Prefatory Note

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Confidential (FR) Class II FOMC

March 12, 2004

CURRENT ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

Supplemental Notes

Prepared for the Federal Open Market Committee by the staff of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System

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The Domestic Nonfinancial Economy

Consumer Sentiment

After having spiked sharply in January, the Michigan Survey Research Center's (SRC) index of consumer sentiment has dropped back noticeably, but to levels that remain above its long-run average and above its readings throughout last year. According to the preliminary report for March, the index was just a touch lower in early March than in February.

The slight dip in the SRC index in early March was the result of a decrease in the "expected conditions" component of the index that was mostly offset by an increase in the "current conditions" component. For "expected conditions," consumers' appraisals of expected business conditions fell, but their assessments of their expected personal financial situation improved slightly. Regarding "current conditions," consumers' assessments of their current personal financial situation and of buying conditions for large household appliances rebounded a bit following last month's large drops.

Among those items not included in the overall index, expectations about the change in unemployment over the next twelve months continued to deteriorate in early March. In contrast, consumers' appraisals of buying conditions for cars and houses both improved.

In early March, the mean and median of expected inflation climbed to 3.7 percent and 3.0 percent, respectively, the highest readings for both measures since last March. In contrast, both the mean and median of expected inflation over the next five to ten years were unchanged at 3.3 percent and 2.9 percent, respectively.

Federal Government Outlays and Receipts

Adjusting for the timing of outlay payments, the federal government recorded a deficit of \$110 billion in February, about \$13 billion larger than last year.¹ Adjusted receipts were about 5 percent lower than last year, reflecting a surge in individual income tax refunds stemming in large part from last summer's tax cuts.

Adjusted outlays were up about 5 percent over the twelve months ending in February, or about \$9 billion. Spending on income security was about \$5 billion lower than last year, as a result of the tailing off of extended unemployment insurance benefits and an anomalous reduction in refundable

^{1.} This year, February outlays were lower than average because the first day of February fell on a weekend, shifting outlays into January.

University of Michigan Survey Research Center: Survey of Consumer Attitudes Indexes of consumer sentiment (Not seasonally adjusted)

2003 2004 Mar.^P Category Sept. Oct. Nov. Dec. Feb. Aug. Jan. Composite of current and expected conditions¹ 89.3 87.7 89.6 93.7 92.6 103.8 94.4 94.1 102.5 Current conditions1 97.0 99.7 98.4 99.9 109.5 103.6 105.7 Expected conditions¹ 82.5 80.8 83.0 88.1 89.8 100.1 88.5 86.6 Personal financial situation Now compared with 12 months ago^2 109 106 111 107 105 119 111 115 Expected in 12 months² 124 127 128 122 133 136 128 131 Expected business conditions 108 Next 12 months² 111 97 122 128 143 118 111 112 Next 5 years² 97 94 98 104 124 110 106 Appraisal of buying conditions Cars 150 152 155 161 157 161 150 159 Large household appliances² 148 158 150 148 146 165 157 159 Houses 165 158 165 170 163 164 158 168 Expected unemployment change - next 12 months 111 117 105 98 95 105 108 114 29 Prob. household will lose a job - next 5 years 25 25 27 24 26 25 23 Expected inflation - next 12 months 2.9 Mean 2.8 3.4 3.1 3.1 2.8 2.9 3.7 Median 2.5 2.8 2.6 2.7 2.6 2.7 2.6 3.0 Expected inflation - next 5 to 10 years Mean 3.0 3.0 3.1 3.1 3.1 3.4 3.3 3.3 2.7 2.7 Median 2.8 2.7 2.8 2.8 2.9 2.9

Note. Figures on financial, business, and buying conditions are the percent reporting 'good times' (or 'better') minus the percent reporting 'bad times' (or 'worse'), plus 100. Expected change in unemployment

is the fraction expecting unemployment to rise minus the fraction expecting unemployment to fall, plus 100.

P Preliminary.

1. Feb. 1966 = 100.

2. Indicates the question is one of the five equally-weighted components of the index of sentiment.

EITC payments.² Spending on agriculture and net interest was also lower than last year, while spending on Medicare was up sharply.

