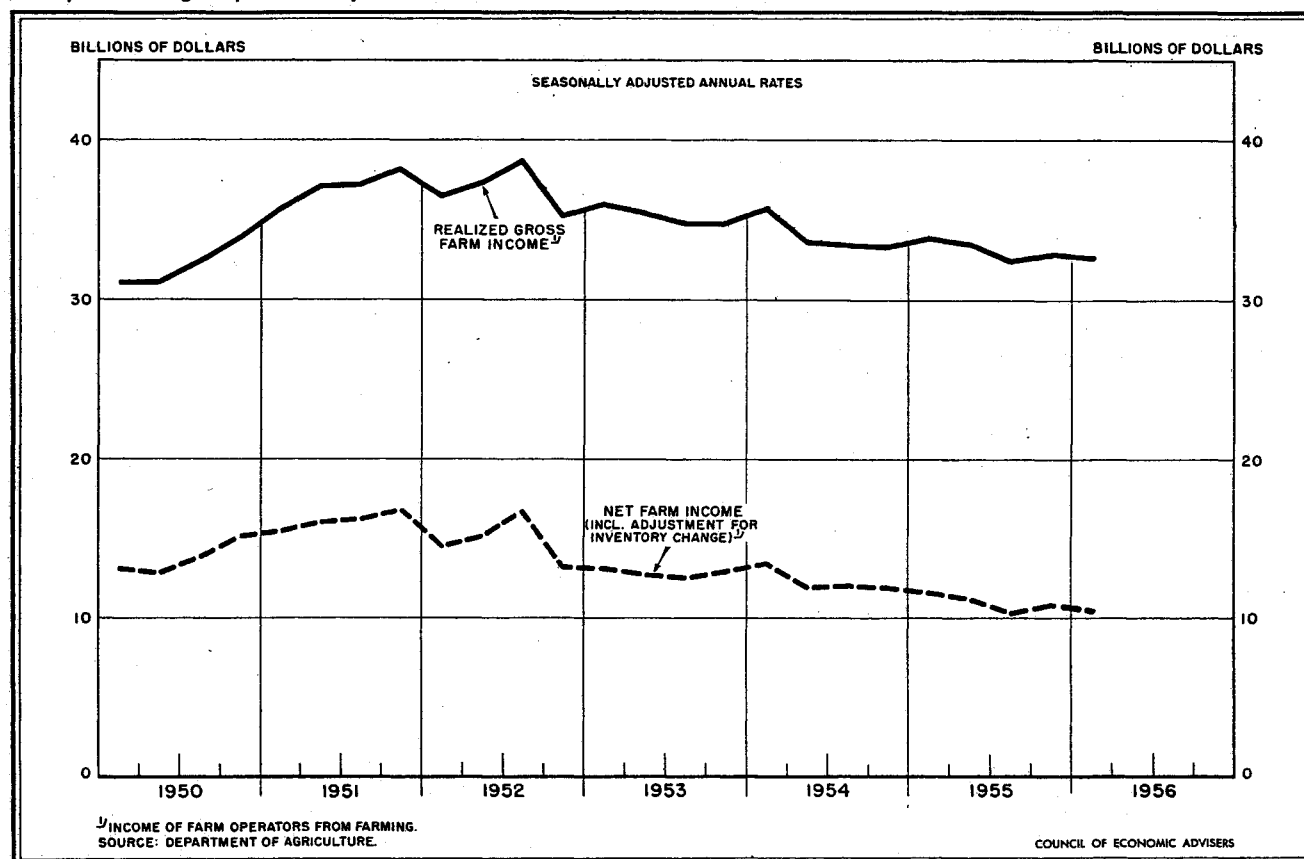
³ Includes armed forces overseas. Annual data as of July 1; quarterly data centered in the middle of the period, interpolated from monthly figures.

⁴ Preliminary estimates.

Sources: Department of Commerce, Department of Labor, and Council of Economic Advisers.

FARM INCOME

Gross and net farm income, seasonally adjusted, declined between the fourth quarter of 1955 and the first quarter of 1956, according to preliminary estimates.



Period	Farm operators' income						Number of farms (millions) ⁶
	Realized gross farm income ¹	Farm production expenses	Net income ²		Net income per farm (including adjustment for inventory change)		
			Excluding adjustment for inventory change ³	Including adjustment for inventory change ⁴	Current prices	1955 prices ⁵	
Billions of dollars					Dollars		
1939-----	10. 6	6. 2	4. 4	4. 5	697	1, 584	6. 4
1947-----	34. 0	16. 8	17. 2	15. 5	2, 632	3, 032	5. 9
1948-----	34. 6	18. 6	15. 9	17. 7	3, 049	3, 318	5. 8
1949-----	31. 6	17. 9	13. 7	12. 9	2, 248	2, 526	5. 7
1950-----	32. 1	19. 2	12. 9	13. 7	2, 428	2, 695	5. 6
1951-----	37. 1	22. 3	14. 8	16. 1	2, 919	2, 973	5. 5
1952-----	36. 9	22. 9	14. 1	14. 9	2, 778	2, 798	5. 4
1953-----	35. 2	21. 8	13. 4	12. 8	2, 445	2, 472	5. 2
1954-----	34. 0	22. 2	11. 8	12. 3	2, 413	2, 403	5. 1
1955-----	33. 2	22. 4	10. 8	11. 0	2, 192	2, 192	5. 0
Seasonally adjusted annual rates							
1954: Third quarter-----	33. 4	22. 0	11. 4	12. 0	2, 353	2, 327	5. 1
Fourth quarter-----	33. 3	22. 0	11. 3	11. 9	2, 333	2, 342	5. 1
1955: First quarter-----	33. 9	22. 7	11. 2	11. 6	2, 320	2, 330	5. 0
Second quarter-----	33. 5	22. 5	11. 0	11. 2	2, 240	2, 230	5. 0
Third quarter-----	32. 4	22. 2	10. 2	10. 3	2, 060	2, 060	5. 0
Fourth quarter-----	32. 8	22. 1	10. 7	10. 8	2, 160	2, 160	5. 0
1956: First quarter ⁸ -----	32. 6	22. 2	10. 4	10. 4	2, 120	2, 120	4. 9

¹ Includes cash receipts from farm marketings, value of farm products consumed directly in farm households, gross rental value of farm dwellings, and Government payments to farmers.

² Excludes (a) farm wages paid to workers living on farms and (b) any income to farm people from nonfarm sources. These items in 1954 were as follows: (a) 2.0 billion dollars and (b) 5.7 billion dollars.

³ Differs from farm proprietors' income on pages 3 and 4 because of revisions by the Department of Agriculture not yet incorporated into the national income accounts of the Department of Commerce.

⁴ Dollar estimates in current prices divided by index of prices paid by farmers for items used in family living, on a 1955 base.

⁵ For the quarterly data, the number of farms is held constant within a given year.

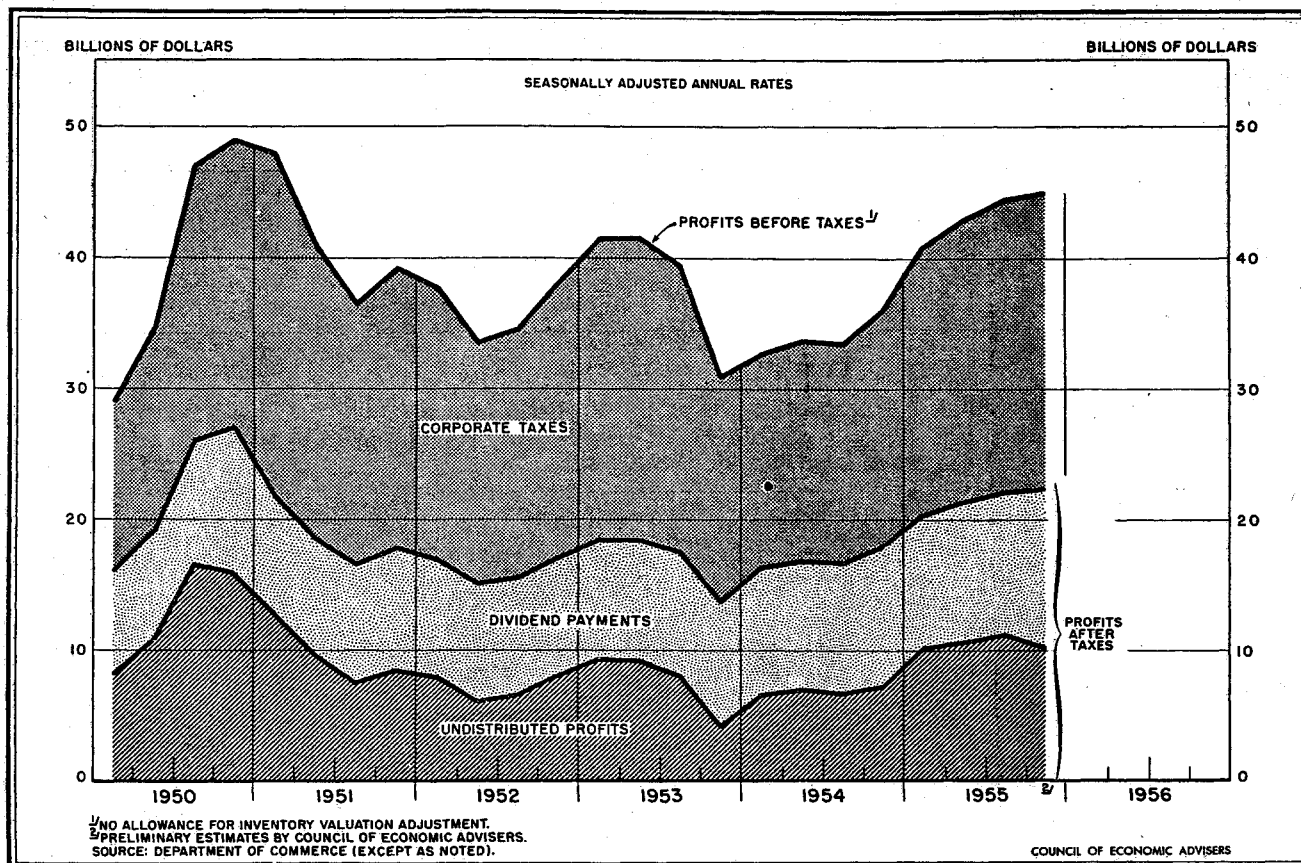
⁶ Preliminary estimates.

⁷ Estimates by Council of Economic Advisers.

Source: Department of Agriculture (except as noted).

CORPORATE PROFITS

According to preliminary estimates, corporate profits rose slightly in the fourth quarter of 1955.



[Billions of dollars]

Period	Corporate profits before taxes	Corporate tax liability	Corporate profits after taxes		
			Total	Dividend payments	Undistributed profits
1939.....	6.4	1.4	5.0	3.8	1.2
1947.....	29.5	11.3	18.2	6.5	11.7
1948.....	32.8	12.5	20.3	7.2	13.0
1949.....	26.2	10.4	15.8	7.5	8.3
1950.....	40.0	17.8	22.1	9.2	12.9
1951.....	41.2	22.5	18.7	9.1	9.6
1952.....	35.9	19.8	16.1	9.0	7.1
1953.....	38.3	21.3	17.0	9.3	7.7
1954.....	34.0	17.1	17.0	10.0	7.0
1955.....	43.4	21.8	21.6	11.2	10.4
Seasonally adjusted annual rates					
1954: Third quarter.....	33.5	16.8	16.7	10.0	6.7
Fourth quarter.....	36.0	18.1	17.9	10.6	7.3
1955: First quarter.....	40.9	20.5	20.4	10.2	10.2
Second quarter.....	43.0	21.6	21.4	10.7	10.7
Third quarter.....	44.5	22.3	22.2	11.0	11.2
Fourth quarter.....	¹ 45.0	¹ 22.6	¹ 22.4	12.2	¹ 10.2

¹ Preliminary estimates by Council of Economic Advisers.

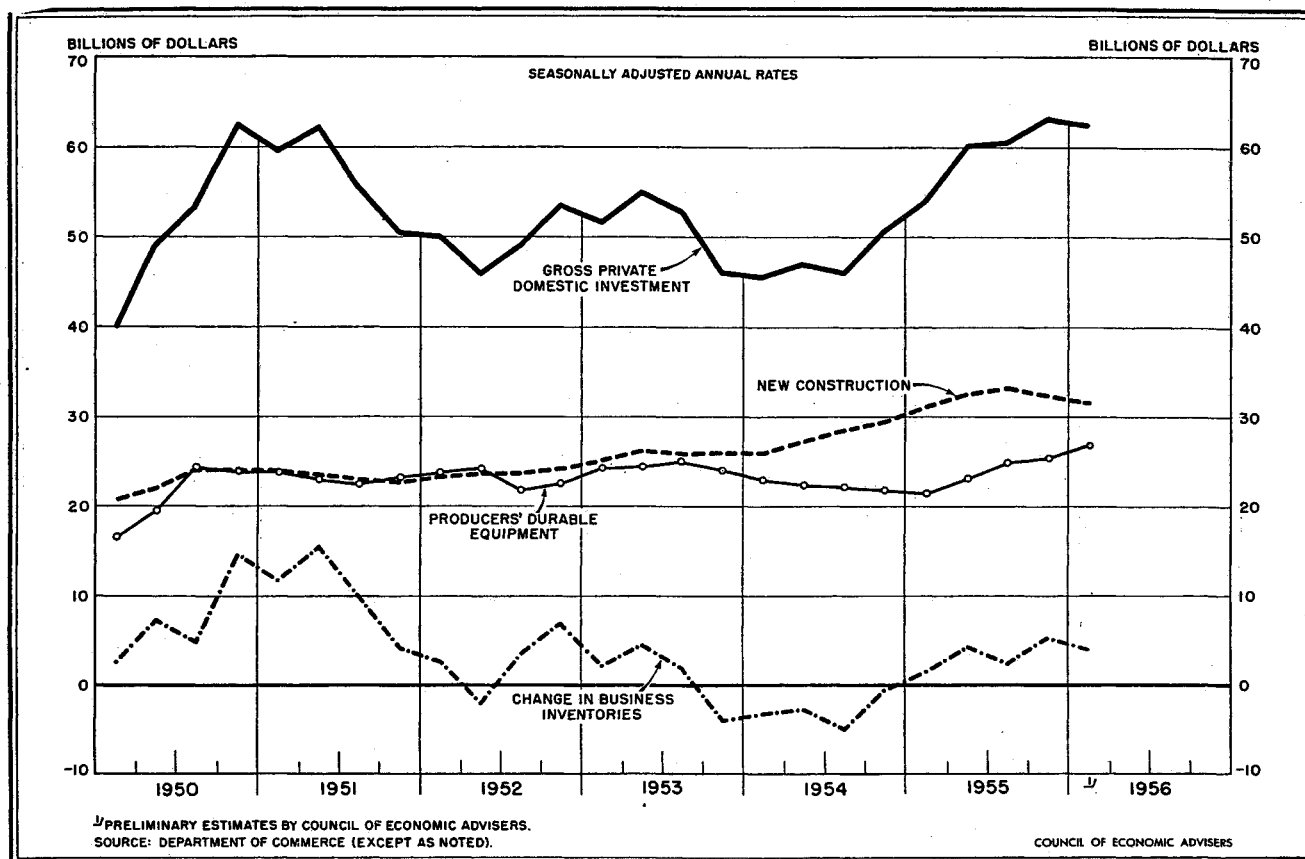
NOTE.—See p. 3 for profits before taxes and after inventory valuation adjustment.

Detail will not necessarily add to totals because of rounding.

Source: Department of Commerce (except as noted).

GROSS PRIVATE DOMESTIC INVESTMENT

Gross private domestic investment declined \$0.8 billion (seasonally adjusted annual rate) in the first quarter of this year, according to preliminary estimates. A rise of about \$1½ billion in business fixed investment was more than offset by reductions in residential construction and the rate of inventory accumulation.



[Billions of dollars]

Period	Total gross private domestic investment	Fixed investment						Change in business inventories	
		Total	New construction				Producers' durable equipment	Total	Non-farm
			Total	Residential nonfarm	Commercial and industrial ¹	All other ²			
1939-----	9.3	8.9	4.8	2.7	1.2	0.8	4.2	0.4	0.3
1947-----	29.7	30.7	14.0	6.3	4.9	2.8	16.7	-1.0	1.3
1948-----	41.2	37.0	17.9	8.6	5.7	3.6	19.1	4.2	3.0
1949-----	32.5	35.3	17.5	8.3	5.3	3.9	17.8	-2.7	-1.9
1950-----	51.2	43.9	22.7	12.6	5.7	4.5	21.1	7.4	6.4
1951-----	56.9	46.5	23.3	11.0	7.2	5.1	23.2	10.4	9.0
1952-----	49.6	46.8	23.7	11.1	7.5	5.2	23.1	2.8	2.1
1953-----	51.4	50.2	25.8	11.9	8.4	5.4	24.4	1.2	1.9
1954-----	47.2	50.1	27.8	13.5	8.6	5.7	22.3	-2.9	-3.2
1955-----	59.3	56.2	32.4	16.6	9.9	5.9	23.8	3.2	3.0
Seasonally adjusted annual rates									
1954: Third quarter----	45.9	50.7	28.5	14.2	8.6	5.7	22.2	-4.9	-5.4
Fourth quarter----	50.7	51.3	29.4	15.0	8.7	5.7	21.9	-.6	-1.0
1955: First quarter----	54.1	52.7	31.2	16.1	9.3	5.8	21.5	1.5	1.5
Second quarter----	60.1	55.8	32.6	16.9	9.8	5.9	23.2	4.3	4.2
Third quarter----	60.5	58.1	33.2	17.2	10.2	5.8	24.9	2.4	2.0
Fourth quarter----	63.2	57.8	32.3	16.2	10.3	5.8	25.5	5.3	5.1
1956: First quarter ³ ----	62.4	58.4	31.6	15.2	10.4	5.9	26.8	4.0	4.0

¹ Includes public utility.

² Includes petroleum and natural gas well drilling.

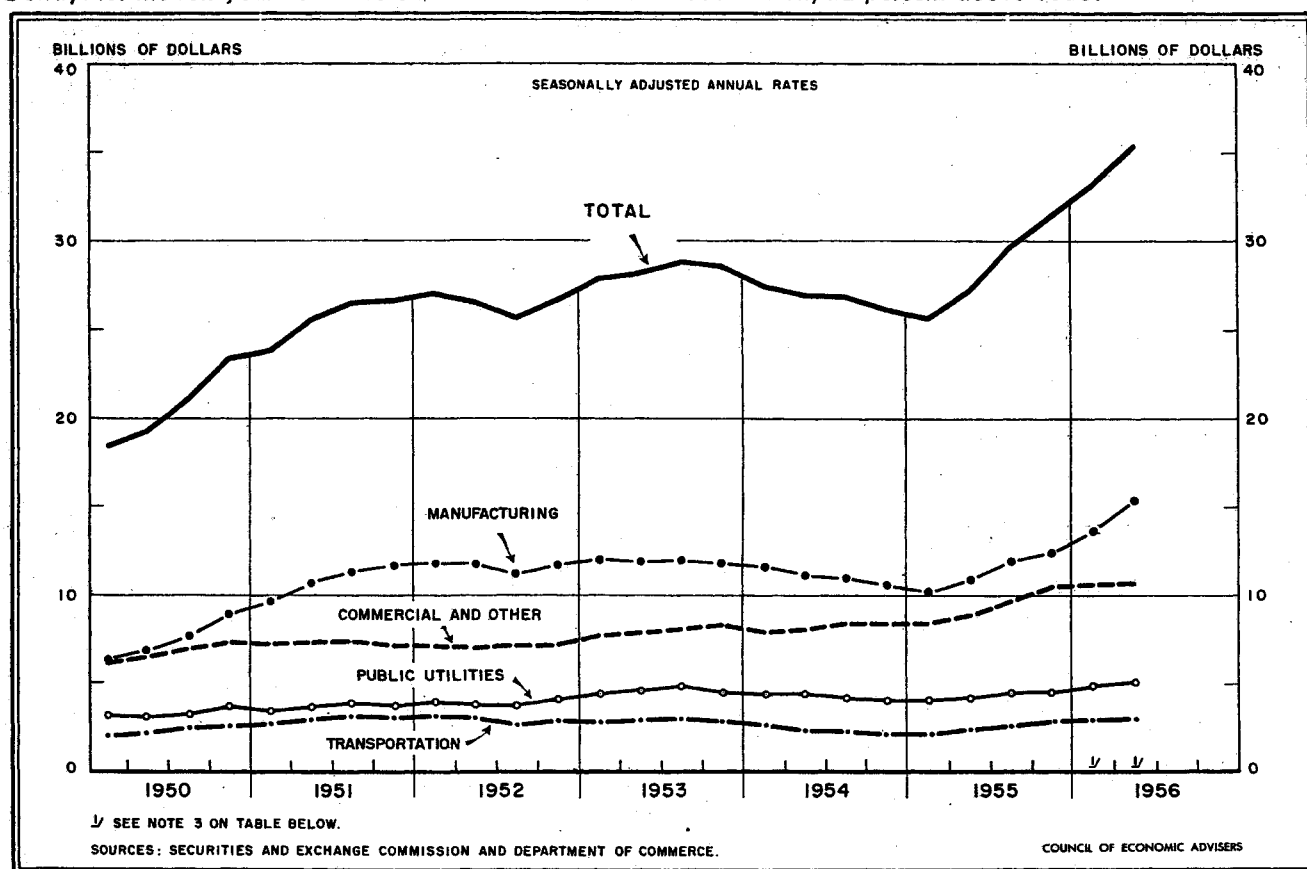
³ Preliminary estimates by Council of Economic Advisers.

