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



WASHINGTON, D. C., SEPTEMBER 11, 1941

## SUMMARY OF BUSINESS TRENDS

RETAIL trade was extraordinarily heavy during the summer months. After a much smaller July decline than has been usual in past seasons, department store sales increased in an exceptional amount during August. The Federal Reserve's adjusted index for the month was 133 , as compared with 115 in July and 98 in August a year ago. Reports from other retail outlets, such as variety stores, mail order houses, rural stores selling general merchandise, and various chain stores all testify further to the heavy purchasing on the part of cons mers in the past several months.

Aggregate consumer expenditures for both goods and services are likely to reach $\$ 75$ billion this year. Such a sum will not only exceed last year's $\$ 66$ billion expenditure, but will also surpass the previous high of $\$ 72$ billion in 1929 . Only a part of this increased expenditure as compared with last year is the result of higher prices. Total retail sales in the first 7 months of 1941 had a value 18 percent above the same period in 1940, while the physical volume of goods purchased is estimated to have expanded about 13 percent.

The largest rise has occurred in the purchasing of durables, as January-July sales of these increased in value about 33 percent. Retailers selling nondurables expanded their business about 13 percent.

The heavy buying this year has been influenced in part by consumers anticipation of higher prices and less favorable credit terms, shortage of goods because of raw material scarcities, and possible deterioration in quality. Particularly was this true in August, when the curtailment of silk supplies and the issuance of consumer credit regulations impressed upon the buying public the probable extent of future shortages in certain lines. However, in an article appearing in the September issue of the Survey, it is shown that sales during the first 6 months, while very large, were not out of line with what should have been expected, given the record income payments of the period.

Financial developments in August, other than the new consumer installment credit regulations and the issuance of the first tax-anticipation notes, continued trends of recent previous months. The new tax-anticipation notes enable taxpayers to make provision for taxes that do not come due until the following year and provide the Government with defense funds prior to the formal tax collection. Inasmuch as they increase current savings, they are also a check on inflation. From August 1 through September 6, notes with a value of $\$ 1,087$ million had been sold.

## SELECTED BUSINESS INDICATORS



## WEEKLY BUSINESS INDICATORS ${ }^{\bullet}$

[Weekly average, $1923-25=100$, except as indicated]

| ITEM | 1941 |  |  |  |  | 1940 |  | 1939 |  | ITEM |  | 1941 |  |  |  |  | 1940 |  | 1939 |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | ${ }_{7}^{\text {Sept. Aug. }}$ |  | Sept. Sept. |  |  |  | Sept. | $\therefore{ }^{\prime} \text { Aug. }$ |  | Aug. | $\overline{\text { Aug. }}$ | Sept. | Ang. |  | t. Sept. |
| Business activity; New York Timest |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Finance-Continued. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| New York Timess |  | 130.5 <br> 137.1 | 130.8 | 130.9 | 130.6 | 1108.6 |  | 101.4 | 98.5 |  | Stock prices $\ddagger$. |  |  |  | 93.6 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Business Week..-.-........-: |  | 154.3 | 155. 6 | 157.1 | 158.4 | 129.3 |  | 110.8 | 108.2 |  | Debits, outside, N. Y. C.t. |  |  |  |  |  | 96.5 | 79.2 | 99 | 78.3 |
| Commodity prices, wholesale: Dept. of Labor: <br> Combined index, $1926=100$ |  |  |  | 88.6 |  |  |  |  |  |  | Federal Reserve' reporting member bcink3: Loans, total | 87.2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Farm products... |  | 88.6 | 86.7 | 86, 4 | 87.8 | 67. 6 |  | 68. 1 | 62.7 |  | Interest rates: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Food. |  | 88.2 | 87.0 | 86.7 | 86.2 | 71.6 |  | 74.5 | 68.5 |  | Call loanst | 24.2 | 24.2 | 24.2 | 24.2 | 24.2 | 24.2 | 24.2 | 24.2 |  |
| All other. |  | ${ }_{152} 91$ | ${ }^{80.9}$ | ${ }_{150.6} 7$ | ${ }^{90} 6$ | ${ }_{109}^{82} 3$ |  | 181.7 | 80.4 <br> 100 |  | Time loans $\dagger$ |  |  | 28.6 |  | 28.6 |  | 23.6 | 28.6 | 28.6 |
| 28 basic commodities $($ Fisher's index, 1926=100: | 153.8 | 152.7 | 151.0 | 150.6 | 151.8 | 109.6 |  |  | 100.4 |  | Currency in cir Production: |  |  | 202.8 |  |  | 166.6 | 165.3 |  | 147. |
| - Combined index | 97.9 | 97.7 | 97.0 | 96.7 | 96.2 | 82.0 | 81.6 | 80.2 | 78.4 |  | Automobiles. | 41.9 | 50.8 |  |  | 53.2 |  | 35.2 |  |  |
| Copper, electrolytict | 85.5 | 85.5 | 85. 5 | 85.5 | 85.5 | 78.3 | 78.3 | 78.3 | 74.6 |  | Bituminous coalt. |  | 106.5 | 105.2 |  | 103.2 | 93.4 | 88. |  | 80.4 |
| Cotton, midding, spot | B6. 2 | 64.0 | 62.5 | ${ }^{61.4} 8$ | 62.5 | 36.4 | 36.4 100.1 | 36.0 | 32.7 68.6 |  | Cotton consumpt |  | 151.4 | 189.0 | 190. 1 | 190.6 | 121.7 | 135.9 | 111.6 |  |
| Distribution: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Lumber........ |  | 57.1 |  |  |  |  |  | 44.9 |  |
| Carioadings |  |  |  | 93.5 | 02.2 | 73.0 | 80.7 | . 5 | 75.2 |  | Petroleum: |  | 198.6 | 197.1 | 196.0 | 194.0 | 179. 7 | 173. | 160.1 | 113.2 |
| Department store sales $\triangle$ |  | 152 | 118 | 114 | 116 | 109 | 118 | 99 | 107 |  | Steel ingots 8 . | 173.4 | 173.8 | 173. | 172.2 | 173. |  |  |  | 108.2 |
| Employment, Detroit, factory |  |  |  | \%7. |  |  | 83 |  | 89.4 |  | Recelpts, primary markets: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Finance: ${ }_{\text {Bond }}$ ylelds $\ddagger$ | 57.0 | 57.0 | 57.2 | 57.0 | 56.8 | 61.0 | 61.5 | 68.5 | 65.2 |  | Whe | 68. 11.4 | 4145.3 | 138.8 | 134.0 | ( $\begin{array}{r}\text { 54. } \\ 14.5\end{array}$ | 127.2 | 170.7 |  |  |