Defense spending was little changed from its January level and was about 20 percent higher than a year earlier, marking a moderate step-up from the plateau in defense spending recorded from last spring through the end of the year. February's level spending came in higher than we had assumed in the Greenbook, and we have raised our projection of real NIPA defense spending in the first quarter by about \$4 billion (annual rate). This change boosts our projection of the first-quarter change in real defense spending by 4 percentage points and lowers the second-quarter change by a similar amount.

Inventory Investment

The book value of retail inventories increased at an annual rate of \$5.1 billion in January following a \$31.4 billion accumulation in the fourth quarter. Excluding motor vehicles and parts, retail inventories edged down slightly in January. Sales at non-auto retailers were unchanged that month, and the inventory-sales ratio for the sector decreased to 1.37 months, a new low.

For the entire manufacturing and trade sector excluding motor vehicles and parts, book-value inventories increased at an annual rate of \$13.6 billion in January, the fifth consecutive month of stockbuilding. Nonetheless, sales in this broad category rose 0.5 percent, and the inventory-sales ratio ticked down to a new low of 1.26 months.

On balance, the inventory data for January were on the low side of our expectations. Together with the information on federal spending, discussed above, our projection for real GDP in the first and second quarters is unchanged.

Erratum

The first sentence of the third paragraph on page I-2 of Greenbook, Part 1, Domestic Developments should read: "Since the January Greenbook, the foreign exchange value of the dollar has increased about 2 percent."

^{2.} Tax refunds are split into two categories in the unified accounts. Refunds that represent an actual payment to a taxpayer (i.e., those stemming from tax credits, like the EITC and child tax credit, that can reduce a taxpayer's liability below zero) are labeled as outlays; the remainder are labeled as negative taxes. At this point, the split between these two categories is only an estimate, whereas the sum is actual data. Taken together, individual tax refunds plus refundable tax credits are 8 percent higher than last year.

Federal Government Outlays and Receipts

(Unified basis; billions of dollars except as noted)

		February		12 months	ending in	February
Function or source	2003	2004	Percent change	2003	2004	Percent change
Outlays	186.1	182.0	-2.2	2074.6	2194.5	5.8
Financial transactions ¹	.5	3		-2.3	-1.9	
Payment timing ²	.0	-12.5		11.2	-12.1	
Adjusted outlays	185.7	194.9	5.0	2065.6	2208.5	6.9
Receipts	89.5	85.3	-4.7	1790.2	1787.7	1
Payment timing	.0	.0		.0	.0	
Adjusted receipts	89.5	85.3	-4.7	1790.2	1787.7	1
Surplus or deficit (-)	-96.7	-96.7		-284.3	-406.8	
Selected components of adjusted outlays and receipts						
Adjusted outlays	185.7	194.9	5.0	2065.6	2208.5	6.9
Net interest	13.2	12.8	-3.4	165.6	151.8	-8.3
Non-interest	172.5	182.1	5.6	1900.0	2056.7	8.2
National defense	29.9	35.9	20.3	367.1	430.6	17.3
Social security	39.0	41.2	5.5	464.4	482.6	3.9
Medicare	18.7	20.8	11.1	240.9	253.3	5.1
Medicaid	12.1	13.3	9.8	151.9	166.7	9.7
Income security	44.5	39.9	-10.4	328.0	332.8	1.5
Agriculture	1.6	.2	-86.6	23.2	22.2	-4.4
Other	26.7	30.9	15.8	324.6	368.6	13.6
Adjusted receipts	89.5	85.3	-4.7	1790.2	1787.7	1
Individual income and payroll taxes	77.1	70.0	-9.2	1488.1	1451.8	-2.4
Withheld + FICA	114.8	115.8	.9	1368.4	1366.6	-2.4
Nonwithheld $+$ SECA	2.6	3.5	.9 34.7	314.4	287.2	-8.6
Less: Refunds	40.3	49.3	22.4	194.6	201.9	3.8
Corporate	-1.2	.8	<i>22</i> , 7	118.0	147.2	24.7
Gross	3.9	.0 3.3	 -16.4	186.0	201.7	8.4
Less: Refunds	5.1	2.4	-52.3	68.0	54.5	-19.8
Other	13.6	14.4	6.6	184.0	188.7	2.5
Adjusted surplus or deficit (-)	-96.2	-109.6		-275.4	-420.8	

Note. Components may not sum to totals because of rounding. 1. Financial transactions consist of deposit insurance, spectrum auction and sales of major assets. 2. A shift in payment timing occurs when the first of the month falls on a weekend or holiday, or when the first three days of a month are nonworking days. Outlays for defense, social security, Medicare, income security, and "other" have been adjusted to account for these shifts.