NOTE.—Detail will not necessarily add to totals because of rounding.

Source: Department of Commerce (except as noted).

EXPENDITURES FOR NEW PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

According to a survey, made between late January and early March, business expenditures on plant and equipment are expected to continue to rise and reach \$35.3 billion (seasonally adjusted annual rate) in the second quarter. Outlays for the full year 1956 are expected to total almost \$35 billion, 22 percent above 1955.



[Billions of dollars]

Period	Total ¹	Manufacturing			Mining	Transportation		Public utilities	Commercial and other ²
		Total	Durable goods	Nondurable goods		Railroads	Other		
1939.....	5.51	1.94	0.76	1.19	0.33	0.28	0.36	0.52	2.08
1947.....	20.61	8.70	3.41	5.30	.69	.89	1.30	1.54	7.49
1948.....	22.06	9.13	3.48	5.65	.88	1.32	1.28	2.54	6.90
1949.....	19.28	7.15	2.59	4.56	.79	1.35	.89	3.12	5.98
1950.....	20.60	7.49	3.14	4.36	.71	1.11	1.21	3.31	6.78
1951.....	25.64	10.85	5.17	5.68	.93	1.47	1.49	3.66	7.24
1952.....	26.49	11.63	5.61	6.02	.98	1.40	1.50	3.89	7.09
1953.....	28.32	11.91	5.65	6.26	.99	1.31	1.56	4.55	8.00
1954.....	26.83	11.04	5.09	5.95	.98	.85	1.51	4.22	8.23
1955.....	28.70	11.44	5.44	6.00	.96	.92	1.60	4.31	9.47
1956 ³	34.89	15.04	7.68	7.35	1.14	1.31	1.78	4.99	10.64
Seasonally adjusted annual rates									
1955: Third quarter.....	29.65	11.97	5.77	6.20	0.99	0.96	1.60	4.43	9.70
Fourth quarter.....	31.45	12.48	6.00	6.48	1.08	1.17	1.70	4.48	10.54
1956: First quarter ³	33.21	13.66	6.81	6.85	1.14	1.18	1.71	4.84	10.68
Second quarter ³	35.32	15.40	8.05	7.35	1.24	1.30	1.67	5.01	10.70

¹ Excludes agriculture.

² Commercial and other includes trade, service, finance, communications, and construction.

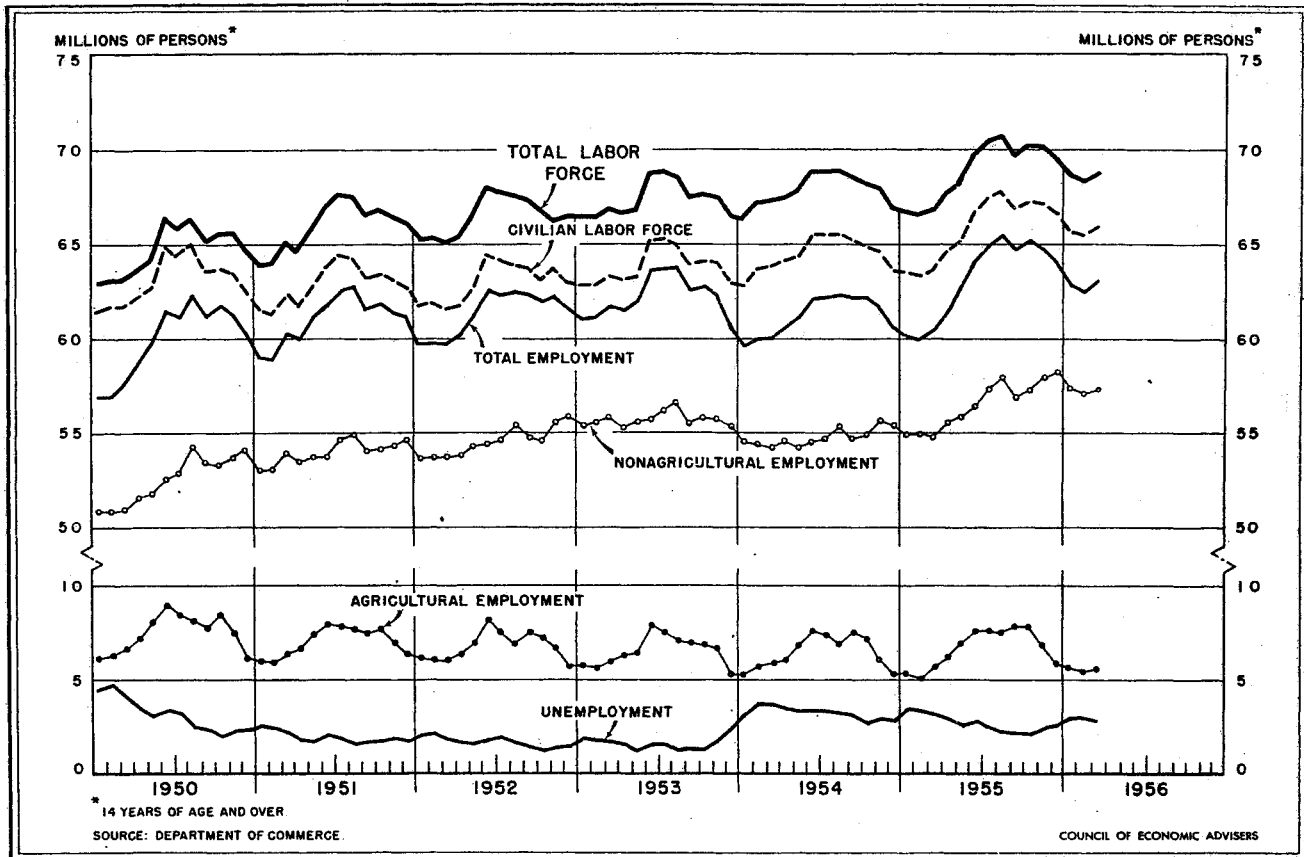
³ Estimates based on anticipated capital expenditures as reported by business from late January to early March 1956.

NOTE.—These figures do not agree with the totals included in the gross national product estimates of the Department of Commerce, principally because the latter cover agricultural investment and also certain equipment and construction outlays charged to current expense. Detail will not necessarily add to totals because of rounding.

Sources: Securities and Exchange Commission and Department of Commerce.

EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT, AND WAGES STATUS OF THE LABOR FORCE

In line with seasonal expectations, total employment (inclusive of agriculture) rose by about 1/2 million between February and March. Unemployment, which usually declines at this time of year, did not change appreciably.



Period	Total labor force (including armed forces)	Civilian labor force	Employment ^{1 2}			Tempo- rary layoffs ³	Unemployment ²		Insured unemployment ⁴	
			Total	Agricul- tural	Nonagri- cultural		Number	% of civilian labor force	Thousands of persons (all pro- grams)	% of covered employment (State pro- grams)
	Thousands of persons 14 years of age and over ⁵									
1939-----	55, 600	55, 230	45, 750	9, 610	36, 140	-----	9, 480	17. 2	-----	5. 1
1949-----	63, 721	62, 105	58, 710	8, 026	50, 684	185	3, 395	5. 5	2, 470	6. 2
1950-----	64, 749	63, 099	59, 957	7, 507	52, 450	92	3, 142	5. 0	1, 599	4. 6
1952-----	66, 560	62, 966	61, 293	6, 805	54, 488	142	1, 673	2. 7	1, 064	2. 9
1953-----	67, 362	63, 815	62, 213	6, 562	55, 651	167	1, 602	2. 5	1, 058	2. 8
1954-----	67, 818	64, 468	61, 238	6, 504	54, 734	221	3, 230	5. 0	2, 039	5. 2
1955-----	68, 896	65, 847	63, 193	6, 730	56, 464	133	2, 654	4. 0	1, 388	3. 5
1955: March-----	66, 840	63, 654	60, 477	5, 692	54, 785	75	3, 176	5. 0	1, 875	4. 7
April-----	67, 784	64, 647	61, 685	6, 215	55, 470	108	2, 962	4. 6	1, 651	4. 1
May-----	68, 256	65, 192	62, 703	6, 963	55, 740	133	2, 489	3. 8	1, 392	3. 6
June-----	69, 692	66, 696	64, 016	7, 681	56, 335	107	2, 679	4. 0	1, 226	3. 2
July-----	70, 429	67, 465	64, 994	7, 704	57, 291	157	2, 471	3. 7	1, 202	3. 1
August-----	70, 695	67, 726	65, 488	7, 536	57, 952	173	2, 237	3. 3	1, 068	2. 7
September-----	69, 853	66, 882	64, 733	7, 875	56, 858	116	2, 149	3. 2	951	2. 4
October-----	70, 250	67, 292	65, 161	7, 905	57, 256	117	2, 131	3. 2	864	2. 2
November-----	70, 164	67, 206	64, 807	6, 920	57, 887	86	2, 398	3. 6	956	2. 4
December-----	69, 538	66, 592	64, 165	5, 884	58, 281	124	2, 427	3. 6	1, 238	3. 2
1956: January-----	68, 691	65, 775	62, 891	5, 635	57, 256	145	2, 885	4. 4	1, 606	4. 1
February-----	68, 396	65, 490	62, 576	5, 469	57, 107	134	2, 914	4. 4	1, 651	4. 2
March-----	68, 806	65, 913	63, 078	5, 678	57, 400	153	2, 834	4. 3	⁶ 1, 578	⁶ 4. 1

¹ Includes part-time workers and those with jobs but not at work for such reasons as vacations, illness, bad weather, temporary layoff, and industrial disputes; excludes armed forces.

² See footnote 3.

³ Temporary layoffs are shown separately so as to

afford a basis for further analysis of employment and unemployment.

⁴ Weekly average.

⁵ Data for 1949-53 (1953 revised series) based on 68-area sample; beginning 1954, on 230-area sample. Starting July 1955, data are for week containing

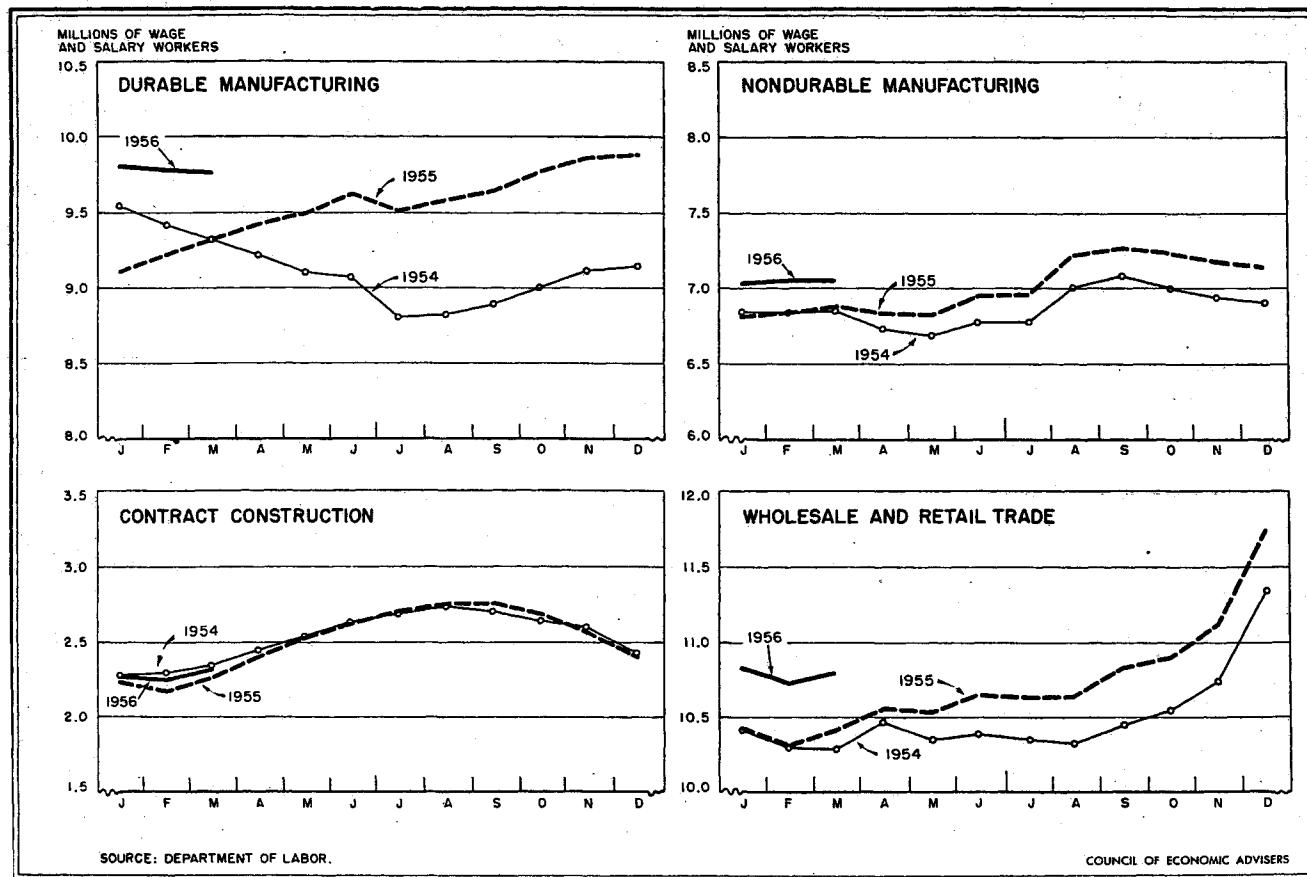
12th of month; previously, for week containing 8th of month.

⁶ Preliminary estimate.

Sources: Department of Commerce (labor force) and Department of Labor (insured unemployment).

NONAGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT

Employment in nonagricultural establishments increased somewhat less than seasonally between February and March. As is usual at this time of year, employment in manufacturing did not change appreciably.



(Thousands of wage and salary workers ¹¹)

Period	Total adjusted for seasonal variation	Total	Manufacturing			Mining	Contract construc- tion	Wholesale and retail trade	Govern- ment (Federal, State, local)	Other
			Total	Durable goods	Nondur- able goods					
Not adjusted for seasonal variation										
1939		30,311	10,078	4,683	5,394	845	1,150	6,612	3,995	7,632
1949		43,315	14,178	7,473	6,705	918	2,165	9,513	5,856	10,686
1950		44,738	14,967	8,085	6,882	889	2,333	9,645	6,026	10,878
1952		48,303	16,334	9,340	6,994	885	2,634	10,281	6,609	11,563
1953		49,681	17,238	10,105	7,133	852	2,622	10,527	6,645	11,797
1954		48,285	15,989	9,120	6,870	770	2,527	10,498	6,751	11,751
1955		49,399	16,552	9,538	7,014	748	2,507	10,729	6,921	11,942
1955: February	48,470	47,753	16,060	9,220	6,840	737	2,169	10,309	6,873	11,605
March	48,760	48,212	16,201	9,323	6,878	739	2,255	10,408	6,922	11,687
April	48,882	48,643	16,255	9,418	6,837	739	2,399	10,549	6,927	11,774
May	49,242	48,918	16,334	9,501	6,833	742	2,526	10,534	6,881	11,901
June	49,514	49,508	16,577	9,624	6,953	760	2,615	10,643	6,851	12,062
July	49,638	49,420	16,475	9,511	6,964	749	2,701	10,633	6,696	12,166
August	49,718	49,858	16,807	9,578	7,229	754	2,746	10,638	6,717	12,196
September	49,835	50,322	16,915	9,645	7,270	758	2,748	10,824	6,911	12,166
October	49,950	50,471	16,999	9,762	7,237	751	2,685	10,909	7,054	12,073
November	50,135	50,629	17,049	9,867	7,182	754	2,580	11,126	7,074	12,046
December	50,228	51,311	17,026	9,889	7,137	754	2,422	11,753	7,315	12,041
1956: January	50,287	49,615	16,842	9,814	7,028	747	2,267	10,833	7,020	11,906
February ²	50,280	49,542	16,821	9,775	7,046	748	2,252	10,741	7,061	11,919
March ²	50,211	49,783	16,807	9,761	7,046	749	2,316	10,804	7,110	11,997

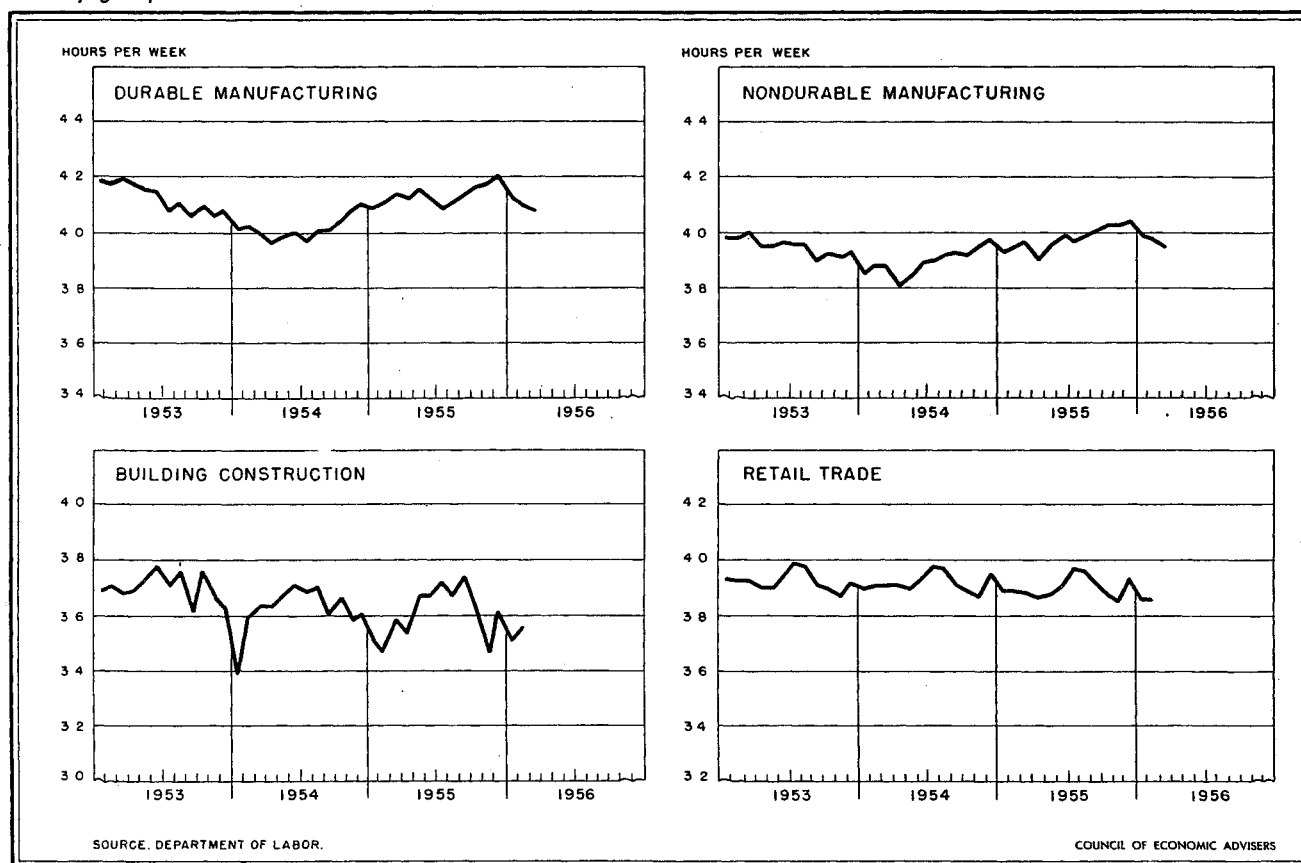
¹ Includes all full- and part-time wage and salary workers in nonagricultural establishments who worked during or received pay for any part of the pay period ending nearest the 15th of the month. Excludes proprietors, self-employed persons, domestic servants, and personnel of the armed forces. Total derived from this table not comparable with estimates of nonagricultural employment of the civilian labor force reported by the Department of Commerce (p. 11) which include proprietors, self-employed persons, and domestic servants; which count persons as employed when they are not at work because of industrial disputes; and which are based on an enumeration of population, whereas the estimates in this table are based on reports from employing establishments.