- Data do not cover calendar weeks in all cases.

ISeasonally adjusted. $\ddagger$ Daily average.
or Weekly average, $1935-30=100$

$\Delta$ Weckly average $1935-39=100$. The index is compiled by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System; it is not adjusted for seasonal variations.
WEEKLY BUSINESS STATISTICS •

| ITEM | 1941 |  |  |  |  | 1940 |  | 1939 |  | 1938 |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Sept. 6 | Aug. 30 | Ang. 23 | Aug. 16 | Aug. 9 | Sept. 7 | Aug. 31 | Sept. 9 | Sept. 2 | Sept. 10 | Sept. 3 |
| COMMODITY PRICES, WHOLESALE |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Copper, electrolytic, New York $\ddagger$--......--dol. per lb-- | 0.118 | 0.118 | 0. 118 | 0. 118 | 0. 118 | 0.108 | 0. 108 | 0.108 | 0.103 | 0.099 | 0.099 |
| Cotton, middling, spot, New York.-.-.-.-------do.--- | . 180 | ${ }^{1} 174$ | -170 | . 167 | . 170 | . 099 | . 099 | . 098 | . 089 | . 081 | . 083 |
|  | 3. 28 | 3. 26 | 3. 21 | 3. 21 | 3.19 | 2.32 | 2. 29 | 2. 32 | 2. 16 | 2. 42 | 2. 41 |
| Iron and steel, composite .-.-...-.-.-.- dol. per ton-. | 38.15 | 38. 15 | 38.15 | 38.15 | 38.15 | 37.81 | 37. 78 | 36.01 | 35.98 | 36. 50 | 36. 50 |
| Wheat, No. 2, Hard Winter (Kansas City) dol. per bu.. | 1.12 | 1.08 | 1.08 | 1.07 | 1.06 | . 75 | . 70 | . 87 | . 67 | . 63 | . 67 |
| Banking: FINANCE |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Debits, New York City ............................... Debits, outside New York City ( 140 cities) $\qquad$ | 3,280 | 3,304 | 3,394 | 3,243 | 3,804 | 2, 442 | 2,258 | 2,897 | 2,555 | 2,373 | 2,744 |
|  | 5, 020 | 5,286 | 5,720 | 5,170 | 5,816 | 3,731 | 3,672 | 3,833 | 3,629 | 3,260 | 3,521 |
| Federal Reserve bank credit, total.............do. | 2,241 | 2,281 | 2, 272 | 2, 247 | 2,231 | 2,490 | 2,480 | 2, 643 | 2,448 | 2,592 | 2, 585 |
| U. S. Government securities.....-.-...........- do | 2,184 | 2,184 | 2,184 | 2. 184 | 2,184 | 2,434 | 2,442 | 2,594 | 2,426 | 2,564 | 2, 504 |
| Member bank reserve balances................... do | 12,884 | 12,998 | 13,037 | 12,948 | 12,951 | 13, 524 | 13,516 | 11,141 | 10,951 | 8,269 | 8,179 |
| Excess reserves, estimated .-.-...-.............do | 4,857 | 4,994 | 5, 058 | 5,027 | 5,018 | 6, 494 | 6,487 | 4,969 | 4,799 | 3,034 | 2,941 |
| Federal Reserve reporting member banks: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Deposits, demand, adjusted..---.-...-.-.-...- do... | 24,349 8,426 | 24,453 5,431 | 24,455 5,435 | 24,245 5,434 | 24,217 5,431 | 20,901 5,358 | 21,053 5,340 | 18,040 5,235 | 18,096 5,247 | 15,267 5,217 | 15,388 5,210 |
|  | $\begin{array}{r}\text { S. } \\ \text { 1826 } \\ \\ \hline 1.335\end{array}$ | 5.431 18,410 | 5,435 $\mathbf{1 8 , 3 3 7}$ | 5,434 18,211 | 5,431 18,104 | 5,358 15,622 | 5,340 15,648 | 5,235 14,084 | 5,247 14,233 | 5,217 12,601 | 5, 210 $\mathbf{1 2 , 5 9 1}$ |