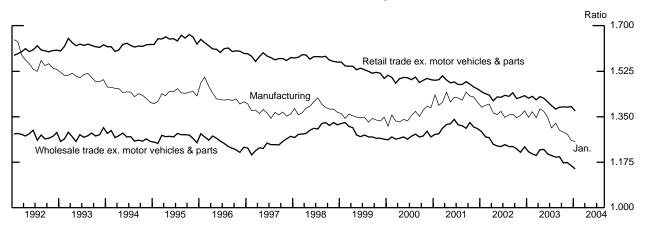
... Not applicable.

		20	003		2004
Sector	Q3	Q4	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.
Manufacturing and trade Ex. wholesale and retail	-5.1	49.3	46.6	44.5	19.2
motor vehicles & parts	5.8	26.4	27.9	31.1	13.6
Manufacturing Ex. aircraft	-17.5 -14.8	1.2 4.3	-6.6 2	5.5 6.0	9.9 8.8
Wholesale trade Motor vehicles & parts Ex. motor vehicles & parts	6.1 -4.2 10.3	16.7 6.2 10.5	11.8 -1.2 13.0	22.8 10.2 12.6	4.2 .1 4.1
Retail trade Motor vehicles & parts Ex. motor vehicles & parts	6.3 -6.7 13.0	31.4 16.7 14.7	41.4 19.8 21.6	16.2 3.2 13.0	5.1 5.5 4

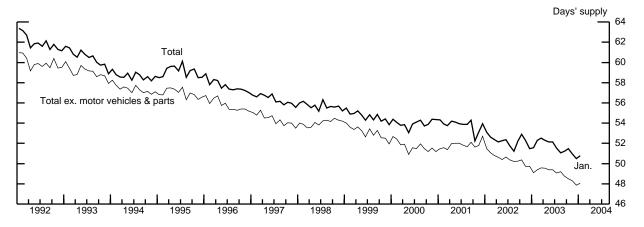
Changes in Manufacturing and Trade Inventories

(Billions of dollars; seasonally adjusted book value; annual rate)

Book-Value Inventories Relative to Shipments and Sales



Inventory-Consumption Ratios, Flow-of-Goods System



Type of cred	it 2003	Q3 2003	Q4 2003	Dec. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004	Level, Feb. 2004 (\$ billions)
Total							
1. Adjusted ¹	5.8	4.5	6	-4.1	6.7	20.5	6,107
2. Reported	5.6	2.4	.0	-2.3	8.2	21.1	6,316
Securities							
3. Adjusted ¹	8.8	-3.7	5.5	-2.8	-6.4	47.2	1,693
4. Reported	7.6	-10.2	6.9	3.2	.1	46.0	1,902
5. Treasury and a	gency 8.7	-15.2	2.5	-1.2	-1.6	71.5	1,165
6. Other ²	5.9	-2.1	13.9	9.9	2.4	8.0	736
Loans ³							
7. Total	4.8	7.6	-2.8	-4.6	11.6	10.6	4,414
8. Business	-8.7	-13.6	-9.4	-5.4	-3.6	4.0	878
9. Real estate	11.0	18.3	-1.7	5	10.3	11.3	2,258
10. Home equity	30.8	24.1	30.9	33.4	41.4	27.7	297
11. Other	8.7	17.6	-5.9	-5.2	5.7	8.8	1,961
12. Consumer	6.0	6.5	12.5	6.7	7.8	-2.6	636
13. Adjusted ⁴	6.1	3.6	8.6	1.6	11.4	.7	1,008
14. Other ⁵	4.4	3.8	-11.8	-29.2	42.0	31.0	643

Commercial Bank Credit

(Percent change, annual rate, except as noted; seasonally adjusted)

Note. Data are adjusted to remove estimated effects of consolidation related to FIN 46 and for breaks caused by reclassifications. Monthly levels are pro rata averages of weekly (Wednesday) levels. Quarterly levels (not shown) are simple averages of monthly levels. Annual levels (not shown) are levels for the fourthquarter. Growth rates are percentage changes in consecutive levels, annualized but not compounded.