² Preliminary estimates.

NOTE.—Beginning with 1953, data are based on first quarter 1954 benchmark levels.
Source: Department of Labor.

AVERAGE WEEKLY HOURS - SELECTED INDUSTRIES

The average workweek of factory production workers declined from 40.5 hours in February to 40.3 hours in March. It usually increases somewhat at this time of year. The decline occurred in both the durable and nondurable goods industry groups.



[Hours per week, for production workers or nonsupervisory employees]

Period	Manufacturing			Building construction	Retail trade
	Total	Durable goods	Nondurable goods		
1939.....	37.7	38.0	37.4	32.6	42.7
1947.....	40.4	40.6	40.1	37.6	40.3
1948.....	40.1	40.5	39.6	¹ 37.3	40.3
1949.....	39.2	39.5	38.8	36.7	40.4
1950.....	40.5	41.2	39.7	36.3	40.5
1951.....	40.7	41.6	39.5	37.2	40.2
1952.....	40.7	41.5	39.6	38.1	39.9
1953.....	40.5	41.3	39.5	37.0	39.2
1954.....	39.7	40.2	39.0	36.2	39.2
1955.....	40.7	41.4	39.8	36.1	39.0
1955: February.....	40.4	41.1	39.5	34.7	38.9
March.....	40.6	41.4	39.7	35.9	38.8
April.....	40.3	41.2	39.0	35.4	38.6
May.....	40.8	41.6	39.6	36.7	38.8
June.....	40.7	41.2	39.9	36.7	39.1
July.....	40.4	40.9	39.7	37.2	39.7
August.....	40.6	41.1	39.9	36.7	39.6
September.....	40.9	41.4	40.1	37.4	39.1
October.....	41.1	41.7	40.3	36.3	38.7
November.....	41.2	41.8	40.3	34.7	38.5
December.....	41.3	42.0	40.4	36.1	39.4
1956: January.....	40.7	41.2	39.9	35.1	38.6
February ²	40.5	41.0	39.8	35.6	38.6
March ²	40.3	40.8	39.5	(³)	(³)

¹ Data beginning with January 1948 are not strictly comparable with those for earlier periods.

² Preliminary estimates.

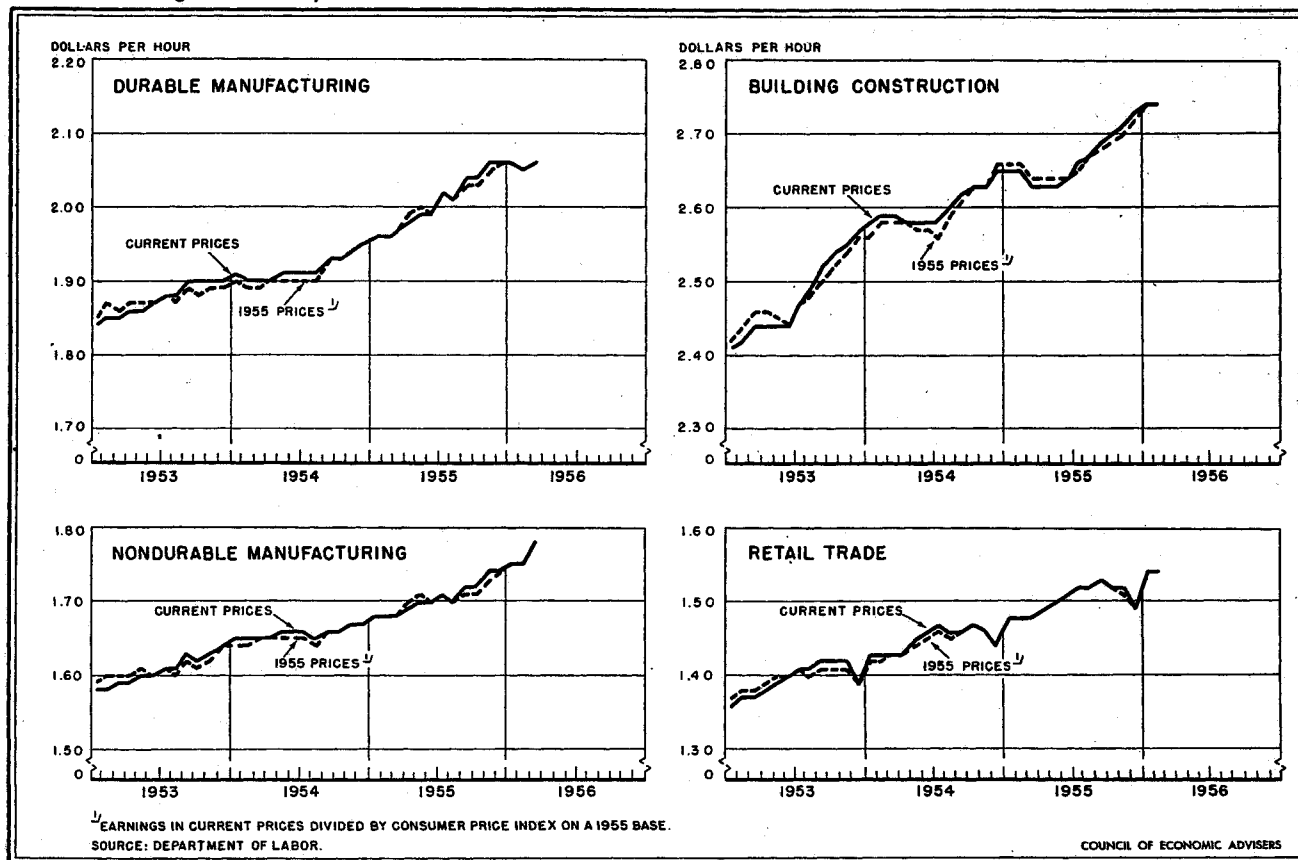
³ Not available.

NOTE.—Beginning with 1953, data are based on first quarter 1954 benchmark levels of employment.

Source: Department of Labor.

AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS - SELECTED INDUSTRIES

Average hourly earnings of production workers in manufacturing were \$1.95 in March, 2 cents higher than in February and 10 cents higher than a year earlier.



[For production workers or nonsupervisory employees]

Period	All manufacturing		Durable goods manufacturing		Nondurable goods manufacturing		Building construction		Retail trade	
	Current prices	1955 prices ¹	Current prices	1955 prices ¹	Current prices	1955 prices ¹	Current prices	1955 prices ¹	Current prices	1955 prices ¹
1939	\$0.633	\$1.220	\$0.698	\$1.345	\$0.582	\$1.121	\$0.932	\$1.796	\$0.542	\$1.044
1947	1.237	1.483	1.292	1.549	1.171	1.404	1.681	2.016	1.009	1.210
1948	1.350	1.503	1.410	1.570	1.278	1.423	1.848	2.058	1.088	1.212
1949	1.401	1.576	1.469	1.652	1.325	1.490	1.935	2.177	1.137	1.279
1950	1.465	1.631	1.537	1.712	1.378	1.535	2.031	2.262	1.176	1.310
1951	1.59	1.64	1.67	1.72	1.48	1.53	2.19	2.26	1.26	1.30
1952	1.67	1.69	1.77	1.79	1.54	1.55	2.31	2.33	1.32	1.33
1953	1.77	1.77	1.87	1.87	1.61	1.61	2.48	2.48	1.40	1.40
1954	1.81	1.80	1.92	1.91	1.66	1.66	2.60	2.59	1.45	1.45
1955	1.88	1.88	2.01	2.01	1.71	1.71	2.67	2.67	1.50	1.50
1955: February	1.85	1.85	1.96	1.96	1.68	1.68	2.65	2.66	1.48	1.48
March	1.85	1.85	1.97	1.97	1.68	1.68	2.63	2.64	1.48	1.48
April	1.86	1.87	1.98	1.99	1.69	1.70	2.63	2.64	1.49	1.49
May	1.87	1.88	1.99	2.00	1.70	1.71	2.63	2.64	1.50	1.50
June	1.87	1.87	1.99	1.99	1.70	1.70	2.64	2.64	1.51	1.51
July	1.89	1.89	2.02	2.02	1.71	1.71	2.66	2.65	1.52	1.52
August	1.88	1.88	2.01	2.01	1.70	1.70	2.67	2.67	1.52	1.52
September	1.90	1.89	2.04	2.03	1.72	1.71	2.69	2.68	1.53	1.53
October	1.91	1.90	2.04	2.03	1.72	1.71	2.70	2.69	1.52	1.52
November	1.93	1.92	2.06	2.05	1.74	1.73	2.71	2.70	1.52	1.51
December	1.93	1.93	2.06	2.06	1.74	1.74	2.73	2.72	1.49	1.49
1956: January	1.93	1.93	2.06	2.06	1.75	1.75	2.74	2.74	1.54	1.54
February ³	1.93	1.93	2.05	2.05	1.75	1.75	2.74	2.74	1.54	1.54
March ³	1.95	(4)	2.06	(4)	1.78	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)

¹ Earnings in current prices divided by consumer price index on a 1955 base.

² Data beginning with January 1948 are not strictly comparable with those for earlier periods.

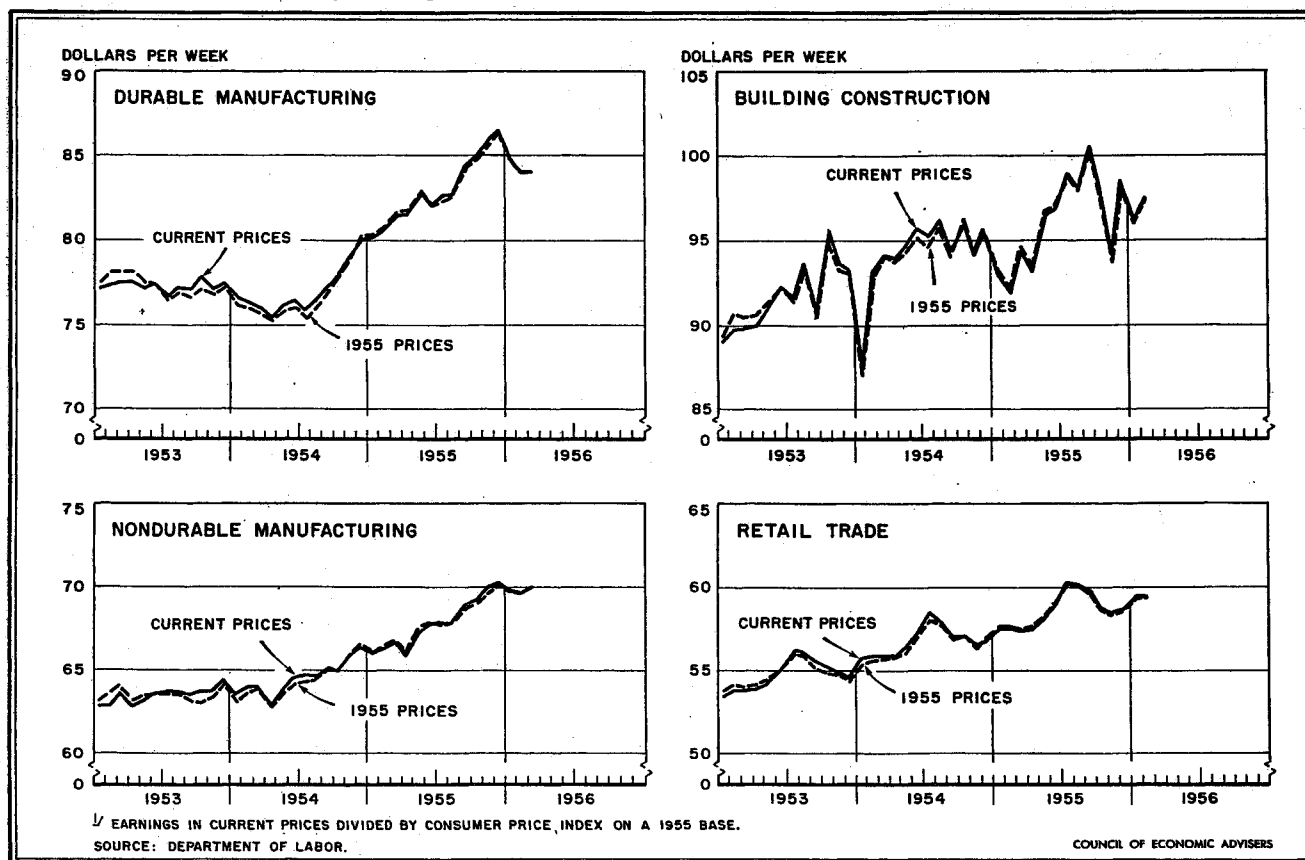
NOTE.—Beginning with 1963, data are based on first quarter 1954 benchmark levels of employment.

³ Preliminary estimates.

⁴ Not available.

AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS - SELECTED INDUSTRIES

Average weekly earnings of factory production workers rose from \$78.17 in February to \$78.59 in March, reflecting the increase in average hourly earnings.



[For production workers or nonsupervisory employees]

Period	All manufacturing		Durable goods manufacturing		Nondurable goods manufacturing		Building construction		Retail trade	
	Current prices	1955 prices ¹	Current prices	1955 prices ¹	Current prices	1955 prices ¹	Current prices	1955 prices ¹	Current prices	1955 prices ¹
1939.....	\$23.86	\$45.97	\$26.50	\$51.06	\$21.78	\$41.97	\$30.39	\$58.55	\$23.14	\$44.59
1947.....	49.97	59.92	52.46	62.90	46.96	56.31	63.30	75.90	40.66	48.75
1948.....	54.14	60.29	57.11	63.60	50.61	56.36	² 68.85	² 76.67	43.85	48.83
1949.....	54.92	61.78	58.03	65.28	51.41	57.83	70.95	79.81	45.93	51.66
1950.....	59.33	66.07	63.32	70.51	54.71	60.92	73.73	82.10	47.63	53.04
1951.....	64.71	66.78	69.47	71.69	58.46	60.33	81.47	84.08	50.65	52.27
1952.....	67.97	68.59	73.46	74.13	60.98	61.53	88.01	88.81	52.67	53.15
1953.....	71.69	71.76	77.23	77.31	63.60	63.66	91.76	91.85	54.88	54.93
1954.....	71.86	71.65	77.18	76.95	64.74	64.55	94.12	93.84	56.84	56.67
1955.....	76.52	76.52	83.21	83.21	68.06	68.06	96.39	96.39	58.50	58.50
1955: February.....	74.74	74.89	80.56	80.72	66.36	66.49	91.96	92.14	57.57	57.69
March.....	75.11	75.26	81.56	81.72	66.70	66.83	94.42	94.61	57.42	57.54
April.....	74.96	75.19	81.58	81.83	65.91	66.11	93.10	93.38	57.51	57.68
May.....	76.30	76.53	82.78	83.03	67.32	67.52	96.52	96.81	58.20	58.38
June.....	76.11	76.19	81.99	82.07	67.83	67.90	96.89	96.99	59.04	59.10
July.....	76.36	76.21	82.62	82.46	67.89	67.75	98.95	98.75	60.34	60.22
August.....	76.33	76.33	82.61	82.61	67.83	67.83	97.99	97.99	60.19	60.19
September.....	77.71	77.48	84.46	84.21	68.97	68.76	100.61	100.31	59.82	59.64
October.....	78.50	78.27	85.07	84.82	69.32	69.11	98.01	97.72	58.82	58.64
November.....	79.52	79.20	86.11	85.77	70.12	69.84	94.04	93.67	58.52	58.29
December.....	79.71	79.55	86.52	86.35	70.30	70.16	98.55	98.35	58.71	58.59
1956: January.....	78.55	78.47	84.87	84.79	69.83	69.76	96.17	96.07	59.44	59.38
February ³	78.17	78.09	84.05	83.97	69.65	69.58	97.54	97.44	59.44	59.38
March ³	78.59	(⁴)	84.05	(⁴)	70.31	(⁴)	(⁴)	(⁴)	(⁴)	(⁴)

¹ Earnings in current prices divided by consumer price index on a 1955 base.

² Data beginning with January 1948 are not strictly comparable with those for earlier periods.

³ Preliminary estimates.

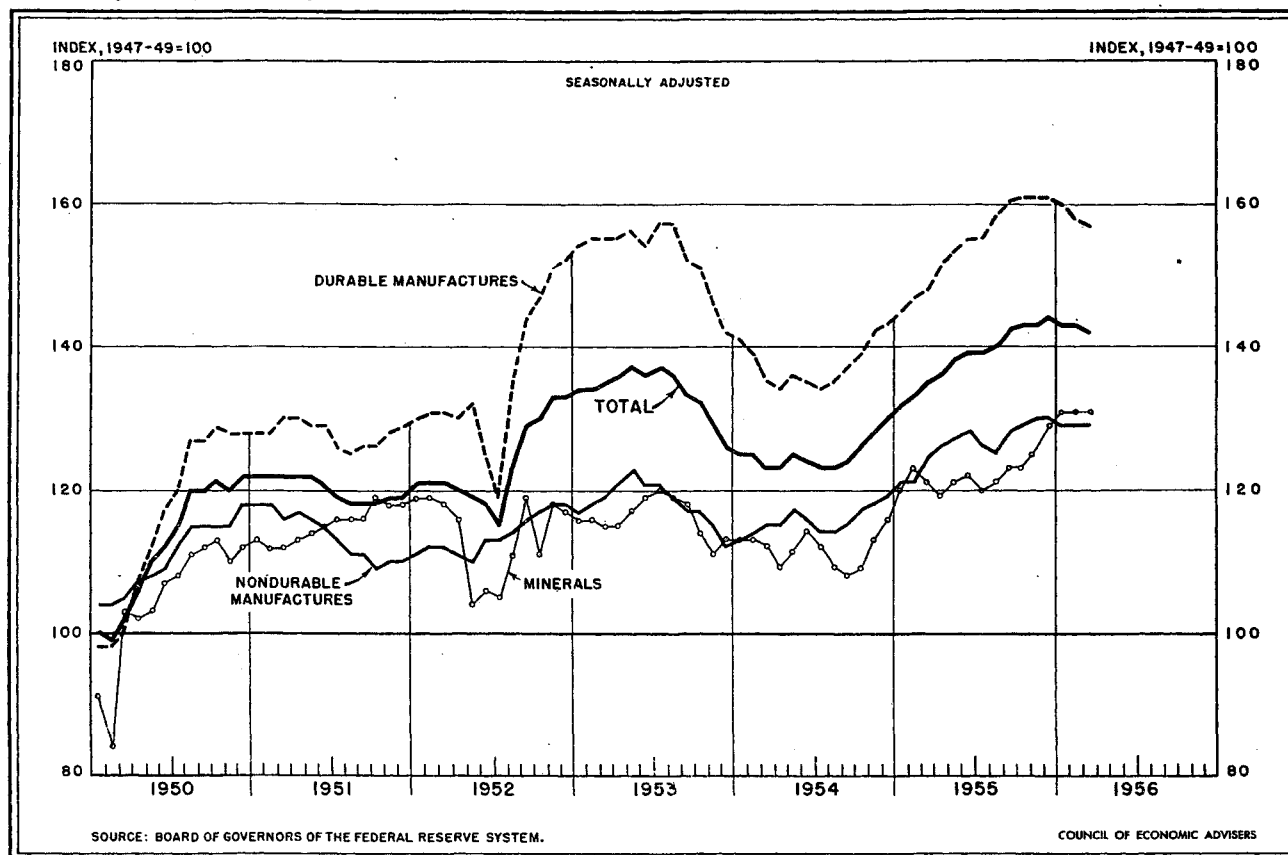
⁴ Not available.

