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HEICO CORP
Form S-3/A
May 11, 2004

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on May 11, 2004
File No. 333-115112

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UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

Amendment No. 1

FORM S-3
REGISTRATION STATEMENT
UNDER
THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

HEICO Corporation
(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in Its Charter)

Florida (State or Other Jurisdiction of Incorporation or Organization)	3000 Taft Street Hollywood, Florida 33021 (Address, Including Zip Code, and Telephone Number, Including Area Code, of Registrant's Principal Executive Offices)	65-0341002 (I.R.S. Employer Identification Number)
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Thomas S. Irwin, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
HEICO Corporation
3000 Taft Street
Hollywood, Florida 33021
Phone: (954) 987-4000 Fax: (954) 987-8228
(Name, Address, Including Zip Code, and Telephone Number,
Including Area Code, of Agent For Service)

With a copy to:
Jonathan L. Awner, Esq.
Akerman Senterfitt
One Southeast Third Avenue, 28th Floor
Miami, FL 33131
Phone: (305) 374-5600 Fax: (305) 374-5095

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public: From time to
time after the effective date of this registration statement.

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If the only securities being registered on this Form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box. []

If any of the securities being registered on this Form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, check the following box. [X]

If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, please check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering. []

If this Form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering. []

If delivery of the prospectus is expected to be made pursuant to Rule 434, please check the following box. []

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

TITLE OF EACH CLASS OF SECURITIES TO BE REGISTERED/(1)/	AMOUNT TO BE REGISTERED	PROPOSED MAXIMUM AGGREGATE OFFERING PRICE PER UNIT	PROPOSED AGGREGATE PRICE
Common Stock, par value \$.01 per share.....	(3)	(4)	
Class A Common Stock, par value \$.01 per share...	(3)	(4)	
Preferred Stock, par value \$.01 per share.....	(5)	(4)	
Debt Securities.....	(6)	(4)	
Depositary Shares.....	(7)	(4)	
Warrants.....	(8)	(4)	
Units.....	(9)	(4)	
Subtotal.....	--	--	\$ 120,000
Secondary Offering of Class A Common Stock by Selling Shareholders.....	500,000 Shares	\$ 13.51/(11)/	6,755
Total.....			\$ 126,712

(Footnotes appear on the following page)

The Registrant hereby amends this Registration Statement on such date or dates as may be necessary to delay its effective date until the Registrant shall file a further amendment which specifically states that this Registration Statement shall thereafter become effective in accordance with Section 8(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 or until the Registration Statement shall become effective on such date as the Commission, acting pursuant to said Section 8(a), may determine.

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- (1) This Registration Statement also covers common stock, Class A common stock, preferred shares, debt securities, depository shares, warrants and units which may be issued in exchange for, or upon conversion of, as the case may be, the securities registered hereunder.
- (2) In no event will the aggregate maximum offering price of all securities issued and sold by the Registrant pursuant to this Registration Statement exceed \$120,000,000 or the equivalent thereof in foreign currencies or currency units. Any securities registered hereunder may be sold separately, together or as units with other securities registered hereunder.
- (3) Subject to footnote 2, there is being registered hereunder an indeterminate number of shares of common stock and Class A common stock as may be sold, from time to time, by the Registrant. There also is being registered hereunder an indeterminate number of shares of common stock and Class A common stock as may be issuable upon conversion of the debt securities or the preferred stock, upon exercise of warrants, or as may be part of unit securities registered hereby. The aggregate amount of common stock and Class A common stock registered hereunder is limited, solely for purposes of any market offerings, to that which is permissible under Rule 415(a) (4) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended. Preferred share purchase rights automatically attach to any shares of HEICO common stock and Class A common stock that are registered hereunder. These rights will be issued for no additional consideration because the value attributable to the rights, if any, is reflected in the value of the common stock and Class A common stock. Accordingly, no additional registration fee is payable.
- (4) The proposed maximum offering price per unit (a) has been omitted pursuant to Instruction II.D of Form S-3 and (b) will be determined, from time to time, by the Registrant in connection with the issuance by the Registrant of the securities registered hereunder.
- (5) Subject to footnote 2, there is being registered hereunder an indeterminate number of shares of preferred stock as may be sold, from time to time, by the Registrant. There also is being registered hereunder an indeterminate number of shares of preferred stock as shall be issuable upon exercise of warrants, or as may be part of unit securities registered hereby. In addition, there is being registered hereunder such indeterminate number of shares of preferred stock, for which no consideration will be received by the Registrant, as may be issued upon conversion or exchange of debt securities of the Registrant.
- (6) Subject to footnote 2, there is being registered hereunder an indeterminate principal amount of debt securities as may be sold, from time to time, by the Registrant. Such amount shall be increased, if any debt securities are issued at an original issue discount, by an amount such that the net proceeds to be received by the Registrant shall be equal to the above amount to be registered. Also, in addition to any debt securities that may be issued directly under this Registration Statement, there is being registered hereunder such indeterminate amount of debt securities as may be issued upon conversion or exchange of other debt securities, preferred stock or depository shares of the Registrant, for which no consideration will be received by the Registrant, or upon exercise of warrants, or as may be part of unit securities registered hereby.
- (7) Subject to footnote 2, there is being registered hereunder an

