## SURVEY OF CURRENT BUSINESS WEEKLY SUPPLEMENT UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE BUREAU OF FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC COMMERCE



## WASHINGTON, D. C., MAY 9, 1940

## SUMMARY OF BUSINESS TRENDS

DATA now available for the full month of April indicate that the decline in business was slight compared with the drop of the 3 preceding months. Although there was some improvement in certain fields in the last week of April, the trend for the month as a whole was definitely downward. On a seasonally adjusted basis, bituminous coal and paper production were among the few industries to record gains over the preceding month. Steelingot production, automobiles, cotton consumption, carloadings (excluding coal), and other major indexes of production were lower or unchanged for the month. Department-store sales on a seasonally corrected basis showed little change from March to April. For the 4 weeks ended April 27 the reported total was about 1 percent higher than in the corresponding period last year, without allowance for the later date of Caster a year ago.
In May, steel-ingot production began to rise substantially for the first time this year, after having declined from 91 percent of capacity in December to 60 percent by the end of April. The scheduled rate for last week was 61.8 percent, and for the current week 65.8 percent. This rise in the rate of operations came as a result of the business brought in by the rescinding
of the mid-April price reductions. The volume of new orders in April is not yet known; hence the strength of the current move in production cannot be appraised. Steel consumption has no doubt been above the recent level of production but a large rise in the ingot rate at this time could only come through borrowing business from the months ahead. Exports have proved an important factor in steel production in recent months, but foreign shipments are subject to the uncertainties of the war abroad. Automobile production has passed the 1939-40 production peak, falling under 100,000 units last week for the first time since February. In view of the relatively high stocks of cars. in the. hands of dealers, the use of steel in this industry is likely to decline more sharply than usual at this point in the season.
The small gains recorded in major fields in the last week of April did not materially affect either the general level of prices on the stock market or the sensitive commodity price index. Stock prices as a whole were down fractionally in the first week in May. The daily index of 28 basic commodities (see chart below) rose to 115.4 in the latter part of the week but woonff from the preceding week.