1. Adjusted to remove effects of mark-to-market accounting rules (FIN 39 and FAS 115).

2. Includes private mortgage-backed securities, securities of corporations, state and local governments, foreign governments, and

any trading account assets that are not Treasury or agency securities, including revaluation gains on derivative contracts.

3. Excludes interbank loans.

4. Includes an estimate of outstanding loans securitized by commercial banks.

5. Includes security loans and loans to farmers, state and local governments, and all others not elsewhere classified. Also includes lease financing receivables.

III-T-1
Selected Financial Market Quotations

(One-day quotes in percent except as noted)

		200	3	2004	4		Change to Mar. 11 from selected dates (percentage points)			
Instrument	Instrument		Dec. 31	Jan. 27	Mar. 11	2003 June 24	2003 Dec. 31	2004 Jan. 27		
Short-term FOMC intended federal funds rate		1.25	1.00	1.00	1.00	25	.00	.00		
Treasury bills ¹ 3-month 6-month		0.81 0.82	0.93 1.00	0.89 0.96	0.95 0.98	.14 .16	.02 02	.06 .02		
Commercial paper (A1/P1 rat 1-month 3-month	es) ²	0.95 0.91	1.00 1.05	1.02 1.04	1.01 1.02	.06 .11	.01 03	01 02		
Large negotiable CDs ¹ 1-month 3-month 6-month		0.96 0.93 0.92	1.06 1.09 1.16	1.03 1.05 1.10	1.03 1.04 1.07	.07 .11 .15	03 05 09	.00 01 03		
Eurodollar deposits ³ 1-month 3-month		0.94 0.91	1.04 1.07	1.02 1.04	1.01 1.04	.07 .13	03 03	01 .00		
Bank prime rate		4.25	4.00	4.00	4.00	25	.00	.00		
Intermediate- and long-term U.S. Treasury ⁴ 2-year 10-year 30-year		1.14 3.46 4.53	1.83 4.40 5.22	1.70 4.24 5.09	1.52 3.90 4.81	.38 .44 .28	31 50 41	18 34 28		
U.S. Treasury 10-year indexe	d note	1.70	2.00	1.84	1.50	20	50	34		
Municipal revenue (Bond Buy		4.89	5.04	4.94	4.75	14	29	19		
Private instruments 10-year swap 10-year FNMA ⁶ 10-year AA ⁷ 10-year BBB ⁷ 5-year high yield ⁷		3.67 3.84 4.13 5.16 8.95	4.66 4.72 5.05 5.74 7.94	4.47 4.54 4.89 5.52 7.60	4.08 4.22 4.53 5.18 7.81	.41 .38 .40 .02 -1.14	58 50 52 56 13	39 32 36 34 .21		
Home mortgages (FHLMC su 30-year fixed 1-year adjustable	rvey rate) ⁸	5.21 3.51	5.81 3.73	5.64 3.56	5.59 3.47	.38 04	22 26	05 09		
	Record		2003	2004		Change to Mar. 11 from selected dates (percent)				
Stock exchange index	Level	Date	Dec. 31	Jan. 27	Mar. 11	Record high	2003 Dec. 31	2004 Jan. 27		
Dow-Jones Industrial S&P 500 Composite Nasdaq (OTC) Russell 2000	11,723 1,527 5,049 606	1-14-00 3-24-00 3-10-00 3-9-00	10,454 1,112 2,003 557	10,610 1,144 2,116 595	10,128 1,107 1,944 569	-13.60 -27.54 -61.50 -6.17	-3.11 46 -2.97 2.12	-4.54 -3.26 -8.14 -4.44		
Wilshire 5000	14,752	3-24-00	10,800	11,177	10,821	-26.64	.20	-3.18		

1. Secondary market.

Financial commercial paper.
 Bid rates for eurodollar deposits collected around 9:30 a.m. Eastern time.