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indeterminate number of depository shares, such indeterminate number of depository shares to be evidenced by depository receipts, representing a fractional interest of a share of preferred stock.

- (8) Subject to footnote 2, there is being registered hereunder an indeterminate number of warrants representing rights to purchase debt securities, shares of common stock, Class A common stock or preferred stock or depository shares of the Registrant registered hereby.
- (9) Subject to footnote 2, there is being registered hereunder an indeterminate number of units comprising one or more debt securities, shares of common stock, shares of Class A common stock, shares of preferred stock, and warrants in any combination.
- (10) Calculated pursuant to Rule 457(o) of the rules and regulations under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended.
- (11) Calculated in accordance with Rule 457(c) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, based on the high and low sales prices of the Class A Common Stock as reported on the NYSE on April 29, 2004.
- (12) Previously paid.

The information in this prospectus is not complete and may be changed. Neither we nor the selling shareholders may sell these securities until the registration statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission is effective. This prospectus is not an offer to sell these securities and it is not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted.

Subject To Completion, dated May 11, 2004

PROSPECTUS

\$120,000,000

[LOGO OF HEICO CORPORATION]

Common Stock
Class A Common Stock
Preferred Stock
Debt Securities
Depository Shares
Warrants
Units

HEICO Corporation may offer from time to time up to \$120,000,000 of common stock, Class A common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, depository shares, warrants and units. In addition, the selling shareholders listed on the selling shareholder table included in this prospectus may from time to time offer up to 500,000 shares of Class A common stock. We will not receive any proceeds from sales of common shares by the selling shareholders.

This prospectus describes the general terms of these securities and the

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general manner in which we and the selling shareholders will offer the securities. The specific terms of any securities we or the selling shareholders offer will be included in a supplement to this prospectus. The prospectus supplement will also describe the specific manner in which we and the selling shareholders will offer the securities. The prospectus supplements may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read this prospectus and any supplements carefully before you invest. This prospectus may not be used to sell securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement.

Our common stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "HEI." The last reported sale price of our common stock on April 29, 2004, was \$16.80 per share. Our Class A common stock trades on the NYSE under the symbol "HEI.A." The last reported sale price of our Class A common stock April 29, 2004 was \$13.58 per share. We will make application to list any shares of common stock or Class A common stock sold pursuant to a supplement to this prospectus on the NYSE. We have not determined whether we will list any of the other securities we may offer on any exchange or over-the-counter market. If we decide to seek the listing of any securities, the supplement will disclose the exchange or market.

Investing in these securities involves risks. See "Risk Factors" beginning on page 6 of this prospectus.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is .

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You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus. Neither we nor the selling shareholders have authorized anyone to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. Neither we nor the selling shareholders are making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale of these securities is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus is accurate only as of the date on the front cover of this prospectus and that any information we have incorporated by reference is accurate only as of the date of the document incorporated by reference. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since these dates.