SELECTED BUSINESS INDICATORS


208509-40

WEEKLY BUSINESS INDICATORS ${ }^{\bullet}$
[Weekly average, $1923-25=100]$

| ITEM | 1940 |  |  |  |  | 1939 |  | 1938 |  | ITEM |  | 1940 |  |  |  |  | 1939 |  | 1938 |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | $\mathrm{May}_{4}$ | $\begin{array}{\|c} \text { Apr. } \\ 27 \end{array}$ | $\left(\begin{array}{l} \mathrm{spr} . \\ 20 \end{array}\right.$ | Apr. | Apr. | $\overline{\mathrm{May}_{6}}$ |  | $\left\lvert\, \begin{gathered} \operatorname{May} \\ \hline \end{gathered}\right.$ | ${ }_{30}{ }_{3}$ |  |  | $\left\lvert\, \begin{gathered} \mathrm{May}_{4} \\ \hline \end{gathered}\right.$ | Apr. | ${ }^{\text {Apr }}$ 20 | ${ }_{13}{ }^{\text {apr. }}$ | Apr. | $\mid$ | $\begin{array}{\|c\|} \hline \text { Apr. } \\ \hline 29 \\ \hline \end{array}$ | $\overline{M a y}$ | ${ }_{30}$ |
| Business activity: 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Finance-Continued. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| New York Timeşo |  | ${ }_{99.8}^{93.1}$ | 93. 5 | 100.0 | 100.5 | 78.0 | 88.7 | 79.0 | 68.8 |  | Debits, outside N. Y. | 101.3 | 91.2 | 99.6 | 84.2 | 111.9 | 96.2 | 99.1 | 88.5 | 3 |
| Business Week. |  | 105.4 | 105.2 | 104.8 | 104.3 | 91.8 | ${ }_{94.5}$ | 75.7 | 76.3 |  | Federal Reserve reporting |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Commodity prices, wholesale: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Loans, total | 69.3 | 69.2 | 69.2 | 69.1 | 69.2 | 64.6 | 64.8 | 68. | 68.7 |
| Dept. of Labor, $1926=100$ : Combined index (813) |  | 79.0 | 78.5 | 78.0 | 77.6 | 76.1 | 76.1 | 77.8 | 78.3 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Farm products (67) |  | 71.6 | 69.6 | 68.0 | 67.0 | 63.6 | 63.9 | 67.4 | 67.8 |  | Call loanst. | 24.2 | 28.2 | 24.2 28. |  |  | 24. 28 | 24.2 |  | 24.2 |
| Food (122)--7 |  | 72.8 82.5 | 71.9 | 70.8 | 69.7 82.7 | ${ }_{80} 68.3$ | ${ }_{80}^{68.6}$ | 71.4 | 71.9 |  | Currency in circulation | 156.2 | 155.1 | 155.2 | 154.9 | ${ }_{155.0}$ |  | 41.8 | 32. | 131.3 |
| All other (624) Fiow- |  | 82.5 | 82.6 | 82.7 | 82.7 | 80.9 | 80.8 | 82.0 | 82.2 |  | Production: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Combined index (120). | 84.3 | 84.6 | 84.8 | 84.5 | 83.7 | 79.9 | 80.1 | 80.5 | 80.6 |  | Aituminous coalt | 126.3 | 76.7 | 71.8 | 75.0 | 81.2 | 97.0 | 32.5 | 45.7 | 49.1 |
| Copper, electrolytict... | 79.7 40.8 | 80.4 | 81.9 <br> 40.8 | 80.4 | 79.7 40.8 | 72.5. | 71.7 | 71.0 | 71.0 32.4 |  | Cotton consumptionit.-.........- |  | 7. | 115. 3 | 115.7 | 115.7 | 115.3 | 110.7 | 83,6 | 75.8 |
| Construction contractst | 40.8 | 40.8 | 62.3 | ${ }^{43.8}$ | 40.8 | 34. | 88. | 32.0 | 70.0 |  | Electric powert................- |  | 143.9 | 145.4 | 145.1 | 142.9 | 129.9 | 131.0 | 116.4 38 3 | 16.4 |
| Distribution: Carloadings. |  | 67.7 | 66.0 | 05.0 | 63.3 | 90.1 | 61.4 | $5 \overline{5}$ | 57.0 |  |  |  | ${ }^{51.6}$ |  | ${ }_{191.1}^{48.1}$ |  | ${ }^{49.2}$ |  | ${ }^{38} 8.3$ |  |
| Employment: Detroit, factory. |  |  |  | 108.3 |  |  | 96.0 |  | 68.4 |  | Steel ingots ${ }^{\text {a }}$ | 106.0 | 102.9 | 104.4 | 105.1 | 105.8 | 82.1 | 83.5 | 51.8 | 54.0 |
| Finance: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Receipts, primary markets: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Failures, commercial | 71.7 | 76.4 | ${ }^{64.4}$ | 84. 5 | 67.3 61.5 | 69.0 | ${ }_{66.6}^{80.1}$ | 75.4 | 75.9 |  | Cattle and calves.. |  | 59.2 39.6 | 56.6 37.7 | 53.6. | 53.5 46.9 | ${ }^{61.4}$ | 63.4 | 63.2 | 66.4 |
| Stock pricest. | 111.3 | 111.8 | 111.6 | 113.0 | 112.7 | 96.0 | 94.3 | 82.4 | 81. 6 |  | Cotton- Wheat. | $\left\|\begin{array}{c} 33.1 \\ 103.9 \end{array}\right\|$ | $\left\lvert\, \begin{gathered} 45.4 \\ 101.2 \end{gathered}\right.$ | 37.7 82.4 | 32.7 67.0 | 41.9 <br> 72. | 16.9 |  | $\begin{array}{r} .24 .8 \\ .24 . \\ 47 \end{array}$ | 31,5 <br> 40.1 |

- Data do not cover calendar weeks in all cases.