NOTE.—Beginning with 1953, data are based on first quarter 1954 benchmark levels of employment.
Source: Department of Labor.

PRODUCTION AND BUSINESS ACTIVITY

INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION

The index of industrial production (seasonally adjusted) is estimated at 142 (1947-49=100) in March, 1 point below the January-February level.



[1947-49=100, seasonally adjusted]

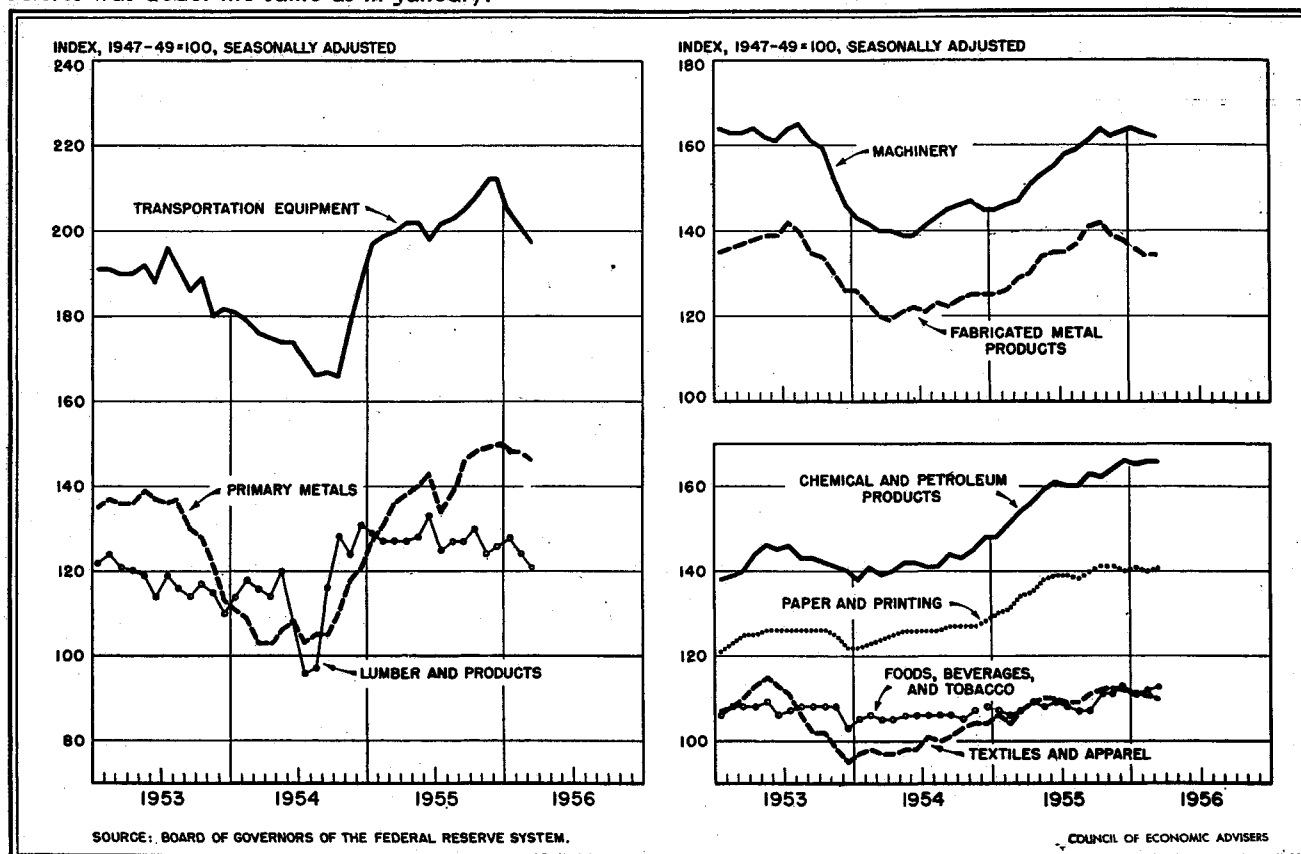
Period	Total industrial production	Manufactures			Minerals
		Total	Durable	Nondurable	
1939.....	58	57	49	66	68
1947.....	100	100	101	99	100
1948.....	104	103	104	102	106
1949.....	97	97	95	99	94
1950.....	112	113	116	111	105
1951.....	120	121	128	114	115
1952.....	124	125	136	114	114
1953.....	134	136	153	118	116
1954.....	125	127	137	116	111
1955 ¹	139	140	155	126	122
1955: February.....	133	134	147	121	123
March.....	135	136	148	124	121
April.....	136	138	151	126	119
May.....	138	140	153	127	121
June.....	139	141	155	128	122
July.....	139	141	155	126	120
August.....	140	142	158	125	121
September.....	142	144	160	128	123
October.....	143	145	161	129	123
November.....	143	145	161	130	125
December.....	144	146	161	130	129
1956: January ¹	143	145	160	129	131
February ¹	143	144	158	129	131
March ¹	142	143	157	129	131

¹ Preliminary estimates.

Source: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MANUFACTURES

In March, production of most durable manufacturing industries declined slightly. Production of nondurable manufactures was about the same as in January.



[1947-49=100, seasonally adjusted]

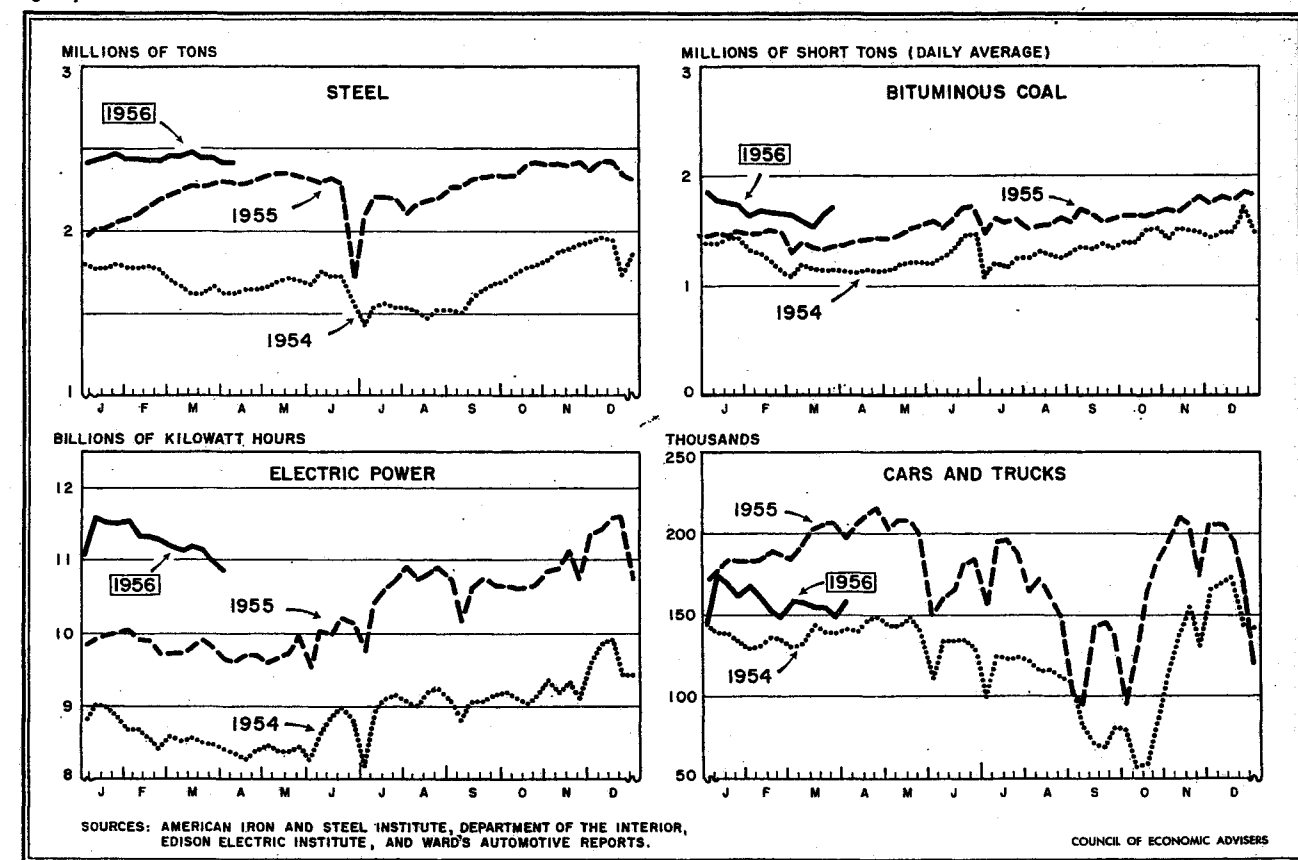
Period	Durable manufactures					Nondurable manufactures				Con- sumer durable goods
	Primary metals	Fabri- cated metal products	Machin- ery	Transpor- tation equip- ment	Lumber and prod- ucts	Textiles and apparel	Paper and print- ing	Chemical and petro- leum products	Foods, bever- ages, and tobacco	
1939.....	54	52	38	47	80	80	66	49	65	-----
1947.....	103	103	103	96	101	99	96	97	101	98
1948.....	107	104	104	102	106	103	103	103	100	101
1949.....	90	93	93	102	93	97	101	100	100	101
1950.....	115	115	114	120	113	110	114	118	103	133
1951.....	126	122	130	135	113	106	118	132	105	114
1952.....	116	121	147	154	111	105	118	133	106	105
1953.....	132	136	160	189	118	107	125	142	107	127
1954.....	108	123	142	175	115	100	125	142	106	116
1955 ¹	140	134	155	203	127	110	137	159	109	146
1955: February.....	131	126	146	199	127	104	131	151	106	140
March.....	136	129	147	200	127	107	134	154	107	142
April.....	138	130	151	202	127	109	135	156	109	144
May.....	140	134	153	202	128	110	138	159	108	145
June.....	143	135	155	198	133	110	139	161	109	144
July.....	134	135	158	202	125	109	139	160	108	150
August.....	139	137	159	203	127	109	138	160	107	151
September.....	146	141	161	205	127	111	140	163	107	154
October.....	148	142	164	208	130	112	141	162	111	152
November.....	149	139	162	212	124	113	141	164	111	151
December.....	150	138	163	212	126	112	140	166	113	149
1956: January ¹	148	136	164	205	128	111	141	165	111	143
February ¹	148	134	163	201	124	111	140	166	112	137
March ¹	146	134	162	197	121	110	141	166	113	133

¹ Preliminary estimates.

Source: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

WEEKLY INDICATORS OF PRODUCTION

Steel production increased during March to a new record. Freight carloadings also increased. Production of electric power and paperboard declined slightly, but remained at near peak levels. Car and truck assemblies dropped slightly.



Period	Steel produced		Electric power distributed (millions of kilowatt-hours)	Bituminous coal mined (thousands of short tons) ²	Freight loaded (thousands of cars)	Paperboard produced (thousands of tons)	Cars and trucks assembled (thousands)		
	Thousands of net tons	Percent of theoretical capacity ¹					Total	Cars	Trucks
Weekly average:									
1950.....	1,857	96.9	6,183	1,687	748	214	154.2	128.4	25.9
1951.....	2,018	100.9	6,958	1,772	779	229	129.8	102.7	27.2
1952.....	1,782	85.8	7,451	1,548	730	213	106.8	83.4	23.4
1953.....	2,141	94.9	8,244	1,521	735	241	141.1	118.0	23.2
1954.....	1,694	71.0	8,883	1,304	652	236	125.6	106.0	19.7
1955.....	2,245	93.0	10,318	1,560	729	269	176.7	152.7	24.0
1955: March.....	2,253	93.4	9,796	1,378	651	270	198.1	174.1	23.9
April.....	2,288	94.8	9,658	1,360	693	263	207.6	177.0	30.6
May.....	2,331	96.6	9,741	1,503	766	275	204.2	173.3	30.9
June.....	2,272	94.1	9,986	1,593	756	278	168.1	141.8	26.2
July.....	2,059	85.3	10,386	1,567	758	232	183.8	158.0	25.8
August.....	2,166	89.7	10,816	1,595	781	282	149.2	128.7	20.4
September.....	2,309	95.7	10,540	1,632	792	274	131.1	110.3	20.9
October.....	2,370	98.2	10,635	1,609	826	290	142.1	119.4	22.7
November.....	2,389	99.0	10,993	1,752	757	291	197.9	171.4	26.5
December.....	2,376	98.5	11,348	1,787	672	270	172.9	151.1	21.8
1956: January.....	2,444	99.3	11,421	1,820	678	267	162.6	138.9	23.7
February.....	2,444	99.3	11,336	1,673	692	291	157.1	132.7	24.4
March ³	2,465	100.1	11,115	1,596	701	286	154.2	130.3	23.9
Week ended:									
1956: March 10.....	2,462	100.0	11,133	1,588	698	285	157.0	132.8	24.2
17.....	2,477	100.6	11,202	1,538	686	282	154.9	131.2	23.7
24.....	2,449	99.5	11,134	1,655	697	286	155.0	131.3	23.7
31.....	2,452	99.6	10,992	1,713	725	291	149.9	125.8	24.1
April 7 ³	2,406	97.7	10,846	⁴ 1,662	685	277	157.7	133.4	24.3
14 ³	2,414	98.1					⁴ 159.3	135.0	24.2

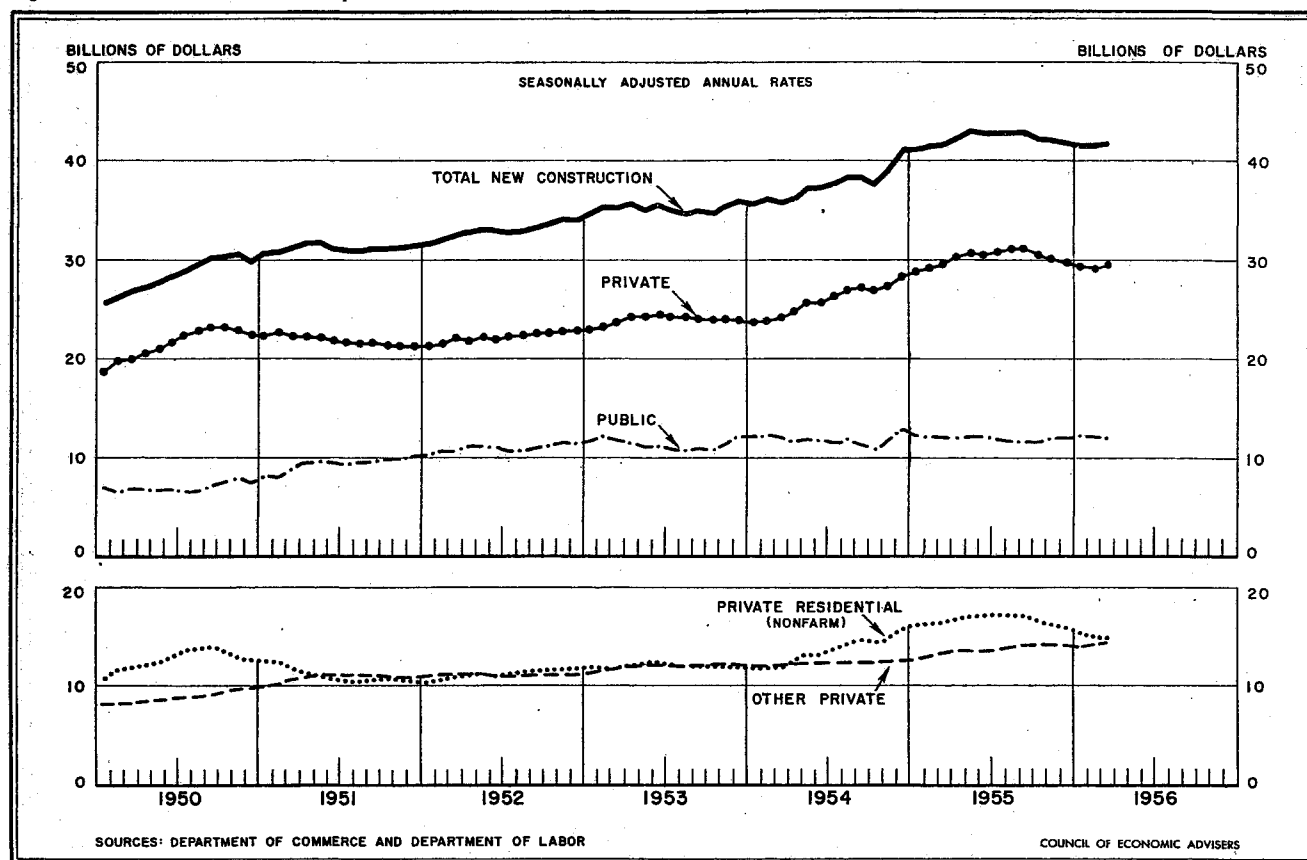
¹ Percent of capacity based on weekly net ton capacity of 1,906,268 for the first half of 1950; 1,928,721 beginning July 1, 1950; 1,999,034 beginning January 1, 1951; 2,077,040 beginning January 1, 1952; 2,254,459 beginning January 1, 1953; 2,384,549 beginning January 1, 1954; 2,413,278 beginning January 1, 1955; and 2,461,893 beginning January 1, 1956.

² Daily average for week. ³ Preliminary estimates. ⁴ Not charted.

Sources: American Iron and Steel Institute, Edison Electric Institute, Department of the Interior, Association of American Railroads, National Paperboard Association, and Ward's Automotive Reports.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

Total construction activity (seasonally adjusted) continued in March at about the level of January and February. The rate of contract awards, which had increased sharply since last fall, declined slightly but was nearly 12 percent higher than in March of last year.