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a Registration Statement on Form S-3 that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission utilizing a "shelf" registration process. Under this shelf registration process, we may, from time to time, sell any combination of securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings. In addition, the selling shareholders listed on the table included in this prospectus may offer up to 500,000 shares of our Class A common stock. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we and the selling shareholders may offer. Each time we or the selling shareholders sell securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering and the securities being offered. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement together with additional information described below under the heading "Where You Can Find More Information."

When used in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, the terms "HEICO," "we," "our," and "us" refer to HEICO Corporation and its subsidiaries. The following summary contains basic information about us. It likely does not contain all the information that is important to you. We encourage you to read this entire prospectus, any prospectus supplement and the documents to which we have referred you before you choose to invest in these securities.

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus contains "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. These forward-looking statements reflect our current views about future events and are subject to risks, uncertainties and assumptions. We caution readers that certain important factors may have affected and could in the future affect our actual results and could cause actual results to differ significantly from those expressed in any forward-looking statement. We undertake no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. The most important factors that could prevent us from achieving our goals and cause the assumptions underlying forward-looking statements and the actual results to differ materially from those expressed in or implied by those forward-looking statements include the following:

- . lower demand for commercial air travel or airline fleet changes;
- . our ability to comply with government regulation compliance;
- . retirement of commercial aircraft;
- . reduction in defense or space spending by military and other government agencies;

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- . competition from existing and new competitors;
- . ineffective development and manufacture of new products, equipment and services;
- . increased product specification costs and requirements;
- . uninsured product liability claims and environmental liabilities brought against us; and
- . our inability to grow our company, organically or through acquisitions.

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PROSPECTUS SUMMARY

This summary highlights information contained elsewhere in this prospectus. It is not complete and may not contain all of the information that you should consider before investing in these securities. You should carefully read the entire prospectus, including the "Risk Factors" section, the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus and any prospectus supplement.

HEICO CORPORATION

HEICO Corporation believes it is the world's largest manufacturer of Federal Aviation Administration approved jet engine and aircraft component replacement parts, other than the original equipment manufacturers, which we refer to as "OEMs," and their subcontractors. HEICO is also a leading manufacturer of various types of electronic equipment for the aviation, defense, space, medical, telecommunications and electronics industries.

Our business is comprised of two operating segments:

The Flight Support Group. Our Flight Support Group, consisting of HEICO Aerospace Holdings Corp. and its subsidiaries, accounted for 73% of our revenues in fiscal 2003. This Group uses proprietary technology to design and manufacture jet engine and aircraft component replacement parts for sale at lower prices than those manufactured by OEMs. These parts are approved by the FAA and are the functional equivalent of parts sold by OEMs. In addition, the Flight Support Group repairs, refurbishes and overhauls jet engine and aircraft components for domestic and foreign commercial air carriers and aircraft repair companies, and manufactures thermal insulation products and other component parts primarily for aerospace, defense and commercial applications.

The Flight Support Group competes with the leading industry OEMs and, to a lesser extent, with a number of smaller, independent parts distributors. Historically, the three principal jet engine OEMs, General Electric (including CFM International), Pratt & Whitney and Rolls Royce, have been the sole source of substantially all jet engine replacement parts for their jet engines. Other OEMs have been the sole source of replacement parts for their aircraft component parts. While we believe that we currently supply less than 2% of the market for jet engine and aircraft component replacement parts, we have consistently been adding new products to our line and currently hold Parts Manufacturer Approvals, which we refer to as "PMAs," from the FAA for approximately 3,200 jet engine and aircraft component replacement parts.

We believe that, based on our competitive pricing, reputation for high quality, short lead time requirements, strong relationships with domestic and foreign commercial air carriers and repair stations (companies that overhaul aircraft engines and/or components), strategic relationships with Lufthansa and other major airlines and successful track record of receiving PMAs from the FAA, we are uniquely positioned to continue to increase our product lines and gain market share.