GSeasonally adjusted.

## WEEKLY BUSINESS STATISTICS *

| tTEM | 1940 |  |  |  |  |  | 1939 |  | 1938 |  | $\begin{aligned} & 1937 \\ & \hline \text { M8y } \end{aligned}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | May 4 | Apr. 27 | Apr. 20 | Apr. 13 | Apr. 6 | Mar. 30 | May 6 | Apr. 29 | May 1 | Apr. 30 |  |
| COMMODITY PRICES, WHOLESALE |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Copper, electrolytic, New York $\ddagger$.--------dol. per Ib-- | 0.110 | 0. 111 | 0.113 | 0. 111 | 0.110 | 0.110 | 0. 100 | 0.009 | 0.098 | 0.098 | 0. 138 |
| Cotton, middling, spot, New York.----...-...-- do-..- | . 111 | .111 | . 111 | . 111 | . 111 | . 110 | . 093 | . 092 | . 087 | . 088 | . 136 |
|  | 2.34 | $\begin{array}{r}2633 \\ 365 \\ \hline\end{array}$ | 2.30 | 2.30 | 2.28 | ${ }^{2} 2.29$ | 2.27 | 2. 27 | 2. 36 | 2. 36 | 2.82 |
| Wheat, No. 2 'Hard Winter (Kansas City) doi, per bu-- | 1.05 | $\stackrel{ }{1.08}$ | $\stackrel{36}{1.08}$ | $\begin{array}{r}1.04 \\ 1.56 \\ \hline\end{array}$ | ${ }_{1} 1.03$ | 36.81 <br> 1.03 | 36.21 .75 | 36. 26 | 38.52 .81 | 38.54 .83 | 40.14 1.36 |
| Banking: FINANCE |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Debits, New York City --mememe of dol. | 3,480 | 3,639 | 3,640 | 3,122 | 4,423 | 2,850 | 4,136 | 2,831 | 3,801 | 3,741 | 4,289 |
| Debits, outside New York City (140 cities) .....do..-. | 4,697 | 4,228 | 4,622 | 3,903 | 5,189 | 4,117 | 4,465 | 3,832 | 4,105 | 8,680 | 4,830 |
| Reserve bank credit, total ............................... <br> U. 8. Government securities $\qquad$ do. | 2,500 2,467 | 2,501 2,467 |  | 2,500 | 2, 2,46 | 2, 210 | $\begin{array}{r}2,572 \\ 2,564 \\ \hline\end{array}$ | 2,580 2,564 | 2,589 2,564 | 2,586 2,564 | 2,577 |
| Member bank reserve balances.-......-----.-.-. do...-- | 12,870 | 12,883 | 12,757 | 12,567 |  | 12, 294 | 9,872 |  |  |  |  |
| Excess reserves, estimated Federal Reserve reporting nember banks: | 6, 107 | 6, 116 | 6,048 | 5,949 | 5,815 | 5,679 | 4,084 | 4, 124 | 2,442 | 2, 579 | ${ }^{887}$ |
| Federal Resiverse demand adjusted.................-do....- | 19,696 | 19,764 | 19,655 | 19,465 | 19, 175 | 18, 276 | 16,660 |  | 14,450 | 14, 698 | 15,349 |
| Deposits, time--1- | 5,305 | 5,313 | 5,312 14,936 | 5,360 | 5,355 14,668 | 5,338 | 5, 248 | 5, 235 | 5, 228 12325 123 | 5, 230 | 5, 149 |
| Investments, totaly - direct obligations.-.......do...- | 14,881 8,960 | 14,934 8,975 | 14,936 8,002 | 14,835 8,938 | $\begin{array}{r}14,666 \\ 8848 \\ \hline\end{array}$ | 14,726 8,830 | 13,714 8,341 | 13,675 8,270 | 12,325 8,001 | 12,257 7,987 | 12,707 8,334 |
| obis. S . <br> Obligations fully guaranteed by U. S. Govern- |  |  | 9,002 | 8,938 | 8,848 | 8,830 | 8,341 | 8,270 | 8,001 | 7,987 | 8,334 |
|  | 2,427 | 2,427 | 2,406 | 2,379 | 2,380 | 2,379 | ${ }^{2,026}$ | 2,030 | 1,322 | 1,199 | 1,165 |
| Loans, totalis. $\qquad$ do $\square$ | 8,661 | 8,650 | 8,653 | 8, 631 | 8,649 | 8,603 | 8,071 | 8, 100 | 8,517. | 8, 587 | 9,533 |
|  | 4,409 | 4,419 | 4,430 | 4,393 | 4,414 | 4,383 | 3,841 | 3,844 | 4. 126 | 4, 387 |  |
|  | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1. 00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 100 | 1.00 |
|  | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1. 25 | 1. 25. | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1. 25 | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1. 25 | 1. 25 |