|  | 18.335 | 18,410 11,292 | 18,337 11,279 | 18, 211 | 18,164 | 15,622 9,373 | 15,648 $\mathbf{g}, 387$ | 14,084 8,512 | 14,233 8,565 | 12,601 7,792 | 12,591 7,789 |
| O. S. Government direct obligations-a.-do-...- <br> Obligations fully guaranteed by U. S. Government mil. of dol | 3.316 | 3,316 | 3,314 | 3,312 | 3,305 | 2,584 | 2, 582 | 2,219 | 2,296 | 1,655 |  |
| Commercial, industrial, and agricultural loans§ | 10,993 | 10,697 | -10,688 | 10,663 | 10,597 | 8,566 | 8,509 | 8,305 | 8,209 | 1,651 | 1,655 8,270 |
|  | 6,222 | 6,183 | 6,180 | 6,146 | 6,087 | 4,480 | 4,463 | 4,075 | 3,096 | 3,888 | 3,886 |
| Interest rates, call loansf......-.-.............percent.- | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1. 00 | 1. 00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Interest rates, time loanst....--.-...................... do...- | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1. 25 | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1. 25 | 1. 25 |
| Exchange rates: Pound sterlingt--..-....---.-. dollars.- | c 4.033 | - 4.032 | -4.030 | c 4.032 | - 4.033 | -4.032 | - 4.026 | 4.053 | 4.293 | 4.821 | 4.856 |
|  | 145 | 200 | 227 | 230 | 220 | 177 | 229 | 209 | 229 |  |  |
|  | 10,035 | 9,936 | 9,850 | 9,807 | 9,796 | 8,090 | 8,029 | 7,257 | 7,179 | 6,574 | 6,531 |
| Security markets: ${ }_{\text {Bond sales ( }}$ ( S. S. E.) , thous. of dol. par value.- | 26,800 | 35,430 | 29,570 | 29,670 | 35,320 | 28,950 | 19,150 | 204,300 | 42,950 | 20, 140 | 22,240 |
| Bond yields (Moody'ts) (120 bonds) $4 . . . . . .-$ percent. | 3.29 | 3. 29 | 3.30 | 3.29 | 3.28 | 3.52 | 3.55 | 3.95 | 3.76 | 4.11 | 4.10 |
| Stock sales ( $N . Y$ Y, S. E.) ...-......--thous. of shares.- | 2,340 | 2,206 | 2,183 | 2,216 | 3,228 | 3,507 | 1,960 | 17,539 | 5, 865 | 2,995 | 3,760 |
| Stock prices (N. Y. Timet) $\ddagger$.---.-.-.-dol. per share-- | 91.82 | 91.45 | 91.02 | 90.93 | 92.89 | 96.75 | 93.23 | 106. 94 | 97.71 | 93.74 | 93.35 |
| Stock prices (Standard and P0or's) (420) ....1926=100. | 79.3 | 78.9 | 78.3 | 78.0 | 79.7 | 81.2 | 78.3 | 92. 0 | 84.3 | 89.3 | 87.2 |
|  | 93.9 | 93.4 | 92.8 | 92.3 | 94.6 | 93.8 | 90.2 | 109.5 | 98.4 | 107.9 | 105.1 |
|  | 70.0 | 69.8 | 68.8 | 63.9 | 69.9 | 81.6 | 80.3 | 83.2 | 84.5 | 74.5 | 73.4 |
|  | 28.0 | 28.1 | 28.0 | 27.8 | 28.3 | 27.5 | 25.4 | 27.6 | 24.2 | 27.1 | 26.6 |
| PRODUCTION, CONSTRUCTION, AND DISTREBUTION |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Production: Dismminemer |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Automobiles ${ }^{\text {B }}$ - | 32,940 | 39,965 1,813 | 45,525 1,792 | 45,550 1,790 | 41,795 1,758 | 39,665 1,591 | 27,645 1,512 | 26,865 1,557 | 24,240 1,369 | 17,435 1,322 | 22,165 1,172 |