[Billions of dollars]

Period	Total new construction	Private			Federal, State, and local	Construction contracts awarded in 37 Eastern States ¹	
		Total private	Residential (nonfarm)	Other			
1939	8.2	4.4	2.7	1.7	3.8	3.6	
1947	16.7	13.3	6.3	6.9	3.4	7.8	
1948	21.7	16.9	8.6	8.3	4.8	9.4	
1949	22.8	16.4	8.3	8.1	6.4	10.4	
1950	28.5	21.5	12.6	8.9	7.0	14.5	
1951	31.2	21.8	11.0	10.8	9.4	15.8	
1952	33.0	22.1	11.1	11.0	10.9	16.8	
1953	35.3	23.9	11.9	11.9	11.4	17.4	
1954	37.6	25.8	13.5	12.3	11.8	19.8	
1955	42.2	30.2	16.6	13.6	12.0	23.7	
Seasonally adjusted annual rates						Annual rates	
						Un-adjusted	Seasonally adjusted
1955: February	41.4	29.3	16.2	13.1	12.2	19.0	25.6
March	41.6	29.6	16.2	13.4	12.0	25.6	26.1
April	42.3	30.3	16.7	13.6	12.0	27.9	24.4
May	43.0	30.7	17.0	13.6	12.3	26.2	22.8
June	42.8	30.5	17.0	13.5	12.2	27.1	25.1
July	42.8	30.9	17.2	13.7	11.9	27.3	23.9
August	42.8	31.1	17.2	13.9	11.7	22.7	22.1
September	42.9	31.2	17.1	14.1	11.7	24.4	21.2
October	42.3	30.6	16.5	14.1	11.7	22.4	22.1
November	42.2	30.2	16.1	14.1	12.0	21.6	25.1
December	41.9	29.8	15.9	13.9	12.0	23.0	24.0
1956: January	41.5	29.3	15.4	13.8	12.3	22.3	30.1
February	41.4	29.3	15.2	14.1	12.2	22.3	30.2
March ²	41.6	29.5	15.1	14.4	12.1	23.6	29.2

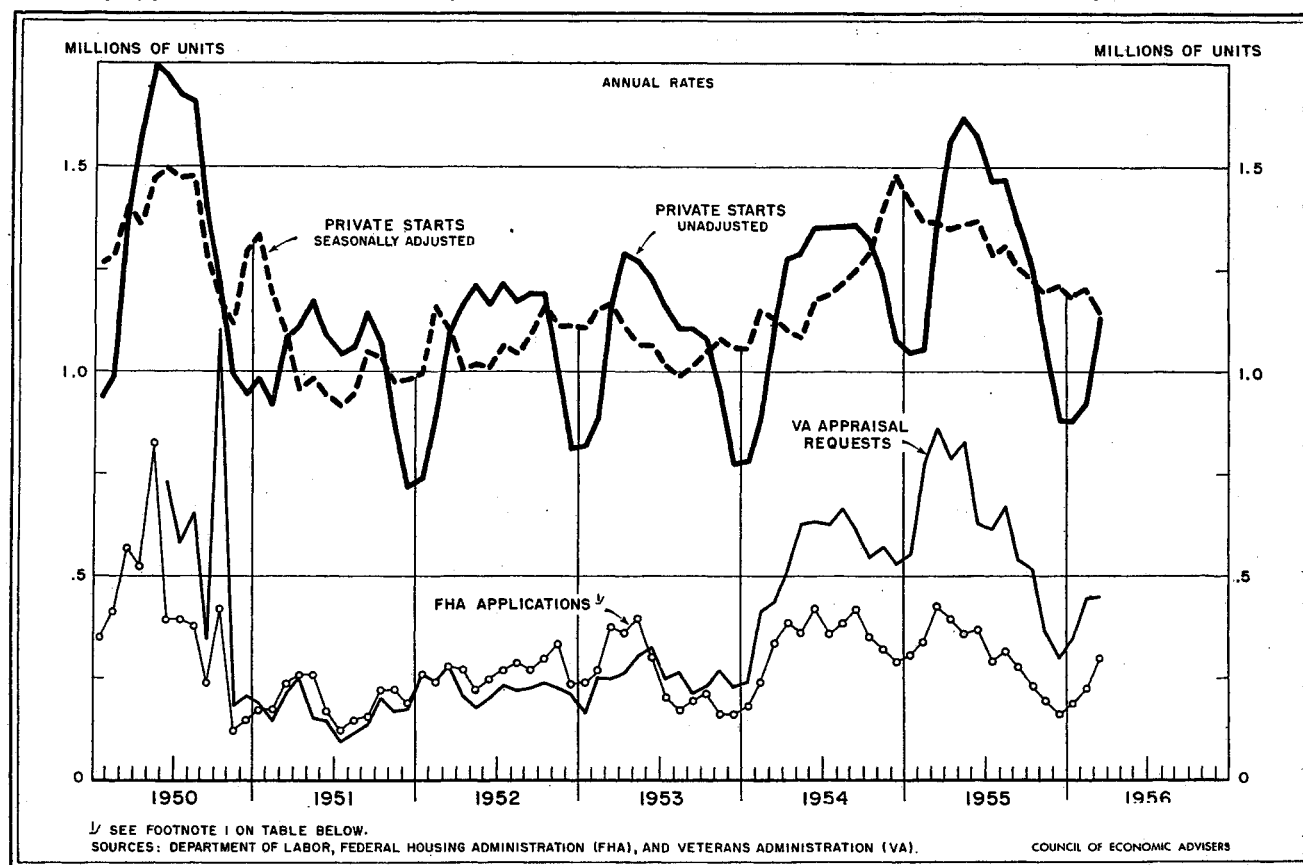
¹ Compiled by F. W. Dodge Corporation; seasonally adjusted by the National Bureau of Economic Research. Omits small contracts, and covers rural areas less fully than urban.

² Preliminary estimates.

³ Sources: Department of Commerce, Department of Labor, and F. W. Dodge Corporation (except as noted).

HOUSING STARTS AND APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCING

Private nonfarm housing starts in March increased less than seasonally and were at an annual rate of 1,140,000. Financing applications rose substantially for FHA loans but were almost the same as in February for VA loans.



[Thousands of units]

Period	New nonfarm housing starts							Proposed home construction	
	Total	Publicly financed	Privately financed				Private, seasonally adjusted annual rates	Applications for FHA com- mitments ¹	Requests for VA appraisals
			Total	Government programs					
				Total	FHA	VA			
Annual total: 1948---	931. 6	18. 1	913. 5	(²)	294. 1	(²)	-----	293. 2	(²)
1949---	1, 025. 1	36. 3	988. 8	(²)	363. 8	(²)	-----	327. 0	(²)
1950---	1, 396. 0	43. 8	1, 352. 2	686. 7	486. 7	³ 200. 0	-----	397. 7	(²)
1951---	1, 091. 3	71. 2	1, 020. 1	412. 2	263. 5	148. 7	-----	192. 8	164. 4
1952---	1, 127. 0	58. 5	1, 068. 5	421. 2	279. 9	141. 3	-----	267. 9	226. 3
1953---	1, 103. 8	35. 5	1, 068. 3	408. 6	252. 0	156. 6	-----	253. 7	251. 4
1954---	1, 220. 4	18. 7	1, 201. 7	583. 3	276. 3	307. 0	-----	338. 6	535. 4
1955---	1, 328. 9	19. 4	1, 309. 5	669. 6	276. 7	392. 9	-----	306. 2	620. 8
Monthly average: 1950---	116. 3	3. 6	112. 7	57. 2	40. 6	16. 7	-----	33. 1	(²)
1953---	92. 0	3. 0	89. 0	34. 0	21. 0	13. 1	-----	21. 1	21. 0
1954---	101. 7	1. 6	100. 1	48. 6	23. 0	25. 6	-----	28. 2	44. 6
1955---	110. 7	1. 6	109. 1	55. 8	23. 1	32. 7	-----	25. 5	51. 7
1955: February---	89. 9	2. 0	87. 9	45. 3	17. 2	28. 0	1, 370	28. 3	64. 2
March---	113. 8	1. 0	112. 8	53. 6	23. 8	29. 9	1, 367	35. 6	71. 9
April---	132. 0	1. 5	130. 5	60. 3	25. 8	34. 5	1, 350	33. 1	65. 9
May---	137. 6	2. 5	135. 1	65. 9	28. 0	37. 8	1, 362	30. 1	69. 3
June---	134. 5	3. 1	131. 4	71. 6	32. 1	39. 5	1, 371	30. 8	52. 4
July---	122. 7	. 8	121. 9	63. 3	26. 0	37. 4	1, 283	24. 3	51. 4
August---	124. 7	2. 4	122. 3	67. 6	26. 9	40. 8	1, 310	26. 4	56. 0
September---	114. 9	1. 3	113. 6	59. 1	24. 7	34. 4	1, 251	23. 1	45. 1
October---	105. 8	1. 0	104. 8	53. 4	18. 6	34. 8	1, 221	19. 2	43. 1
November---	89. 2	. 8	88. 4	45. 6	17. 5	28. 1	1, 192	16. 3	30. 4
December---	76. 2	2. 7	73. 5	37. 9	16. 2	21. 6	1, 208	13. 4	24. 9
1956: January---	⁴ 74. 0	⁴ 1. 0	⁴ 73. 0	36. 0	13. 0	23. 0	⁴ 1, 180	15. 6	29. 3
February---	⁴ 78. 0	⁴ 1. 2	⁴ 76. 8	30. 5	13. 1	17. 4	⁴ 1, 200	18. 5	37. 1
March ⁴ ---	96. 0	1. 6	94. 4	37. 6	17. 0	20. 6	1, 140	24. 9	37. 5

¹ Units represented by mortgage applications for new home construction.

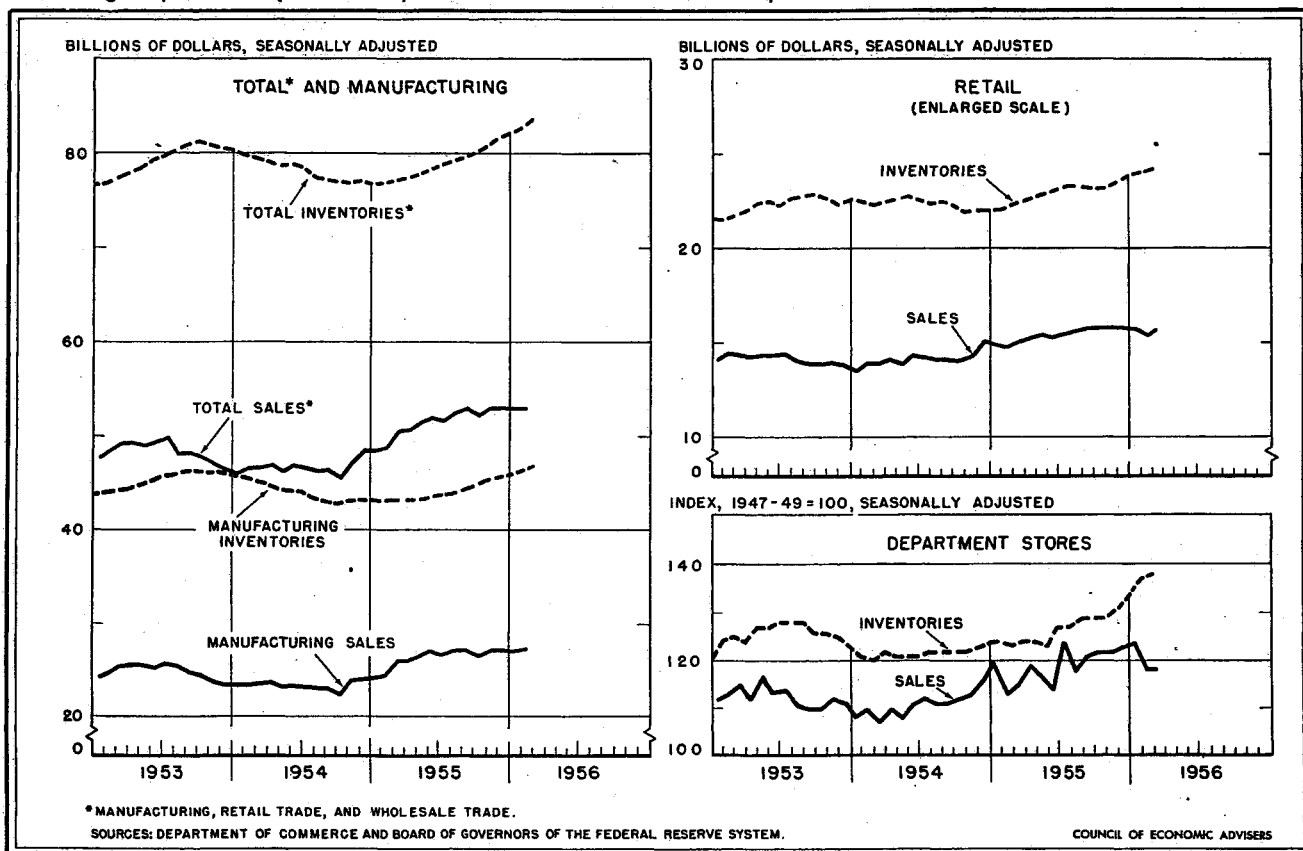
² Not available.

Partly estimated.

⁴ Preliminary estimates.

SALES AND INVENTORIES - MANUFACTURING AND TRADE

Manufacturers' and wholesalers' sales (seasonally adjusted) changed little in February, while retail sales declined about 2 percent. Total business inventories continued to rise, with manufacturers accounting for most of the increase. According to preliminary estimates, retail sales increased about 2 percent in March.



Period	Manufacturing and trade		Manufacturing			Wholesale		Retail		Department stores	
	Sales ¹	Inventories ²	Sales ¹	Inventories ²	New orders ¹	Sales ¹	Inventories ²	Sales ¹	Inventories ²	Sales ¹	Inventories ²
Billions of dollars, seasonally adjusted										Index 1947-49=100, seasonally adjusted	
1939	10.8	20.1	5.1	11.5	5.4	2.2	3.1	3.5	5.5	35	36
1948	36.4	55.6	17.6	31.7	17.4	7.9	8.1	10.9	15.8	104	107
1949	34.7	52.1	16.4	28.9	15.9	7.4	7.9	10.9	15.3	98	99
1950	39.9	64.1	19.3	34.3	21.0	8.7	10.5	12.0	19.3	105	109
1951	44.9	75.2	22.3	42.8	24.5	9.4	11.1	13.2	21.2	109	128
1952	45.9	76.7	22.8	43.8	23.6	9.4	11.3	13.7	21.6	110	118
1953	48.4	80.3	24.9	45.9	23.4	9.3	11.7	14.2	22.7	112	126
1954	46.7	76.9	23.4	43.3	22.4	9.1	11.5	14.2	22.1	111	122
1955	51.7	82.2	26.4	45.9	27.2	9.8	12.3	15.5	23.9	119	127
1955: January	48.7	76.9	24.3	43.2	24.6	9.5	11.5	14.9	22.2	120	124
February	48.9	77.3	24.6	43.3	24.8	9.5	11.7	14.8	22.4	113	123
March	50.7	77.5	26.0	43.3	26.5	9.7	11.6	15.1	22.6	115	124
April	50.9	77.7	26.0	43.3	26.1	9.6	11.7	15.3	22.8	119	124
May	51.7	78.3	26.7	43.5	27.7	9.7	11.8	15.4	23.0	117	123
June	52.2	78.8	27.1	43.8	27.8	9.7	11.8	15.3	23.2	114	127
July	51.9	79.2	26.7	43.9	27.0	9.6	11.9	15.5	23.4	124	127
August	52.8	79.6	27.2	44.3	28.7	9.9	12.0	15.7	23.3	118	129
September	53.1	80.0	27.2	44.7	28.3	10.0	12.0	15.8	23.2	121	129
October	52.5	80.9	26.6	45.4	27.5	10.1	12.2	15.8	23.3	122	129
November	53.2	81.6	27.3	45.7	28.3	10.1	12.3	15.8	23.6	122	131
December	53.2	82.2	27.3	45.9	29.3	10.1	12.3	15.8	23.9	123	134
1956: January	52.9	82.8	27.0	46.3	28.1	10.3	12.4	15.7	24.1	124	137
February ⁵	52.9	83.5	27.2	46.8	27.8	10.3	12.5	15.3	24.2	118	138
March ⁵								15.7		118	

¹ Monthly average for year and total for month.

² Book value, end of period.

³ Book value, end of period, except annual data, which are monthly averages.

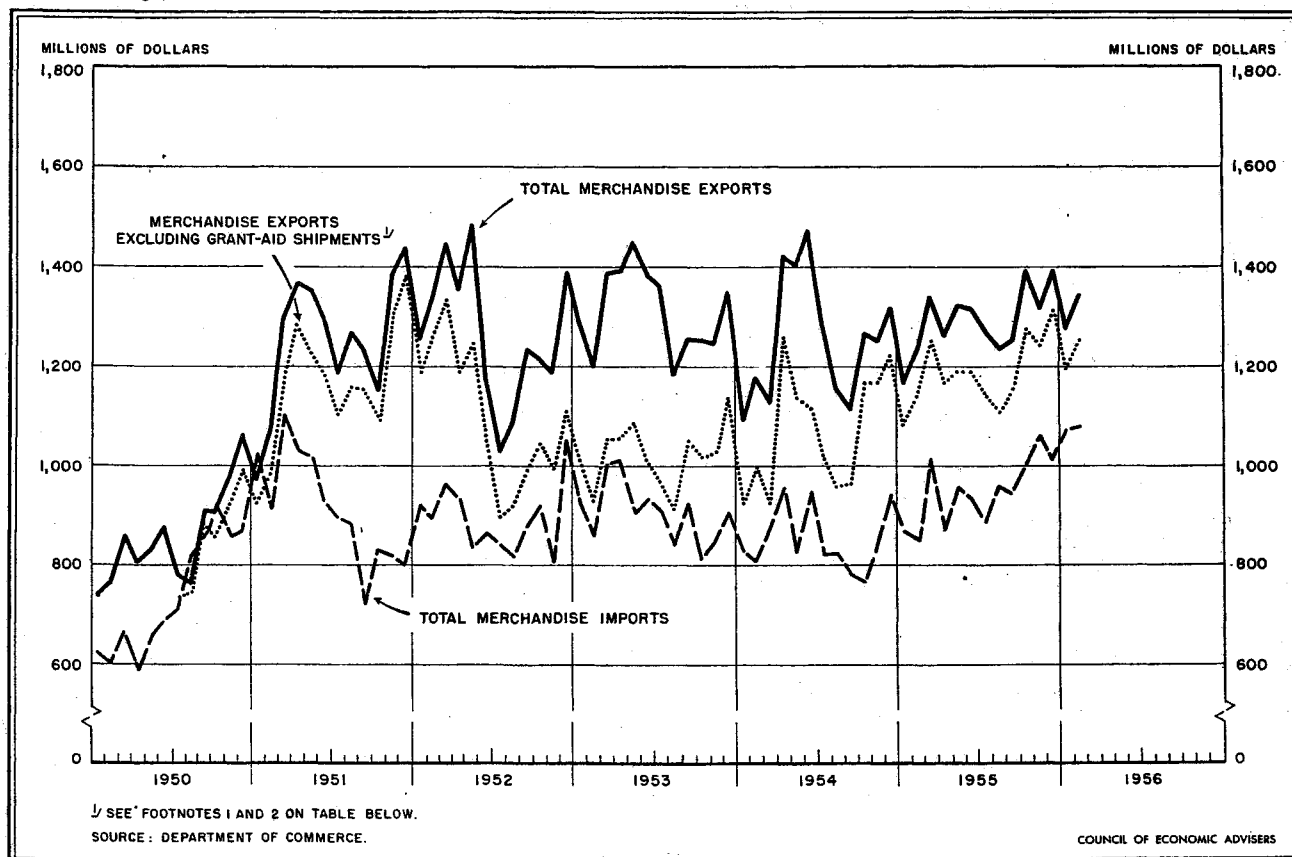
⁴ Revised series on retail trade beginning with 1951; not comparable with previous data.

⁵ Preliminary estimates.

Sources: Department of Commerce and Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

MERCHANDISE EXPORTS AND IMPORTS

For the first 2 months of 1956, commercial exports were 10 percent higher and imports 25 percent higher than for the corresponding period of 1955.



Period	[Millions of dollars]			Merchandise imports	Excess of exports over imports	
	Total	Grant-aid shipments ¹	Excluding grant-aid shipments		Total	Excluding grant-aid shipments
1936-38 monthly average	247	(²)	(²)	207	40	(²)
1947 monthly average	1,278	96	1,182	480	798	702
1948 monthly average	1,054	(²)	(²)	594	460	(²)
1949 monthly average	1,004	(²)	(²)	552	452	(²)
1950 monthly average	856	24	833	738	118	95
1951 monthly average	1,253	89	1,164	914	339	250
1952 monthly average	1,267	166	1,101	893	374	208
1953 monthly average	1,314	293	1,022	906	408	116
1954 monthly average	1,259	188	1,071	851	408	220
1955 monthly average	1,293	105	1,188	948	345	240
1955: January	1,168	85	1,083	870	298	212
February	1,237	95	1,143	850	388	293
March	1,343	92	1,251	1,019	324	232
April	1,262	94	1,168	870	392	298
May	1,322	131	1,191	958	364	233
June	1,319	128	1,191	936	382	254
July	1,268	128	1,140	885	382	255
August	1,235	128	1,107	960	276	148
September	1,254	99	1,155	945	310	210
October	1,396	119	1,276	1,010	386	267
November	1,316	73	1,243	1,064	252	179
December	1,398	84	1,314	1,014	384	299
1956: January	1,276	82	1,194	1,073	203	121
February ³	1,343	90	1,253	1,078	265	175

¹ Beginning with 1950, figures include only Department of Defense shipments of grant-aid military supplies and equipment under the Mutual Security Program. Shipments for the first 6 months of the program (July-December 1950) amounted to 282 million dollars.

² Not available.

³ Preliminary estimates.