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The Electronic Technologies Group. Our Electronic Technologies Group, consisting of HEICO Electronic Technologies Corp. and its subsidiaries, accounted for 27% of our revenues in fiscal 2003. Through our Electronic Technologies Group, which derived approximately 60% of its sales in fiscal 2003 from the sale of products and services to U.S. and foreign military agencies, we design, manufacture and sell various types of electronic, microwave and electro-optical products, including infrared simulation and test equipment, hybrid laser rangefinder receivers, electrical power supplies, back-up power supplies, electromagnetic interference and radio frequency interference shielding, high power laser diode drivers, amplifiers, photodetectors, amplifier modules and flash lamp drivers. In addition, the Electronic

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Technologies Group also repairs and overhauls inertial navigation systems and other avionics, instruments, and components for commercial, military and business aircraft operators.

We have continuously operated in the aerospace industry for more than 40 years. Since assuming control in 1990, our current management has achieved significant sales and profit growth through a broadened line of product offerings, an expanded customer base, increased research and development expenditures and the completion of a number of acquisitions. As a result of internal growth and acquisitions, our revenues have grown from \$32.3 million in fiscal 1990 to \$176.5 million in fiscal 2003, a compound annual growth rate of approximately 14%. During the same period, we improved our income from a net loss of \$0.5 million to a net income of \$12.2 million.

INDUSTRY TRENDS

We feel we are well positioned among our competitors and expect to capitalize on a number of trends in the aviation and defense industries that will contribute to growth in the market for jet engine replacement parts, aircraft repair and overhaul services and electronic equipment:

- . Improved Outlook for Commercial Aerospace Market. The near term outlook has improved as the positive trend in revenue per available seat mile is expected to continue, along with the continuation of cost reduction efforts industry-wide. Capacity, as measured by available seat miles, is also expected to increase as some previously parked aircraft are redeployed. The long term outlook remains positive due to expected commercial and cargo traffic and fleet growth over the next 20 years. These trends should increase the need for replacement parts and maintenance on existing and new aircraft.
- . Increased Commercial Aviation Outsourcing. Airlines have come under increasing pressure during the last decade to reduce the costs associated with providing air transportation services and have been increasingly outsourcing many of these services, including maintenance, repair and overhaul services. We believe that as a result of this outsourcing trend, the volume of business handled by outside providers, such as HEICO, in the jet engine maintenance, repair and overhaul industry should continue to grow.
- . Consolidation of the Commercial Aviation Service and Supply Chain. In order to reduce purchasing costs and streamline purchasing decisions, airline purchasing departments have been reducing the number of their "approved" suppliers. We believe that only those participants with adequate financial resources and a reputation for quality will continue to be selected as approved suppliers and survive the consolidation.

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- . Increased Safety Requirements. We believe that the trend toward more stringent maintenance requirements and more frequent maintenance and overhaul has increased the size of the market for the replacement or repair of jet engine and aircraft components. We believe that, because of our established ability to satisfy the FAA's PMA process and our long-standing emphasis on quality control, HEICO will benefit from the evolving maintenance and safety standards.
- . Increasing Military and Space Spending. We believe the recent trend in increased military spending is likely to continue as the federal government is considering further increases in national defense budgets. According to the United States Office of Management and Budget, national defense spending increased, on average, 8.6% per annum from 1998 to 2003 as the United States has increased its efforts in the war on terrorism. In addition, we believe the global space industry will continue to grow. According to the International Space Business Council, the space industry generated \$96.9 billion in revenues in 2003 and is expected to reach \$104.6 billion in 2004, an increase of 7.9%. These trends may increase demand for our products.

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GROWTH STRATEGY

We feel we are well positioned within our industry due to several competitive strengths. These include having an extensive product line of jet engine and aircraft component replacement parts, a competitive price advantage over the OEMs, a reputation for quality, niche market positions for several of our electro-optical products, extensive and consistent new product research and development and excellent strategic partnerships. We intend to employ the following strategies to enhance these competitive strengths and help ensure profitable growth going forward:

- . Expand New Product Development. We intend to broaden our current jet engine and aircraft component replacement parts product lines through the development and receipt of additional PMAs from the FAA and thereby increase our market penetration. We intend to operate in markets that offer a high growth profile and produce products that hold niche positions with high margin potential.
- . Expand Our Electronics, Defense and Space Businesses. We intend to grow our presence in these markets. We will continue to focus on developing advanced and proprietary technology that can be used in products involving greater stand-off targeting by the United States military and allied foreign military customers and for the development of those products, as United States military strategy is increasingly based upon attacking enemy targets from greater distances. In addition, our products frequently offer a lower cost alternative for major military prime contractors and the U.S. government compared with other development or testing methods.
- . Create New Strategic Relationships. In 1997, we formed a strategic alliance with Lufthansa. In connection with this strategic alliance, Lufthansa has invested over \$50 million in our company, to acquire and maintain a 20% minority interest in HEICO Aerospace, and to partially fund the accelerated development of additional FAA-approved replacement parts for jet engines and aircraft components. In addition, we have established strategic relationships with other leading airlines such as American Airlines, United Airlines, Air Canada, Delta Air Lines and Japan Airlines, providing these customers with a reliable supply of low cost replacement parts and, to a lesser extent, to share costs and risks

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associated with new product development. We will continue to seek partnerships that offer similar advantages to both HEICO and our customers.

- . Effectively Utilize Our Competitive Pricing Model and Our Reputation for Quality. We offer high quality replacement parts at lower prices than the OEMs. These replacement parts are available for sale once they have completed a comprehensive FAA approval process. Based on our success in receiving PMAs from the FAA, as well as our consistent passing of periodic FAA facility reviews, we believe that we have an outstanding reputation with the FAA, with our customers and with other industry participants. We will continue to relentlessly market the unique solutions we provide in order to grow our business and take market share from the OEMs.
- . Make Complementary Acquisitions. A key element of our strategy involves growth through acquisitions in both the Flight Support Group and the Electronic Technologies Group. In making acquisitions, we seek to expand product offerings and capabilities available to our customers, expand our customer base and increase our research and development and marketing efforts. We have completed 22 acquisitions in our primary business lines since 1991, including 14 in our Flight Support Group and 8 in our Electronic Technologies Group.

Our principal executive offices are located at 3000 Taft Street, Hollywood, Florida 33021, and our telephone number is (954) 987-4000. Our website address is www.heico.com. Information included on our web site is not a part of this prospectus.

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RISK FACTORS

Investing in our securities involves risks. In addition to the information set forth elsewhere in this prospectus and in the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus and in any prospectus supplement, you should carefully consider the following factors relating to us and our securities in deciding whether to invest in our securities. There may be additional risks to an investment in our securities that are not described in this Risk Factors section.

Our success is highly dependent on the performance of the aviation industry, which could be impacted by lower demand for commercial air travel or airline fleet changes causing lower demand for our goods and services.

Economic factors and passenger security concerns that affect the aviation industry also affect our business. The aviation industry has historically been subject to downward cycles from time to time which reduce the overall demand for jet engine and aircraft component replacement parts and repair and overhaul services, and such downward cycles result in lower prices and greater credit risk. These economic factors and passenger security concerns may have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

We are subject to governmental regulation and our failure to comply with these regulations could cause the government to withdraw or revoke our authorizations and approvals to do business and could subject us to penalties and sanctions that could harm our business.

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Governmental agencies throughout the world, including the FAA, highly regulate the manufacture, repair and overhaul of aircraft parts and accessories. We include with the replacement parts that we sell to our customers documentation certifying that each part complies with applicable regulatory requirements and meets applicable standards of airworthiness established by the FAA or the equivalent regulatory agencies in other countries. In addition, our repair and overhaul operations are subject to certification pursuant to regulations established by the FAA. Specific regulations vary from country to country, although compliance with FAA requirements generally satisfies regulatory requirements in other countries. The revocation or suspension of any of our material authorizations or approvals would have an adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations. New and more stringent government regulations, if adopted and enacted, could have an adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations. In addition, some sales to foreign countries of the equipment manufactured by our Electronic Technologies Group require approval or licensing from the U.S. government. Denial of export licenses could reduce our sales to those countries and could have a material adverse effect on our business.