|  |  | 3,224 | 3.193 | 3,201 | 3,196 | 2,592 | 2, 736 | 2,376 | 2,442 | 2,110 | 2,217 |
|  |  | 4,005 | 3,975 | 3,953 | 3,912 | 3,624 | 3,501 | 3,229 | 2,283 | 3,207 | 3,349 |
|  | 96.3 | 96.5 | 96.2 | 95. 6 | 96.3 | 82.5 | 91.3 | 68.6 | 63.0 | 39.9 | 44.0 |
| Distribution: |  |  |  | 14,373 |  |  | 16,078 |  | 11,014 |  | 17,322 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | 695, 258 | 768, 775 |  |  |  |  |
| Frelght-car loadings, total...........................cars |  | 183, 808 | 899, 182,632 | 181, 204 | 179, 485 | 123, 257 | 150, 023 | 123,331 | 135, 132 | 104, 750 | 613,029 121,668 |
|  |  | 47, 750 | 50, 445 | 50, 365 | 49,118 | 34, 457 | 38,637 | 29,980 | 33, 232 | 26,619 | 30.080 |
|  |  | 43, 536 | 43,625 | 44, 375 | 45,887 | 36, 775 | 37, 333 | 36, 136 | 40, 200 | 30, 517 | 42, 016 |
|  |  | 12, 462 | 12,013 | 10, 930 | 10,021 | 15, 803 | 16, 168 | 16,651 | 14,017 | 14,667 | 14,645 |
|  |  | 158,311 | 157, 102 | 156, 256 | 156, 684 | 134, 181 | 153, 660 | 135, 692 | 156, 865 | 134,392 | 155, 153 |
|  |  | 76,548 | 77, 019 | 78, 847 | 76, 697 | 69,478 | 69, 290 | 49,478 | 52, 491 | 21,994 | 26, 593 |
|  |  | 390, 305 | 376,914 | 368,397 | 360, 657 | 276, 217 | 303, 664 | 266, 189 | 284, 460 | 232, 768 | 257, 874 |
| Receipts: Cattle and |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 247 | 237 | 205 | 193 | 241 | 267 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 245 | 230 | 239 | 233 | 252 | 277 |  |  |  |  |
| Cotton into sight.--.-.-...----..-.thous. of bales.. | 178 | 97 | 130 | 130 | 138 | 196 | 140 | 395 | 272 | 380 | 258 |
| Wheat, at primary markets..-......... thous. of bu.. | 9,256 | 11,554 | 11,043 | 10,663 | 11,497 | 10,115 | 13,552 | 10,329 | 12, 276 | 9,620 | 13, 784 |

$\ddagger$ Daily average. Data do not cover calendar weeks in all cases. ISource: Ward's Automotive Reports. Eree rate.
§Data for 1938 not strictly comparable with data for later years; see note on corresponding data shown in p. 51 of the 1940 Supplement.
$\otimes$ Rate weak ended Sept. 13, is 96.9 ; data beginning with July 1941 are based on estimated capacity as of June 30, 1941, of $86,148,700$ tons of open-hearth, Bessemer, and lectric ingots and steel for castings.
$\dagger$ Recelpts at Buffalo and Cincin
$\triangle$ Data re
$\triangle$ Data revised beginaing in the June 19,1941 , issue to include certain additional governmental and industrial power generation not previously reported.

MONTHLY BUSINESS STATISTICS


MONTHLY BUSINESS STATISTICS—Continued

$r$ Revised. $\quad D$ Preliminary.
$\dagger$ Revised series. See note on corresponding item in the August 1941 Survex.

