ALERT 96-3

DATE: February 8, 1996
TYPE: Suspicious Transactions
SUBJECT: Certified Bankers Checks, Certified Money Orders, and Comptroller Warrants

TO: Chief Executive Officers of all National Banks; all State Banking Authorities; Chairman, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System; Chairman, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation; Conference of State Bank Supervisors; Deputy Comptrollers (Districts); District Administrators; District Counsel and Examining Personnel.

RE: Certified Bankers Checks, Certified Money Orders, and Comptroller Warrants

It has been brought to my attention that certain individuals have been making and executing various paper documents entitled "Certified Bankers Checks," "Certified Money Orders," and "Comptroller Warrants" (copies attached). Some of these items state that they are drawn on, are to be presented to, or are payable through the United States Treasury or Treasurer, the United States Postmaster or Postal Service, and/or the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. These instruments are being presented for payment at banks and other businesses throughout the United States.

These instruments have been the subject of two previous OCC Alerts (95-33, dated September 8, 1995, and 95-44, dated November 20, 1995). As indicated in those alerts, they have no financial value and no legal validity.

The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency is a bank regulatory agency and has no authority to draw on funds of the United States or to control any bank accounts of private individuals or corporations. Any of these instruments that are presented to this Office for payment will be returned to the sender and copies will be provided to the appropriate law enforcement agencies.

If one of these instruments is presented to your institution for payment, or you have any information concerning this matter, your institution should immediately bring it to the attention of:
Office of the Comptroller of the Currency
Enforcement & Compliance Division
250 E Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20219
Fax (202) 874-5301

Your institution should prepare a criminal referral form, in accordance with 12 CFR 21.11. Under no circumstances should your institution honor one of these instruments or submit it for payment.

Eugene A. Ludwig
Comptroller of the Currency