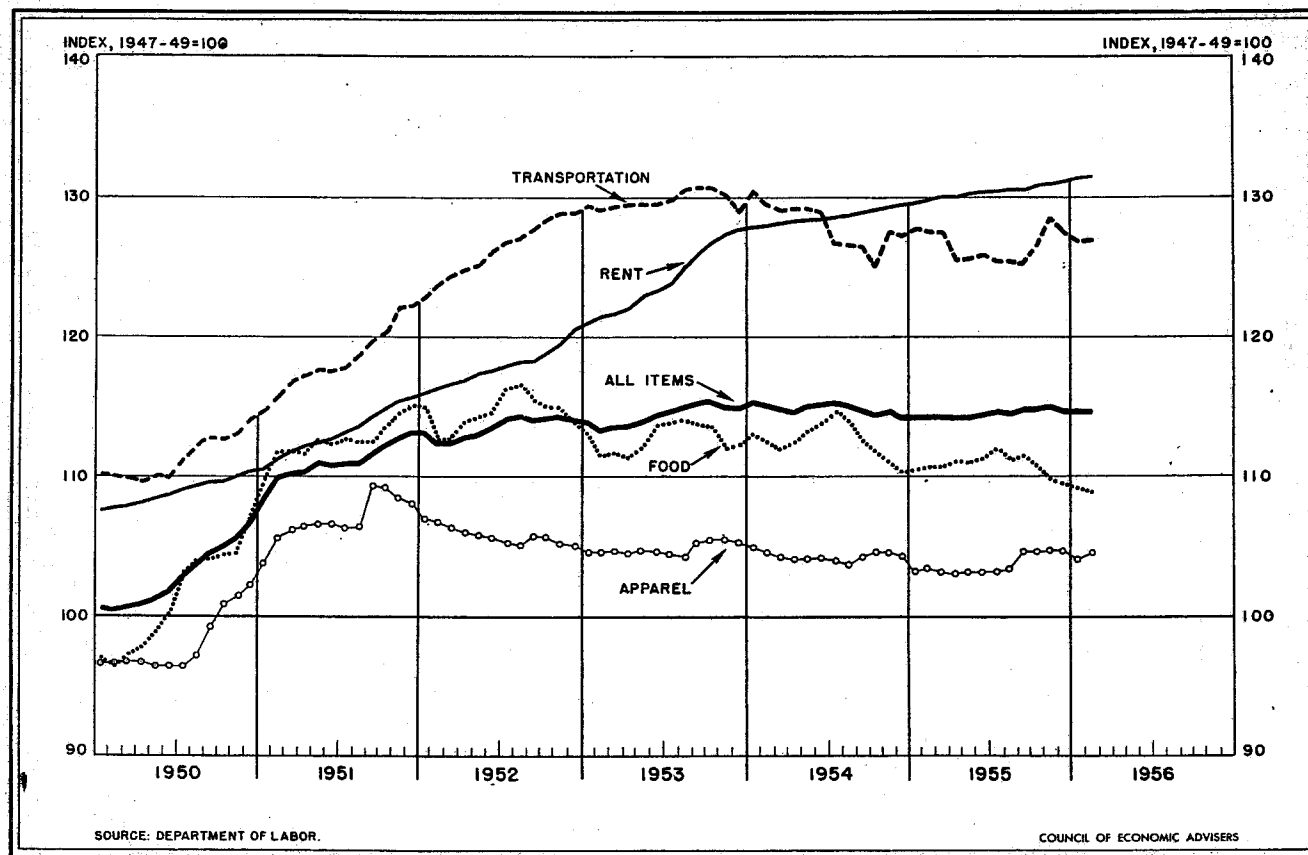
NOTE.—Detail will not necessarily add to totals because of rounding.

Sources: Department of Commerce and Department of Defense.

PRICES

CONSUMER PRICES

The average of consumer prices remained unchanged in February. Lower prices for food were offset by moderate increases in other major groups.



[1947-49=100]

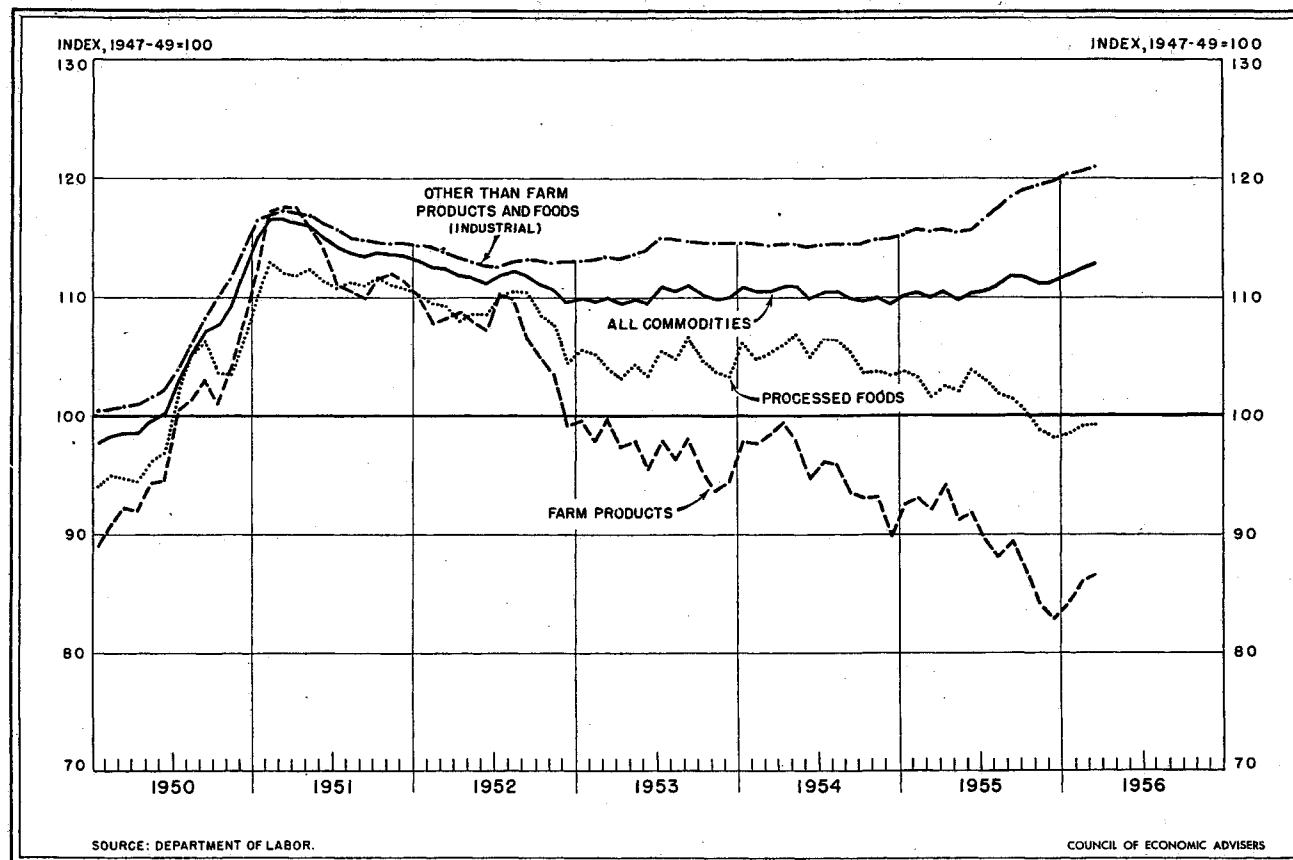
Period	All items	Food	Housing		Apparel	Transportation	Medical care	Personal care	Reading and recreation	Other goods and services
			Total ¹	Rent						
1939.....	59.4	47.1	76.1	86.6	52.5	68.9	72.6	59.6	63.0	70.6
1947.....	95.5	95.9	95.0	94.4	97.1	90.6	94.9	97.6	95.5	96.1
1948.....	102.8	104.1	101.7	100.7	103.5	100.9	100.9	101.3	100.4	100.5
1949.....	101.8	100.0	103.3	105.0	99.4	108.5	104.1	101.1	104.1	103.4
1950.....	102.8	101.2	106.1	108.8	98.1	111.3	106.0	101.1	103.4	105.2
1951.....	111.0	112.6	112.4	113.1	106.9	118.4	111.1	110.5	106.5	109.7
1952.....	113.5	114.6	114.6	117.9	105.8	126.2	117.2	111.8	107.0	115.4
1953.....	114.4	112.8	117.7	124.1	104.8	129.7	121.3	112.8	108.0	118.2
1954.....	114.8	112.6	119.1	128.5	104.3	128.0	125.2	113.4	107.0	120.1
1955.....	114.5	110.9	120.0	130.3	103.7	126.4	128.0	115.3	106.6	120.2
1955: January.....	114.3	110.6	119.6	129.5	103.3	127.6	126.5	113.7	106.9	119.9
February.....	114.3	110.8	119.6	129.7	103.4	127.4	126.8	113.5	106.4	119.8
March.....	114.3	110.8	119.6	130.0	103.2	127.3	127.0	113.5	106.6	119.8
April.....	114.2	111.2	119.5	129.9	103.1	125.3	127.3	113.7	106.6	119.8
May.....	114.2	111.1	119.4	130.3	103.3	125.5	127.5	113.9	106.5	119.9
June.....	114.4	111.3	119.7	130.4	103.2	125.8	127.6	114.7	106.2	119.9
July.....	114.7	112.1	119.9	130.4	103.2	125.4	127.9	115.5	106.3	120.3
August.....	114.5	111.2	120.0	130.5	103.4	125.4	128.0	115.8	106.3	120.4
September.....	114.9	111.6	120.4	130.5	104.6	125.3	128.2	116.6	106.7	120.6
October.....	114.9	110.8	120.8	130.8	104.6	126.6	128.7	117.0	106.7	120.6
November.....	115.0	109.8	120.9	130.9	104.7	128.5	129.8	117.5	106.8	120.6
December.....	114.7	109.5	120.8	131.1	104.7	127.3	130.2	117.9	106.8	120.6
1956: January.....	114.6	109.2	120.6	131.4	104.1	126.8	130.7	118.5	107.3	120.8
February.....	114.6	108.8	120.7	131.5	104.6	126.9	130.9	118.9	107.5	120.9

¹ Includes, in addition to rent, homeowner costs, utilities, house furnishings, etc.

Sources: Department of Labor.

WHOLESALE PRICES

Wholesale prices continued to advance in March, as average prices for farm products, processed foods, and industrial commodities increased.



[1947-49 = 100]

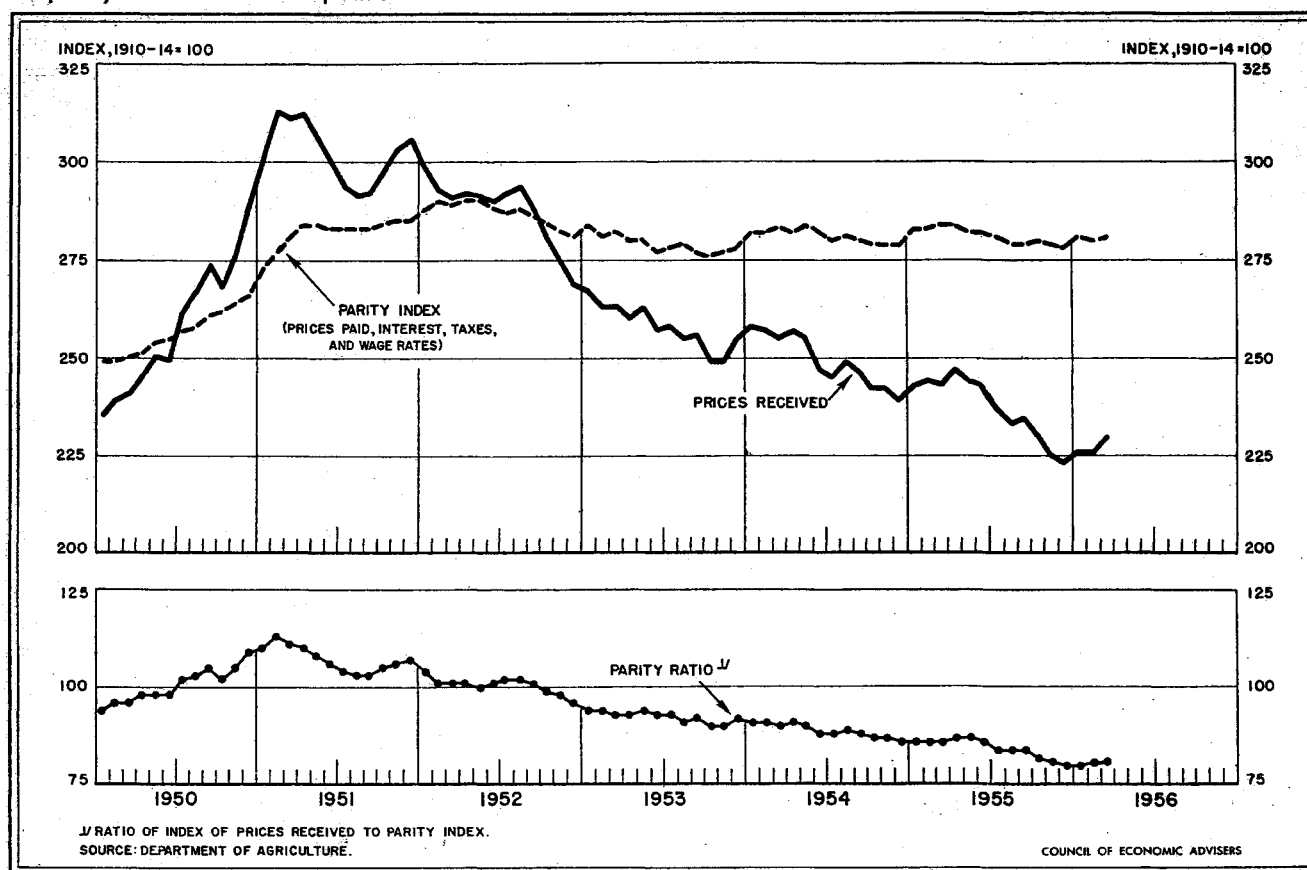
Period	All commodities	Farm products	Processed foods	Other than farm products and foods (industrial)
1939.....	50.1	36.5	43.3	58.1
1947.....	96.4	100.0	98.2	95.3
1948.....	104.4	107.3	106.1	103.4
1949.....	99.2	92.8	95.7	101.3
1950.....	103.1	97.5	99.8	105.0
1951.....	114.8	113.4	111.4	115.9
1952.....	111.6	107.0	108.8	113.2
1953.....	110.1	97.0	104.6	114.0
1954.....	110.3	95.6	105.3	114.5
1955.....	110.7	89.6	101.7	117.0
1955: February.....	110.4	93.1	103.2	115.7
March.....	110.0	92.1	101.6	115.6
April.....	110.5	94.2	102.5	115.7
May.....	109.9	91.2	102.1	115.5
June.....	110.3	91.8	103.9	115.6
July.....	110.5	89.5	103.1	116.5
August.....	110.9	88.1	101.9	117.5
September.....	111.7	89.3	101.5	118.5
October.....	111.6	86.8	100.2	119.0
November.....	111.2	84.1	98.8	119.4
December.....	111.3	82.9	98.2	119.8
1956: January.....	111.9	84.1	98.3	120.4
February.....	112.4	86.0	99.0	120.6
March.....	112.8	86.6	99.2	121.0
Week ended: ¹				
1956: April 3.....	113.5	88.4	100.8	121.2
10.....	113.4	88.0	100.8	121.3

¹ Weekly series based on smaller sample than monthly series.

Source: Department of Labor.

PRICES RECEIVED AND PAID BY FARMERS

The index of prices received by farmers rose in the month ended March 15. Since prices paid by farmers rose less, the parity ratio increased 1 point.



Period	Prices paid by farmers for items used in		Parity index (prices paid, interest, taxes, and wage rates)	Prices re- ceived by farmers	Parity ratio ¹
	Family living	Produc- tion			
	Index, 1910-14=100				
1939.....	120	121	123	95	77
1947.....	237	224	240	276	115
1948.....	251	250	260	287	110
1949.....	243	238	251	250	100
1950.....	246	246	256	258	101
1951.....	268	273	282	302	107
1952.....	271	274	287	288	100
1953.....	270	253	279	258	92
1954.....	274	252	281	249	89
1955.....	273	250	281	237	84
1955: February 15.....	271	255	283	244	86
March 15.....	273	256	284	243	86
April 15.....	274	254	284	247	87
May 15.....	274	251	282	244	87
June 15.....	274	250	282	243	86
July 15.....	274	248	281	237	84
August 15.....	273	247	279	233	84
September 15.....	272	246	279	235	84
October 15.....	274	246	280	230	82
November 15.....	273	244	279	225	81
December 15.....	273	243	278	223	80
1956: January 15.....	272	246	281	226	80
February 15.....	272	245	280	226	81
March 15.....	274	246	282	230	82

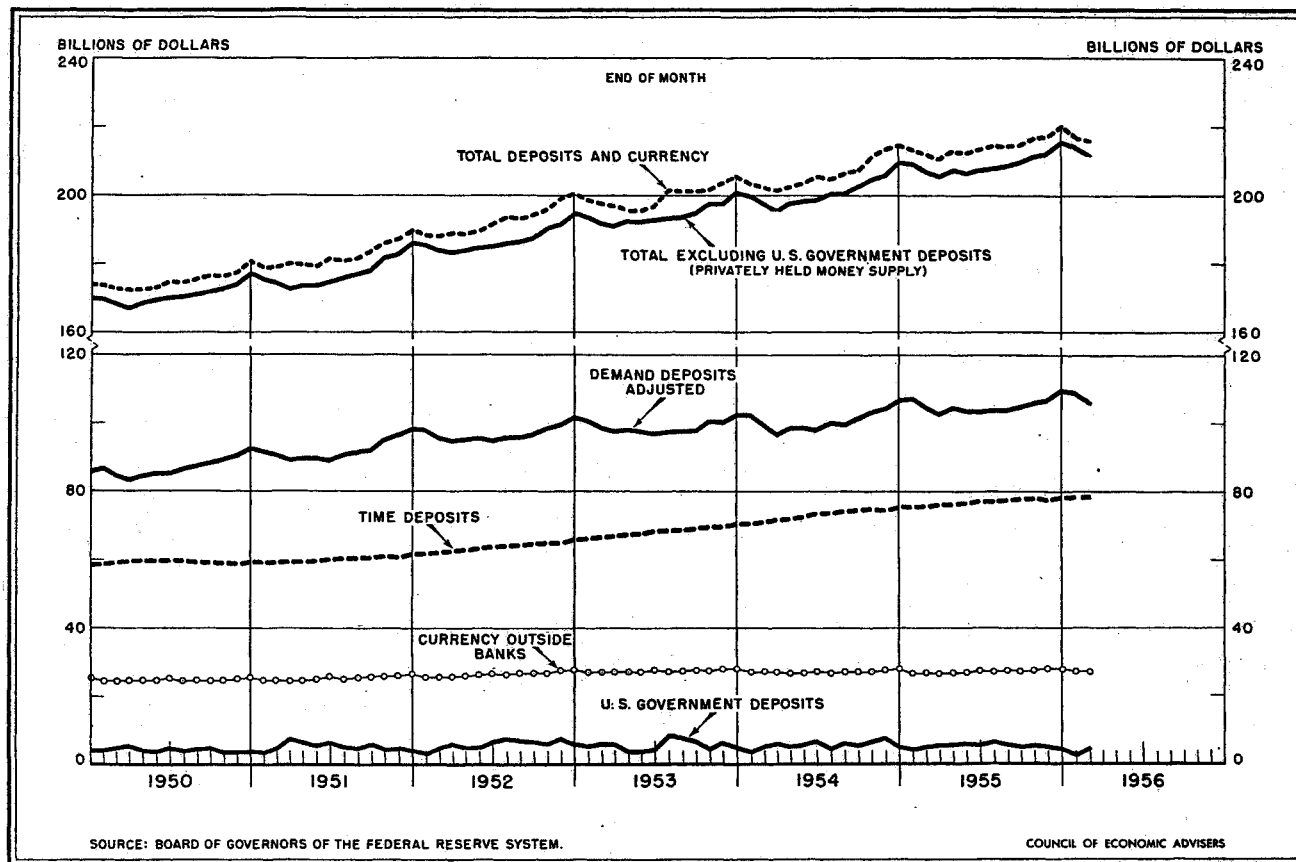
¹ Percentage ratio of index of prices received by farmers to parity index.

Source: Department of Agriculture.

CURRENCY, CREDIT, AND SECURITY MARKETS

CURRENCY AND DEPOSITS

During February, demand deposits declined more than seasonally. At the end of the month, total deposits (excluding Government) and currency were 2.2 percent higher than a year earlier.