The retirement of commercial aircraft could reduce our revenues.

Our Flight Support Group designs, manufactures and distributes jet engine and aircraft component replacement parts and also offers repairs, refurbishments and overhauls of jet engine and aircraft components. If aircraft for which we have replacement parts or supply repair and overhaul services are retired and there are fewer aircraft that require these parts or services our revenues may decline.

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Reductions in defense or space spending by U.S. and/or foreign customers could reduce our revenues.

In fiscal 2003, approximately 60% of the sales of our Electronic Technologies Group were derived from the sale of products and services to U.S. and foreign military agencies and their suppliers. A decline in defense or space budgets or additional restrictions imposed by the U.S. government on sales of products or services to foreign military agencies could lower sales of our products and services.

Intense competition from existing and new competitors may harm our business.

We face significant competition in each of our businesses.

Flight Support Group

- . For jet engine replacement parts, we compete with the industry's leading jet engine OEMs, particularly Pratt & Whitney and General Electric.
- . For the overhaul and repair of jet engine and airframe components, we compete with:
 - major commercial airlines, many of which operate their own maintenance and overhaul units;
 - OEMs, which manufacture, repair and overhaul their own parts; and
 - other independent service companies.

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Electronic Technologies Group

- . For the design and manufacture of various types of electronic and electro-optical equipment and the repair and overhaul of inertial navigation systems and other avionics equipment, we compete in a fragmented marketplace with a number of companies, some of which are well capitalized.

The aviation aftermarket supply industry is highly fragmented, has several highly visible leading companies and is characterized by intense competition. Some of our OEM competitors have greater name recognition than HEICO, as well as complementary lines of business and financial, marketing and other resources that HEICO does not have. In addition, OEMs, aircraft maintenance providers, leasing companies and FAA-certificated repair facilities may attempt to bundle their services and product offerings in the supply industry, thereby significantly increasing industry competition. Moreover, our smaller competitors may be able to offer more attractive pricing of parts as a result of lower labor costs or other factors. A variety of potential actions by any of our competitors, including a reduction of product prices or the establishment by competitors of long-term relationships with new or existing customers, could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations. Competition typically intensifies during cyclical downturns in the aviation industry, when supply may exceed demand. We may not be able to continue to compete effectively against present or future competitors, and competitive pressures may have a material and adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

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Our success is dependent on the development and manufacture of new products, equipment and services, and our inability to introduce new products and product pricing levels could reduce our sales or sales growth.

The aviation, defense, space and electronics industries are constantly undergoing development and change and, accordingly, new products, equipment and methods of repair and overhaul service are likely to be introduced in the future. In addition to manufacturing electronic and electro-optical equipment and selected aerospace and defense components for OEMs and the U.S. government and repairing jet engine and aircraft components, we re-design sophisticated aircraft replacement parts originally developed by OEMs so that we can offer the replacement parts for sale at substantially lower prices than those manufactured by the OEMs. Consequently, we devote substantial resources to research and product development. Technological development poses a number of challenges and risks, including the following:

- . We may not be able to successfully protect the proprietary interests we have in various aircraft parts, electronic and electro-optical equipment and our repair processes;
- . As OEMs continue to develop and improve jet engines and aircraft components, we may not be able to re-design and manufacture replacement parts that perform as well as those offered by OEMs or we may not be able to profitably sell our replacement parts at lower prices than the OEMs;
- . We may need to expend significant capital to:
 - purchase new equipment and machines,
 - train employees in new methods of production and service, and
 - fund the research and development of new products; and

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- . Development by our competitors of patents or methodologies that preclude us from the design and manufacture of aircraft replacement parts or electrical and electro-optical equipment could adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations.

In addition, we may not be able to successfully develop new products, equipment or methods of repair and overhaul service, and the failure to do so could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

Product specification costs and requirements could cause an increase to our costs to complete contracts.

Although our engineering teams have usually successfully foreseen contract completion costs, the costs to meet customer specifications and requirements could result in us having to spend more to design or manufacture products in our Electronic Technologies Group and this could reduce our profit margins on current contracts or those we obtain in the future.