| Exchange rates: | 1.980 | 1. 801 | 1.989 | 1.992 | 2.023 | 2.027 | 2.649 | 2.648 | 2903 | 3.088 |  |
|  | - 4.035 | - 4.035 | a 4.035 | - 4.035 | -4.035 | - 4.035 | 4.681 | 4.681 | 4.988 | 4.888 | 4. 936 |
|  | 292 | 311 | 7262 | ${ }^{344}$ | 274 | 287 | ${ }^{281}$ | ${ }^{326}$ |  |  |  |
| Currency in circulationt.....-........................il. of do Securlty markets: | 7,585 | 7, 531 | 7,538 | 7, 523 | 7, 528 | 7,405 | 6,923 | 6,885 | 6,416 | 6,378 | 6,438 |
| Bond sales (N. Y. S. E.)...-thous. of dol. par value Bond yields (Moody's) (120 bonds) Stock sales (N. Y. S. E.) thous. of shares. | 30,460 | 29,840 | 33, 210 | 42,310 | 49,310 | 35,540 | 26,340 | 24, 180 | 29,070 | 26,170 | 49,600 |
|  | 3.52 | 3.54 | 3. 65 | 3.54 | 3.55 | 3.57 | 3.82 | 3. 84 | 4.35 | 4.38 | 3. 92 |
|  | 3,99 | 4,623 | 6,750 | 6,895 | 7,270 | 4,838 | 2,639 | 2,858 | 3,643 | 2,495 | 4,137 |
|  | 10813 91.3 | 108.56 02.4 | 108.42 92.2 | $\begin{array}{r}109.78 \\ 93.3 \\ \hline\end{array}$ | 709.46 93.5 | 107.77 91.7 | ${ }_{8}^{83.23}$ | ${ }_{81.0}^{01.57}$ | 79.99 73.3 | 79.28 74.0 | ${ }^{131.04}$ |
|  | 107.3 | 108.7 | 108.4 | 109.8 | 110.0 | 107.8 | 97.2 | 94.6 | 87.2 | 88.1 | 139.8 |
|  | 87.1 | 86.9 | 87.6 | 88.2 | 88.6 | 87.0 | 81.6 | 80.5 | 67.0 | 67.4 | 97.8 |
|  | 28.4 | 29.0 | 28.6 | 29.3 | 29.6 | 29.0 | 24.9 | 24.1 | 21.4 | 21.6 | 58.2 |
| PRODUCTION, CONSTRUCTION, AND DISTRIBUTION |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| rodaction: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 99,305 | 101,405 | 103,725 | 101,940 | 101, 655 | 103,3;0 | 71,420 | 88,640 | 53,385 | 60,755 | 41,275 |
|  |  | 1,307 |  |  |  | 1,412 | 459 | 553 | 779 | 836 | 1,169 |
| (iluminous coait. .-...........-. thous. of short tons- |  | 2,398 | 2,422 | 2,418 | 2,381 | 2,422 | 2,164 | 2.183 | 1,939 | 1,939 | 2,176 |
|  |  | 3,845 | 3,859 | 3,854 | 3,745 | 3,841 | 3,581 | 3,568 | 3,382 | 3,396 | 3,489 |
|  | 61.8 | 60.0 | 60.9 | 61.3 | 61.7 | 60.7 | 47.8 | 48.6 | 30.7 | 32.0 | 91.0 |
|  |  |  | 10,004 | 11, 762 |  | 10,003 |  | 14, 147 |  | 11,239 |  |
| Distribution: |  | 644, 520 | 628,342 | 618, 810 | 602,697 | 628,278 | 572,857 | .585, 100 | 536, 149 | 543, 039 | 763,495 |
|  |  | 124,638 | 121,018 | 120,447 | 107, 518 | 135, 800 | 66, 104 | 80, 154 | 81,086 | 80, 089 | 122,287 |
| Forest products. $\qquad$ Grains and grain products. |  | 33, 718 | 32, 096 | 31, 174 | 31, 570 | 31,931 | 30,127 | 29, 253 | 25,809 | 26,568 | 37,146 |
|  |  | 35,933 | 34, 163 | 31, 196 | 30, 108 | 34, 540 | 34, 019 | 25, 229 | 32549 | 35,338 | 27,093 |
|  |  | 12, 352 | 11, 304 | 11, 146 | 10, 069 | 9,595 | 13,875 | 14, 100 | 13,060 | 12, 635 | 13, 938 |
|  |  | 148,638 | 148, 150 | 148,301 | 149,726 | 147, 156 | 153,803 | 153,432 | 150, 750 | 149,957 | 173,377 |
|  |  | 20, 848 | 15,164 | 123,495 | 10,369 | 10, 160 | 16,612 | 157,800 | 255, 011 | 10,988 | -72,014 |
| Receipts: |  | 268,395 | 266, 447 | 234, 051 | 263,337 | 259,096 | 253,317 | 257,126 | 225, 011 | 227, 579 | 317,640 |
| Cattle and calves...-.....-..............thousands.. |  | 187 | 179 | 160 | 169 | 173 | 194 | 200 | 200 | 210 | 257 |
|  |  |  | 245 | 310 | 304 | . 310 | 250 | 258 | 255 | 264 | 64 |
|  | 8, 863 | 118 8,049 | 6, 685 | 85 5,330 | 109 5,754 | 6;201 | 4,758 | 466 4,461 | \% <br> 34 <br> 3,768 | $\begin{array}{r}\text { - } \\ \cdot \\ \hline \text {,188 }\end{array}$ | 2,040 |