[Billions of dollars]

End of period	Total deposits and currency	U. S. Government deposits ¹	Total excluding U. S. Government deposits (privately held money supply) ²			
			Total	Currency outside banks	Demand deposits adjusted ³	Time deposits ⁴
1948.....	172.7	3.6	169.1	26.1	85.5	57.5
1949.....	173.9	4.1	169.8	25.4	85.8	58.6
1950.....	180.6	3.7	176.9	25.4	92.3	59.2
1951.....	189.9	3.9	186.0	26.3	98.2	61.4
1952.....	200.4	5.6	194.8	27.5	101.5	65.8
1953.....	205.7	4.8	200.9	28.1	102.5	70.4
1954.....	214.8	5.1	209.7	27.9	106.6	75.3
1955 ⁵	220.2	4.5	215.7	27.9	109.7	78.2
1955: January.....	213.4	4.2	209.2	26.8	107.0	75.4
February.....	212.1	5.1	206.9	26.8	104.5	75.7
March.....	210.6	5.3	205.3	26.7	102.4	76.2
April.....	213.0	5.6	207.4	26.7	104.5	76.2
May.....	212.6	5.9	206.7	26.8	103.3	76.5
June.....	213.5	5.8	207.7	27.4	103.2	77.1
July ¹	214.6	6.5	208.1	27.1	103.9	77.1
August ¹	214.2	5.6	208.6	27.3	103.9	77.4
September ¹	214.8	5.1	209.7	27.2	104.9	77.7
October ¹	216.7	5.3	211.3	27.3	106.1	77.9
November ¹	217.2	5.0	212.2	27.9	106.9	77.4
December ¹	220.2	4.5	215.7	27.9	109.7	78.2
1956: January ¹	217.1	2.8	214.3	27.1	108.9	78.3
February ¹	216.0	4.5	211.5	27.2	105.6	78.7

¹ Includes U. S. Government deposits at Federal Reserve banks and commercial and savings banks, and U. S. Treasurer's time deposits, open account.

² Includes deposits and currency held by State and local governments.

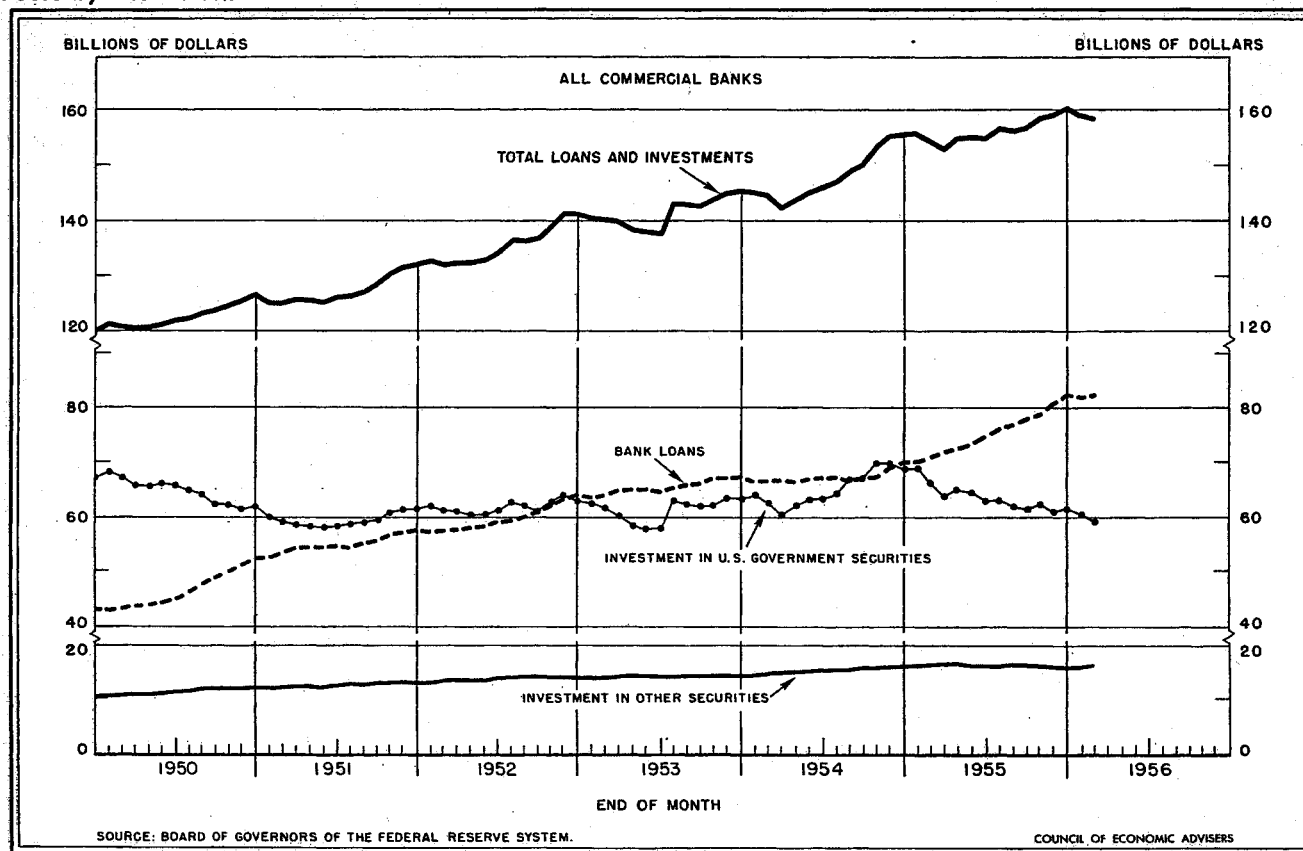
³ Includes demand deposits, other than interbank and U. S. Government, less cash items in process of collection.

⁴ Includes deposits in commercial banks, mutual savings banks, and Postal Savings System, but excludes interbank deposits.

⁵ Preliminary estimates.

BANK LOANS, INVESTMENTS, AND RESERVES

In February, loans of commercial banks increased by \$0.6 billion, and their holdings of U. S. Government securities declined \$1.7 billion. In March, business loans increased much more than usual for this time of the year. The average reserve deficiency of member banks (borrowings at the Federal Reserve less excess reserves) increased between February and March.



SOURCE: BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM.

COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS

[Billions of dollars]

End of period	All commercial banks					Weekly reporting member banks ^{1 2}	All member banks ^{1 2}		
	Total loans and investments	Loans	Investments				Reserve balances		Borrowings at Federal Reserve Banks
			Total	U. S. Government securities	Other securities		Required	Excess	
1949-----	120. 2	43. 0	77. 2	67. 0	10. 2	13. 9	17. 0	. 8	. 1
1950-----	126. 7	52. 2	74. 4	62. 0	12. 4	17. 8	15. 6	. 8	. 1
1951-----	132. 6	57. 7	74. 9	61. 5	13. 3	21. 6	18. 5	. 8	. 3
1952-----	141. 6	64. 2	77. 5	63. 3	14. 1	23. 4	19. 6	. 7	. 8
1953-----	145. 7	67. 6	78. 1	63. 4	14. 7	23. 4	19. 3	. 7	. 8
1954-----	155. 9	70. 6	85. 3	69. 0	16. 3	22. 4	18. 5	. 8	. 1
1955 ⁴ -----	161. 1	82. 8	78. 3	61. 8	16. 5	26. 7	18. 3	. 6	. 6
1955: February-----	154. 8	71. 2	83. 6	66. 8	16. 8	22. 1	18. 2	. 6	. 4
March-----	153. 5	72. 3	81. 2	64. 2	17. 0	22. 6	18. 0	. 6	. 5
April-----	155. 5	72. 9	82. 6	65. 6	17. 0	22. 5	18. 2	. 6	. 5
May-----	155. 6	73. 9	81. 7	65. 0	16. 7	22. 6	18. 2	. 6	. 4
June-----	155. 3	75. 2	80. 1	63. 3	16. 8	23. 5	18. 1	. 6	. 4
July ⁴ -----	157. 0	76. 6	80. 4	63. 7	16. 7	23. 5	18. 2	. 6	. 5
August ⁴ -----	156. 7	77. 3	79. 3	62. 5	16. 9	24. 2	18. 2	. 6	. 8
September ⁴ -----	157. 3	78. 4	78. 9	62. 0	16. 9	24. 7	18. 1	. 6	. 8
October ⁴ -----	158. 9	79. 2	79. 7	62. 9	16. 8	25. 1	18. 3	. 5	. 9
November ⁴ -----	159. 4	81. 4	78. 0	61. 4	16. 6	26. 0	18. 4	. 5	1. 0
December ⁴ -----	161. 1	82. 8	78. 3	61. 8	16. 5	26. 7	18. 6	. 6	. 8
1956: January ⁴ -----	159. 4	82. 0	77. 4	60. 9	16. 5	26. 2	18. 6	. 6	. 8
February ⁴ -----	158. 3	82. 6	75. 7	59. 2	16. 6	26. 3	18. 2	. 5	. 8
March ⁴ -----						27. 8	18. 3	. 6	1. 0

¹ Member banks include, besides all national banks, those State banks that have taken membership in the Federal Reserve System.

² Commercial, industrial, and agricultural loans; revised series beginning January 1952 and again October 1955. Such loans by weekly reporting member banks represent approximately 70 percent of business loans by all commercial banks.

³ Data are averages of daily figures on balances and borrowings during the period.

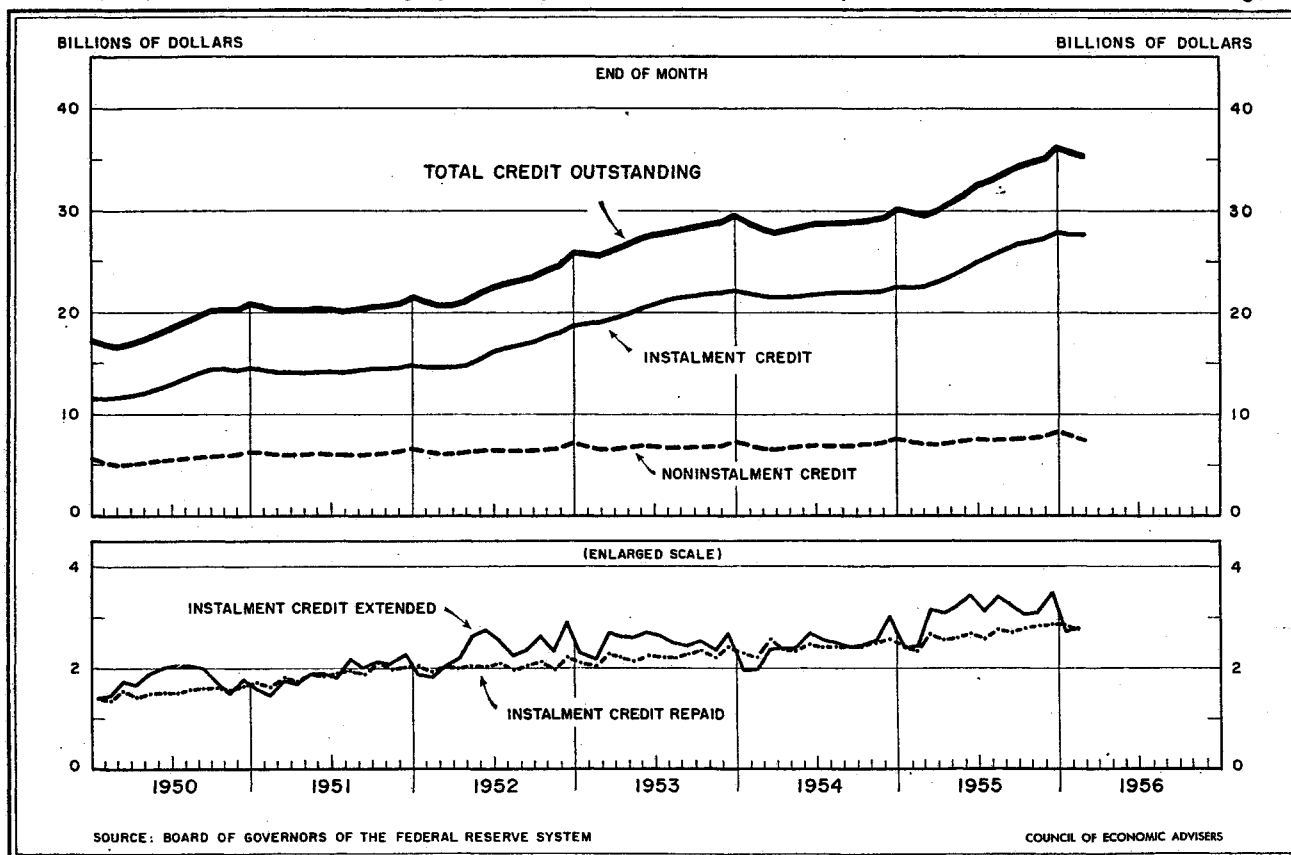
⁴ Preliminary estimates.

NOTE.—Detail will not necessarily add to totals because of rounding.

Source: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

CONSUMER CREDIT

In February, total consumer credit outstanding declined about \$325 million, reflecting the usual seasonal decline in non-instalment credit. Total instalment credit outstanding remained virtually unchanged, as increases in automobile credit and in personal loans were largely offset by a decline in loans for the purchase of other consumer durable goods.



[Millions of dollars]

End of period	Total consumer credit outstanding	Instalment credit outstanding					Noninstalment credit outstanding		Instalment credit extended ¹	Instalment credit repaid ²
		Total	Auto-mobile paper ¹	Other consumer goods paper ¹	Repair and modernization loans ²	Personal loans	Total	Charge accounts		
1939.....	7,222	4,503	1,497	1,620	298	1,088	2,719	1,414	6,872	6,060
1947.....	11,570	6,695	1,924	2,143	718	1,910	4,875	2,353	12,713	10,190
1948.....	14,411	8,968	3,054	2,842	843	2,229	5,443	2,713	15,540	13,267
1949.....	17,104	11,516	4,699	3,486	887	2,444	5,588	2,680	18,002	15,454
1950.....	20,813	14,490	6,342	4,337	1,006	2,805	6,323	3,006	21,256	18,282
1951.....	21,468	14,837	6,242	4,270	1,090	3,235	6,631	3,096	22,791	22,444
1952.....	25,827	18,684	8,099	5,328	1,406	3,851	7,143	3,342	28,397	24,550
1953.....	29,537	22,187	10,341	5,831	1,649	4,366	7,350	3,411	30,321	26,818
1954.....	30,125	22,467	10,396	5,668	1,616	4,787	7,658	3,518	29,304	29,024
1955.....	36,225	27,895	14,312	6,435	1,641	5,507	8,330	3,797	37,172	31,744
1955: January....	29,760	22,436	10,459	5,609	1,574	4,794	7,324	3,225	2,389	2,420
February.....	29,518	22,508	10,641	5,484	1,550	4,833	7,010	2,831	2,416	2,344
March.....	29,948	22,974	11,053	5,479	1,530	4,912	6,974	2,735	3,159	2,693
April.....	30,655	23,513	11,482	5,492	1,534	5,005	7,142	2,859	3,089	2,550
May.....	31,568	24,149	11,985	5,555	1,546	5,063	7,419	3,011	3,206	2,570
June.....	32,471	24,914	12,561	5,639	1,562	5,152	7,557	3,040	3,443	2,678
July.....	32,896	25,476	13,038	5,676	1,570	5,192	7,420	2,991	3,131	2,569
August.....	33,636	26,155	13,547	5,762	1,589	5,257	7,481	3,019	3,436	2,757
September.....	34,293	26,699	13,929	5,848	1,611	5,311	7,594	3,108	3,241	2,697
October.....	34,640	26,963	14,095	5,917	1,627	5,324	7,677	3,218	3,051	2,787
November.....	35,059	27,247	14,172	6,057	1,634	5,384	7,812	3,285	3,103	2,819
December.....	36,225	27,895	14,312	6,435	1,641	5,507	8,330	3,797	3,508	2,860
1956: January....	35,599	27,769	14,314	6,318	1,610	5,527	7,830	3,355	2,724	2,850
February.....	35,272	27,784	14,397	6,209	1,599	5,579	7,488	2,974	2,769	2,754

¹ Includes all consumer credit extended for the purpose of purchasing automobiles and other consumer goods and secured by the items purchased.

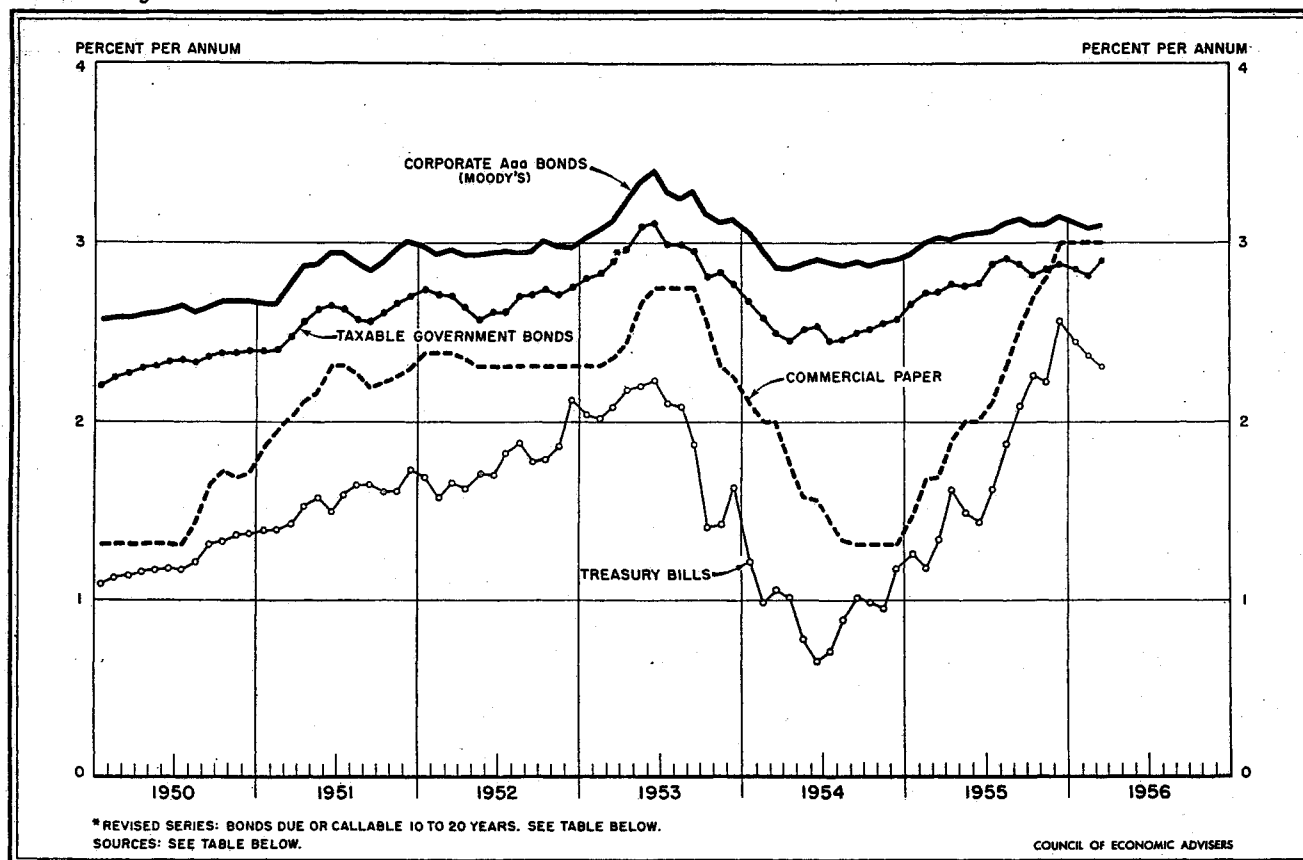
² Includes only such loans held by financial institutions; those held by retail outlets are included in "other consumer goods paper."

³ Credit extended or repaid during the period.

Source: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

BOND YIELDS AND INTEREST RATES

Yields on long-term Government and corporate bonds rose during March, and by early April they equaled or slightly exceeded the 1955 peaks. During March, yields on Treasury bills changed very little and the commercial paper rate was unchanged.