We may incur product liability claims that are not fully insured.

Our jet engine and aircraft component replacement parts and repair and overhaul services expose our business to potential liabilities for personal injury or death as a result of the failure of an aircraft component that we have designed, manufactured or serviced. The commercial aviation industry occasionally has catastrophic losses that may exceed policy limits. An uninsured or partially insured claim, or a claim for which third-party indemnification is not available, could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations. Additionally, insurance coverage costs increased following the events that occurred on September 11, 2001 and may become even more

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expensive in the future. Our customers typically require us to maintain substantial insurance coverage and our inability to obtain insurance coverage at commercially reasonable rates could have a material adverse effect on our business.

We may not have the administrative, operational or financial resources to continue to grow the company.

We have experienced rapid growth in recent periods and intend to continue to pursue an aggressive growth strategy, both through acquisitions and internal expansion of products and services. Our growth to date has placed, and could continue to place, significant demands on our administrative, operational and financial resources. We may not be able to grow effectively or manage our growth successfully, and the failure to do so could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

We may not be able to execute our acquisition strategy, which could slow our growth.

A key element of our strategy is growth through the acquisition of additional companies. Our acquisition strategy is affected by and poses a number of challenges and risks, including the following:

- . Availability of suitable acquisition candidates;
- . Availability of capital;

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- . Diversion of management's attention;
- . Integration of the operations and personnel of acquired companies;
- . Potential write downs of acquired intangible assets;
- . Potential loss of key employees of acquired companies;
- . Use of a significant portion of our available cash;
- . Significant dilution to our shareholders for acquisitions made utilizing our securities; and
- . Consummation of acquisitions on satisfactory terms.

We may not be able to successfully execute our acquisition strategy, and the failure to do so could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

We may incur environmental liabilities and these liabilities may not be covered by insurance.

Our operations and facilities are subject to a number of federal, state and local environmental laws and regulations, which govern, among other things, the discharge of hazardous materials into the air and water as well as the handling, storage and disposal of hazardous materials. Pursuant to various environmental laws, a current or previous owner or operator of real property may be liable for the costs of removal or remediation of hazardous materials. Environmental laws typically impose liability whether or not the owner or operator knew of, or was responsible for, the presence of hazardous materials. Although management believes that our operations and facilities are in material compliance with environmental laws and regulations, future changes in them or interpretations thereof or the nature of our operations may require us to make significant additional capital expenditures to ensure compliance in the future.

We do not maintain specific environmental liability insurance, and the expenses related to these environmental liabilities, if we are required to pay them, could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

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We are dependent on key personnel and the loss of these key personnel could have a material adverse effect on our success.

Our success substantially depends on the performance, contributions and expertise of our senior management team led by Laurans A. Mendelson, our Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer. Technical employees are also critical to our research and product development, as well as our ability to continue to re-design sophisticated products of OEMs in order to sell competing replacement parts at substantially lower prices than those manufactured by the OEMs. The loss of the services of any of our executive officers or other key employees or our inability to continue to attract or retain the necessary personnel could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

Our executive officers and directors have significant influence over our management and direction.

As of January 20, 2004, collectively our executive officers and entities controlled by them, our 401(k) Plan and members of the Board of Directors

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beneficially owned approximately 35% of our outstanding common stock and approximately 18% of our outstanding Class A common stock. Accordingly, they will be able to substantially influence the election of the Board of Directors and control our business, policies and affairs, including our position with respect to proposed business combinations and attempted takeovers.

Our articles of incorporation and bylaws, as well as Florida corporate law could prevent a change in control of the company, which could adversely impact the value of our equity securities.

Articles and Bylaws. Some of the provisions of our articles of incorporation and bylaws may have anti-takeover effects and may discourage, delay, defer or prevent a takeover attempt that a shareholder might consider in its best interest. These provisions:

- . establish advance notice procedures for the nomination of candidates for election as directors and for shareholder proposals to be considered at annual shareholders' meetings;
- . provide that special meetings of the shareholders may be called by the Chairman of the Board of Directors or the President of HEICO or by a majority of the Board;
- . authorize the issuance of 10,000,000 shares of Preferred Stock with the designations, rights, preferences and limitations as may be determined from time to time by the Board;
- . authorize the issuance of 30,000,000 shares of common stock having one vote per share; and
- . authorize the issuance of 30,000,000 shares of Class A common stock having 1/10th vote per share.