4. Derived from a smoothed Treasury yield curve estimated using off-the-run securities.

5. Most recent Thursday quote.
 6. Constant maturity yields estimated from Fannie Mae domestic noncallable coupon securities.

7. Derived from smoothed corporate yield curves estimated using Merrill Lynch bond data.

8. For week ending Friday previous to date shown.

NOTES:

June 24, 2003 is the last day before the most recent policy easing. January 27, 2004, is the day before the most recent FOMC meeting.

The International Economy

U.S. Current Account

The U.S. current account deficit was \$510 billion (s.a.a.r.) in the fourth quarter of 2003, down \$31 billion from the third quarter (revised). The decline was driven by a sizable increase in the surplus on net investment income. The deficit on goods and services and net outflows of unilateral transfers each registered small increases.

The deficit on goods and services widened \$5 billion in the fourth quarter as a \$61 billion increase in imports was nearly matched by a \$56 billion increase in exports. The value of imported goods rose \$54 billion, largely reflecting strong increases in capital goods, automotive products, and consumer goods. Imports of services rose \$7 billion. The value of exported goods increased \$42 billion, with capital goods accounting for about half of the rise. Exports of services moved up \$14 billion.

(Billions of dollars, seasonally adjusted annual rate)							
	1		í – I				
	Goods and	Investment	Other	Current			
Period	services,	income,	income, income and acc				
	net	net	transfers, net	balance			
Annual							
2002	-418.0	1.3	-64.1	-480.9			
2003	-490.2	21.9	-73.6	-541.8			
Quarterly							
2003:Q1	-486.2	4.6	-75.1	-556.6			
Q2	-496.4	10.5	-73.5	-559.4			
Q3	-486.6	17.0	-71.6	-541.2			
Q4	-491.5	55.4	-74.0	-510.2			
C^{\dagger}							
Change		1					
Q1-Q4	-21.7	-12.6	-8.0	-42.3			
Q2-Q1	-10.2	5.9	1.6	-2.7			
Q3-Q2	9.8	6.5	1.8	18.2			
Q4-Q3	-4.9	38.3	-2.4	31.0			

U.S. Current Account

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis.

The surplus on net investment income rose \$38 billion in the fourth quarter as a \$48 billion rise in receipts outweighed a \$9 billion rise in payments. The sizable increase in receipts was driven by a surge in earnings on U.S. direct investment assets held abroad; direct investment receipts rose uniformly across all major sectors and regions. The modest rise in payments was mostly due to higher earnings on foreign portfolio holdings of U.S. assets.

Net unilateral transfers to foreigners rose \$2 billion as higher private transfers offset lower government transfers.

Implications for the outlook. Receipts of investment income on U.S. direct investment assets held abroad came in notably higher in the fourth quarter than we had anticipated. As a consequence, we have revised upward our projection for net investment income over the forecast period. Compared with the March Greenbook, we have narrowed our projection for the U.S. current account deficit about \$25 billion this year and \$20 billion next year. We continue to project that the current account deficit will edge above \$600 billion at the end of 2005, equivalent to a bit less than 5 percent of GDP.

U.S. International Financial Transactions

The March 12 balance of payments press release included new data for the fourth quarter of 2003.

U.S. direct investment abroad (line 6 of the Summary of U.S. International Transactions table) increased to \$50 billion in the fourth quarter, owing to pickups in both reinvested earnings and new equity capital. For the year 2003, direct investment outflows rose to \$155 billion from \$138 billion in 2002, an increase entirely attributable to reinvested earnings. Foreign direct investment into the United States (line 7) rebounded to \$23 billion in the fourth quarter following an anemic third quarter, resulting from a reversal of intra-company debt outflows, as both reinvested earnings and new equity investment were little changed in the quarter. For the year, gains in reinvested earnings led to increased direct investment inflows of \$42 billion. During 2003, U.S. direct investment outflows exceeded foreign direct investment inflows by \$73 billion.