[Percent per annum]

Period	U. S. Government security yields			High-grade municipal bonds (Standard & Poor's) ³	Corporate bonds (Moody's)		Prime commercial paper, 4-6 months
	3-month Treasury bills ¹	Taxable bonds ²			Aaa	Baa	
1948.....	1. 040	2. 44		2. 40	2. 82	3. 47	1. 44
1949.....	1. 102	2. 31		2. 21	2. 66	3. 42	1. 49
1950.....	1. 218	2. 32		1. 98	2. 62	3. 24	1. 45
1951.....	1. 552	2. 57		2. 00	2. 86	3. 41	2. 16
1952.....	1. 766	2. 68		2. 19	2. 96	3. 52	2. 33
1953.....	1. 931	2. 92	3. 16	2. 72	3. 20	3. 74	2. 52
1954.....	. 953	2. 52	2. 71	2. 37	2. 90	3. 51	1. 58
1955.....	1. 753	2. 80	2. 94	2. 53	3. 06	3. 53	2. 18
1955: May.....	1. 491	2. 76	2. 91	2. 41	3. 04	3. 50	2. 00
June.....	1. 432	2. 77	2. 91	2. 48	3. 05	3. 51	2. 00
July.....	1. 622	2. 88	2. 96	2. 62	3. 06	3. 52	2. 11
August.....	1. 876	2. 91	3. 02	2. 67	3. 11	3. 56	2. 33
September.....	2. 086	2. 88	3. 00	2. 63	3. 13	3. 59	2. 54
October.....	2. 259	2. 82	2. 96	2. 56	3. 10	3. 59	2. 70
November.....	2. 225	2. 85	2. 96	2. 55	3. 10	3. 58	2. 81
December.....	2. 564	2. 88	2. 97	2. 71	3. 15	3. 62	2. 99
1956: January.....	2. 456	2. 86	2. 94	2. 64	3. 11	3. 60	3. 00
February.....	2. 372	2. 82	2. 93	2. 58	3. 08	3. 58	3. 00
March.....	2. 310	2. 90	2. 98	2. 69	3. 10	3. 59	3. 00
Week ended:							
1956: March 3.....	2. 409	2. 84	2. 94	2. 60	3. 07	3. 58	3. 00
10.....	2. 173	2. 86	2. 96	2. 63	3. 08	3. 58	3. 00
17.....	2. 374	2. 89	2. 97	2. 66	3. 10	3. 59	3. 00
24.....	2. 422	2. 93	2. 99	2. 68	3. 12	3. 60	3. 00
31.....	2. 173	2. 96	3. 01	2. 77	3. 14	3. 62	3. 00
April 7.....	2. 397	3. 03	3. 07	2. 81	3. 16	3. 64	3. 00
14.....	2. 497	3. 05	3. 09	2. 85	3. 21	3. 67	3. 05

¹ Rate on new issues within period.

² First issued in 1941. The single series on these bonds (which continued through March 1953) included: October 1941-March 1952, bonds due or callable after 15 years; April 1952-March 1953, bonds due or callable after 12 years.

³ Weekly data are Wednesday figures.

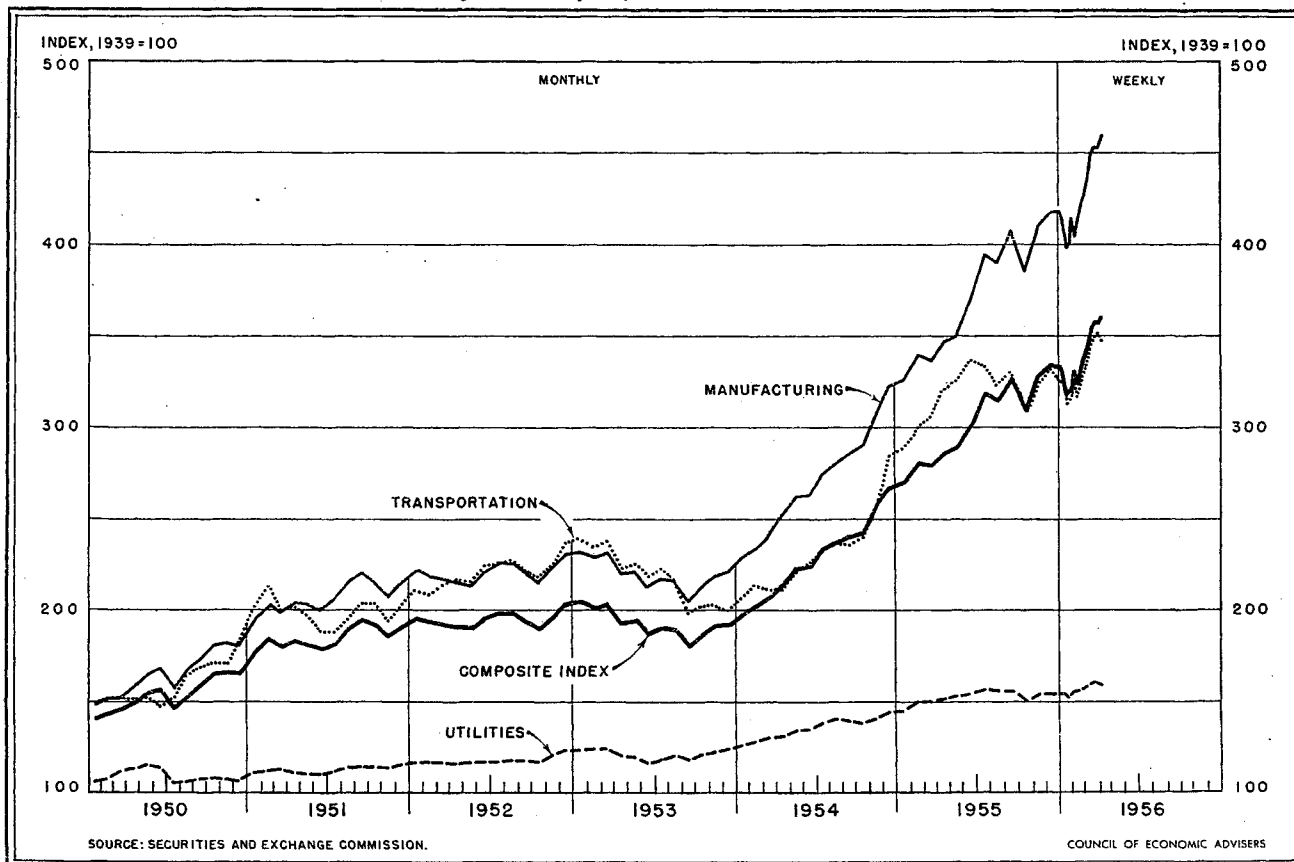
⁴ Bonds due or callable from 10 to 20 years.

⁵ Bonds due or callable 20 years and after.

Sources: Treasury Department and Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (except as noted).

STOCK PRICES

The index of stock prices reached new highs in early April.



[1939=100]

Period	Com- posite index ¹	Manufacturing			Trans- portation	Utilities	Trade, finance, and service	Mining
		Total	Durable goods	Nondura- ble goods				
Weekly average:								
1947.....	130. 9	132. 4	119. 9	144. 6	149. 1	105. 5	162. 8	117. 2
1948.....	132. 7	136. 8	124. 3	148. 6	158. 1	99. 3	156. 9	133. 0
1949.....	127. 7	132. 1	116. 0	147. 2	136. 0	98. 1	160. 7	129. 4
1950.....	154. 1	165. 7	150. 2	180. 2	160. 0	108. 9	183. 8	143. 5
1951.....	184. 9	206. 8	178. 5	233. 1	199. 0	112. 6	207. 9	204. 9
1952.....	195. 0	220. 2	188. 8	249. 3	220. 6	117. 9	206. 0	275. 7
1953.....	193. 3	220. 1	192. 6	245. 2	218. 7	121. 5	207. 1	240. 5
1954.....	229. 8	271. 3	245. 2	295. 2	232. 6	135. 8	235. 6	267. 0
1955.....	304. 6	374. 4	352. 4	394. 4	320. 0	152. 9	296. 9	312. 9
1955: April.....	286. 8	347. 0	326. 8	365. 3	320. 5	152. 1	277. 3	311. 3
May.....	289. 0	349. 6	324. 5	372. 4	326. 0	153. 5	280. 5	302. 6
June.....	302. 9	370. 1	344. 4	393. 4	336. 5	154. 3	294. 2	313. 8
July.....	318. 8	394. 6	366. 1	420. 7	333. 9	156. 6	304. 3	317. 2
August.....	315. 3	390. 0	367. 8	410. 0	323. 6	156. 2	302. 4	311. 4
September.....	326. 6	407. 1	387. 0	425. 2	331. 3	155. 3	319. 7	317. 1
October.....	310. 2	385. 1	365. 3	402. 9	309. 3	150. 9	307. 0	294. 1
November.....	328. 4	410. 6	389. 2	429. 9	324. 8	154. 2	324. 9	312. 5
December.....	333. 6	418. 7	395. 9	439. 2	331. 6	154. 3	323. 2	326. 2
1956: January.....	325. 7	407. 8	378. 6	434. 4	320. 2	153. 8	309. 8	330. 3
February.....	330. 0	413. 3	382. 8	441. 0	322. 8	156. 1	309. 6	350. 2
March.....	350. 9	443. 4	412. 0	472. 0	343. 6	159. 7	321. 9	372. 9
Week ended:								
1956: March 2.....	340. 1	427. 2	395. 3	456. 2	332. 8	158. 5	318. 1	362. 8
9.....	346. 2	435. 8	407. 4	461. 6	339. 8	159. 4	323. 8	368. 9
16.....	354. 4	448. 3	420. 6	473. 4	345. 6	160. 6	325. 5	370. 6
23.....	357. 4	453. 3	421. 2	482. 5	349. 2	160. 4	322. 9	382. 5
29.....	356. 6	452. 6	415. 7	486. 2	350. 6	159. 7	319. 4	379. 5
April 6.....	360. 3	459. 4	414. 0	500. 8	346. 5	158. 8	320. 7	379. 0
13 ²	353. 9	450. 0	410. 0	486. 5	344. 0	157. 8	316. 3	368. 7

¹ Includes 265 common stocks: 98 for durable goods manufacturing, 72 for nondurable goods manufacturing, 21 for transportation, 29 for utilities, 31 for trade, finance, and service, and 14 for mining. Indexes are for weekly closing prices.

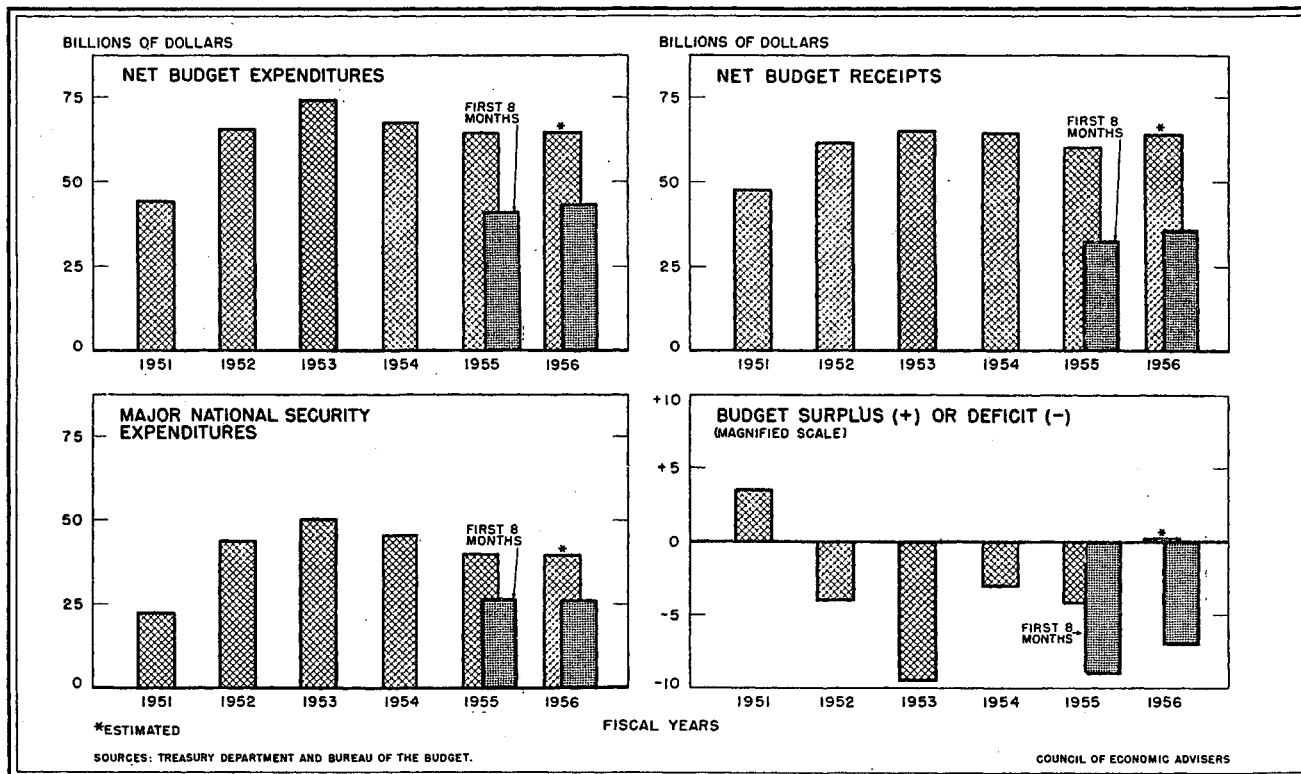
² Not charted.

Source: Securities and Exchange Commission.

FEDERAL FINANCE

BUDGET RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES

The cumulative budget deficit for the first 8 months of the current fiscal year was \$7.2 billion, due primarily to seasonally low tax collections. For the same period last year, the budget deficit amounted to \$9.0 billion.



(Billions of dollars)

Period	Net budget receipts	Net budget expenditures		Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-)	Public debt (end of period) ²
		Total	Major national security ¹		
Fiscal year 1944.....	43.6	95.1	76.8	-51.4	202.6
Fiscal year 1947.....	39.8	39.0	14.4	+8.8	258.4
Fiscal year 1948.....	41.5	33.1	11.8	+8.4	252.4
Fiscal year 1949.....	37.7	39.5	12.9	-1.8	252.8
Fiscal year 1950.....	36.5	39.6	13.0	-3.1	257.4
Fiscal year 1951.....	47.6	44.1	22.4	+3.5	255.3
Fiscal year 1952.....	61.4	65.4	44.0	-4.0	259.2
Fiscal year 1953.....	64.8	74.3	50.4	-9.4	266.1
Fiscal year 1954.....	64.7	67.8	46.9	-3.1	271.3
Fiscal year 1955.....	60.4	64.6	40.6	-4.2	274.4
Fiscal year 1956 (estimated).....	64.5	64.3	39.5	+2	274.4
1955: February.....	5.4	4.8	3.1	+6	278.2
March.....	9.7	5.9	3.6	+3.8	274.1
April.....	3.7	5.2	3.3	-1.5	276.7
May.....	4.4	5.4	3.3	-9	277.5
June.....	10.1	6.8	3.9	+3.4	274.4
July ²	2.8	5.4	3.0	-2.6	277.6
August ²	4.7	6.2	3.5	-1.5	278.4
September ²	5.5	5.3	3.5	+2	277.5
October ²	2.7	5.4	3.3	-2.7	279.9
November ²	4.7	5.2	3.1	-5	280.2
December ²	4.9	5.7	3.4	-8	280.8
1956: January ²	4.7	5.3	3.1	-6	280.1
February ²	6.2	5.0	3.2	1.2	280.2
Cumulative totals for first 8 months:					
Fiscal year 1955.....	32.4	41.3	26.5	-9.0	278.2
Fiscal year 1956 ²	36.1	43.3	26.2	-7.2	280.2

¹ Revised to include the items classified as "major national security" in *The Budget of the United States Government for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1957*. These expenditure items are: Military functions of Defense Department, mutual military program, development and control of atomic energy, stockpiling of strategic and critical materials, and defense production expansion.

² Includes guaranteed securities, except those held by the Treasury. Not all of total shown is subject to statutory debt limitation. ³ Preliminary.

NOTE.—Beginning with February 1954, the reporting of budget receipts and expenditures is on a basis consistent with that used in preparing budget estimates.

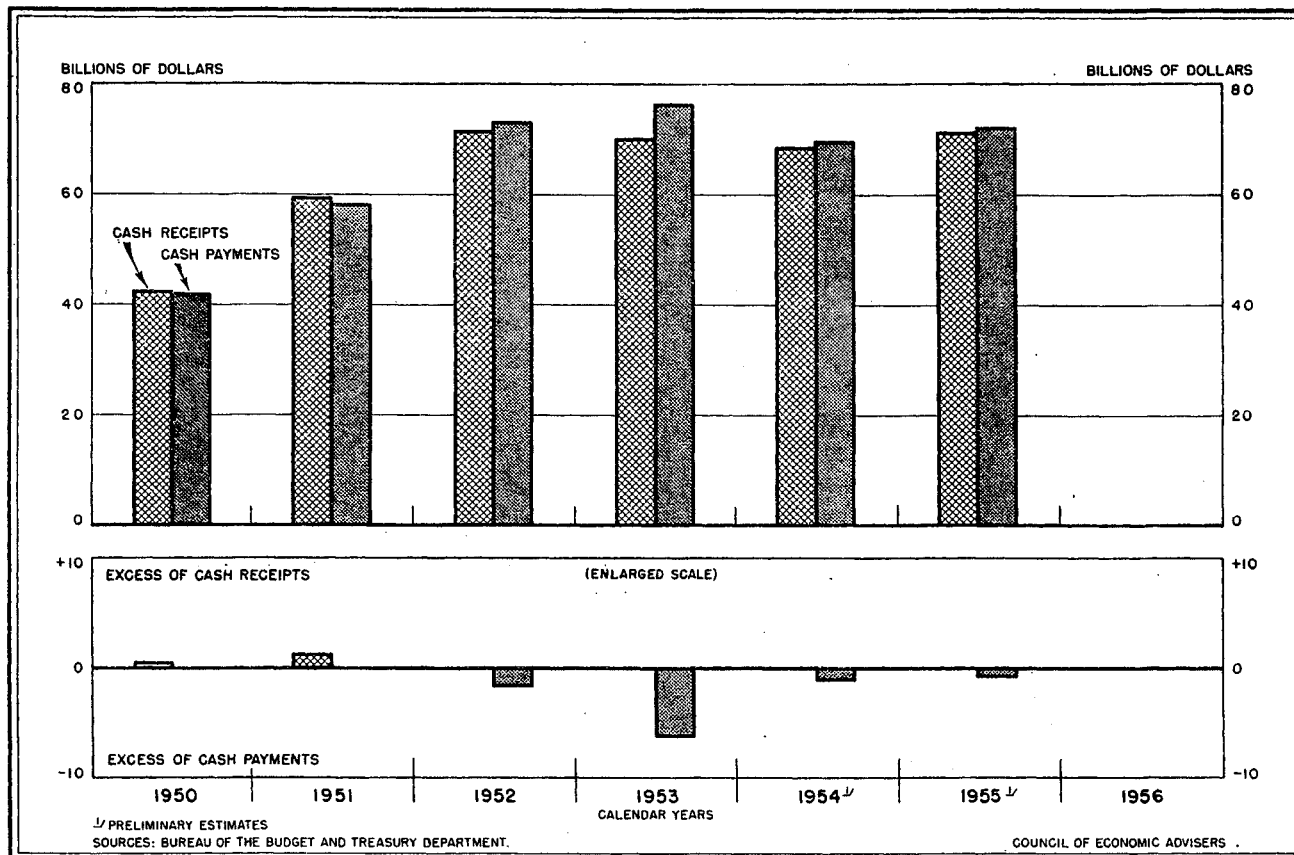
The figures shown above for fiscal years 1953 and 1954 are those published by the Treasury Department on the new basis.

Detail will not necessarily add to totals because of rounding.

Sources: Treasury Department and Bureau of the Budget.

CASH RECEIPTS FROM AND PAYMENTS TO THE PUBLIC

Federal cash payments exceeded cash receipts by \$740 million in calendar year 1955, compared with \$1.1 billion in the prior year. In the fourth quarter of 1955, there was a cash deficit of \$3.8 billion, due primarily to seasonally low tax receipts.



[Millions of dollars]

Calendar year	Cash receipts from the public	Cash payments to the public	Excess of receipts (+) or payments (-)
Calendar year total:			
1948.....	44,922	36,897	+8,027
1949.....	41,346	42,642	-1,295
1950.....	42,419	41,969	+450
1951.....	59,278	58,034	+1,244
1952.....	71,339	72,980	-1,641
1953.....	70,041	76,194	-6,153
1954 ¹	68,562	69,643	-1,082
1955 ¹	71,470	72,209	-740
Quarterly totals, not adjusted for seasonal variation:			
1954: ¹ First quarter.....	23,693	16,459	+7,234
Second quarter.....	19,115	18,431	+684
Third quarter.....	13,501	18,582	-5,082
Fourth quarter.....	12,253	16,172	-3,918
1955: ¹ First quarter.....	21,287	17,161	+4,126
Second quarter.....	20,795	18,633	+2,162
Third quarter.....	15,314	18,571	-3,258
Fourth quarter.....	14,075	17,844	-3,770

¹ Preliminary estimates.

NOTE.—Detail will not necessarily add to totals because of rounding.
Sources: Bureau of the Budget and Treasury Department.