$\oplus$ Rate for week ended May 11 is 65.8
$\oplus$ Rate forer strictly $\quad$ DDaily average. $\quad$ Data do not cover calendar weeks in all cascs.

- Data do not cover calendar weeks in all cascs. $\quad$ Offichal rate

Official rate.
f No longer strictly comparable; for an explanation, see the corresponding date on p, 30 of the Apri! 1939 lssue of the Sorver. ISource: Ward's Automotive Reports,

MONTHLY BUSINESS STATISTICS

"Revised. $\quad$ - Data for March are the latest available. $10{ }^{2}$ Quotations not available August 26-October 16, 1939.

* New series. New items for Federal gross debt beginning June 1916 appear in table 21, p. 16 , of the April 1939 Svivex. 1934; see table 2, $p$. 18 of the January 1940 SURVEY.
; Data for April, June, September, and December 1939 and March 1940 are for 5 weeks; other months, 4 weeks.

MONTHLY BUSINESS STATISTICS-Continued


\& Revised series. World visible supply of tin revised beginning January 1935 ; data not shown on p. 60 of the November 1939 SURVEI will appear in a subsequent issue of he Surver.

See footnote marked "f" on p. 40 of the April 1940 Surver.
Data for April, July, October 1939 , and January 1940 are for 5 weeks; other months, 4 weeks,