The statistical discrepancy (last line) was negative \$53 billion for the fourth quarter and negative \$34 billion for the year. A negative statistical discrepancy indicates some combination of over-recorded net capital inflows and under-recorded net exports.

(Billions of dollars	(Billions of dollars, not seasonally adjusted except as noted)							
	2002	2003			2003			2004
	2002	2005	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Dec	Jan
Official financial flows	87.8	208.4	41.0	56.0	44.7	66.7	20.9	49.0
1. Change in foreign official assets								
in the U.S. (increase, +)	91.5	206.9	40.9	56.2	45.3	64.5	19.1	48.5
a. G-10 countries	30.7	115.7	27.7	24.5	16.2	47.3	9.4	37.8
b. OPEC countries	-7.5	6.2	-7.6	1.1	2.1	10.5	3.5	1.6
c. All other countries	68.2	85.0	20.8	30.6	27.0	6.6	6.2	9.1
2. Change in U.S. official reserve assets (decrease, +)	-3.7	1.5	.1	2	6	2.2	1.8	.5
Private financial flows	440.2	370.6	100.4	94.7	61.2	114.3	•••	•••
Banks								
3. Change in net foreign positions								
of banking offices in the U.S. ¹	147.0	69.4	-12.7	-19.4	6.3	95.2	4.8	31.7
Securities ²								
4. Foreign net purchases of U.S.								
securities (+)	407.9	379.0	66.5	142.5	61.1	108.9	51.0	56.2
a. Treasury securities	110.7	137.7	11.3	55.5	50.6	20.4	15.8	16.6
b. Agency bonds	78.1	-47.9	-2.3	-1.6	-44.4	.4	3.5	13.9
c. Corporate and municipal bonds	160.3	249.1	59.6	67.3	57.6	64.6	18.3	11.1
d. Corporate stocks ³	58.8	40.0	-2.1	21.3	-2.7	23.5	13.4	14.5
5. U.S. net acquisitions (-) of foreign								
securities	15.5	-74.3	-27.5	8.5	-29.0	-26.2	-8.3	-9.3
a. Bonds	33.5	26.9	7.2	25.5	1.3	-7.0	.6	4.9
b. Stock purchases	-14.8	-83.8	-20.1	-17.0	-30.3	-16.5	-6.1	-14.1
c. Stock swaps ³	-3.2	-17.4	-14.7	.0	.0	-2.8	-2.8	.0
Other flows (quarterly data, s.a.)								
6. U.S. direct investment (-) abroad	-137.8	-154.8	-33.8	-29.2	-42.2	-49.6		
7. Foreign direct investment in U.S.	39.6	82.0	34.5	22.5	1.8	23.2		
8. Foreign holdings of U.S. currency	21.5	16.6	4.9	1.5	2.8	7.5		
9. Other $(inflow, +)^4$	-53.6	52.6	68.5	-31.5	60.3	-44.7		
U.S. current account balance (s.a.)	-480.9	-541.8	-139.2	-139.8	-135.3	-127.5	•••	•••
Capital account balance (s.a.) ⁵	-1.3	-3.1	4	-1.6	8	3	•••	•••
Statistical discrepancy (s.a.)	-45.8	-34.1	-1.8	-9.3	30.2	-53.1	•••	

Summary of U.S. International Transactions

NOTE: Data in lines 1 through 5 differ in timing and coverage from the balance of payments data published by the Department of Commerce. Details may not sum to totals because of rounding.

1. Changes in dollar-denominated positions of all depository institutions and bank holding companies plus certain transactions between broker-dealers and unaffiliated foreigners (particularly borrowing and lending under repurchase agreements). Includes changes in custody liabilities other than U.S. Treasury bills.

2. Includes commissions on securities transactions and therefore does not match exactly the data on U.S. international transactions published by the Department of Commerce.

3. Includes (4d) or represents (5c) stocks acquired through mergers.

4. Transactions by nonbanking concerns and other banking and official transactions not shown elsewhere plus amounts resulting from adjustments made by the Department of Commerce and revisions in lines 1 through 5 since publication of the quarterly data in the Survey of Current Business

5. Consists of transactions in nonproduced nonfinancial assets and capital transfers.

n.a. Not available. ... Not applicable.