Accordingly, without shareholder approval, the Board can, among other things:

- . issue preferred stock with dividend, liquidation, conversion, voting or other rights that could adversely affect the voting powers or other rights of holders of our common stock and Class A common stock; and
- . help maintain the voting power of existing common stock shareholders and deter or frustrate takeover attempts that existing holders of common stock might consider to be in their best interest by issuing additional shares of Class A common stock.

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Rights. In addition, each common stock right entitles the registered holder to purchase from us one one-hundredth of a share of our Series B Junior Participating Preferred Stock, par value \$0.01 per share, at a price of \$45.00 per one one-hundredth of a share of Series B Preferred Stock, subject to adjustment. Furthermore, each Class A common stock right entitles the registered holder to purchase from us one one-hundredth of a share of our Series C Junior Participating Preferred Stock, par value \$0.01 per share, at a price of \$39.00 per one one-hundredth of a share Series C Preferred Stock, subject to adjustment. The rights trade with each outstanding share of common stock and Class A common stock, as applicable. The rights applicable to the common stock or Class A common stock are not exercisable or transferable apart from the respective class of stock until a person or group acquires 15% or more of the outstanding shares of that class of stock or commences, or announces an intention to commence, a tender offer for 15% or more of the outstanding shares

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of that class of stock. The rights applicable to the common stock or Class A common stock expire on November 2, 2013, and will cause substantial dilution to a person or a group who attempts to acquire our company on terms not approved by the Board or who acquires 15% or more of the outstanding shares of common stock or Class A common stock without approval of the Board. We can redeem the rights at \$.01 per right at any time until the close of business on the tenth day after a person or group has obtained beneficial ownership of 15% or more of the outstanding common stock or Class A common stock or until a person commences or announces an intention to commence a tender offer for 15% or more of the outstanding common stock or Class A common stock.

Subject to adjustment, holders of shares of the Series B and Series C Preferred Stock will be entitled to, among other things, (i) receive, when, as and if declared by the Board of Directors, cash dividends in an amount per share equal to 100 times the aggregate per share amount of all cash dividends declared or paid on the applicable class of stock and (ii) 100 votes per share of Series B Preferred Stock and 10 votes per share of Series C Preferred Stock on all matters submitted to a vote of the shareholders and the right to vote together with the holders of shares of common stock as a single voting group on all matters submitted to a vote of the shareholders.

Florida Law. Furthermore, some of the provisions of the Florida Business Corporation Act could have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change in control.

There is no established trading market for the offered securities.

With the exception of our common stock and our Class A common stock, all other types of securities that we may offer pursuant to this prospectus and any supplement will be a new issue of securities with no established trading market and may not be listed on any securities exchange or quoted on any automated dealer quotation system. We cannot assure you that an active trading market for any securities offered will develop or that you will be able to sell any securities offered to you at a particular time or that the prices that you receive when you sell will be favorable. We also cannot assure you as to the level of liquidity of the trading market for any offered securities.

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USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless we inform you otherwise in a prospectus supplement, we intend to use the net proceeds of any securities sold under this prospectus for general corporate purposes. General corporate purposes may include any of the following:

- . repaying debt;
- . funding capital expenditures;
- . paying for possible acquisitions or the expansion of our business; and
- . providing working capital.

When a particular series of securities is offered, the prospectus supplement relating to that offer will set forth our intended use for the proceeds we receive from the sale of those securities. Pending the application of the net proceeds, we may invest the proceeds in short-term, interest-bearing instruments or other investment-grade securities.

From time to time, we engage in preliminary discussions and negotiations

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with various businesses in order to explore the possibility of an acquisition or investment. However, as of the date of this prospectus, we have not entered into any agreements or arrangements which would make an acquisition or investment probable under Rule 3-05(a) of Regulation S-X.

DIVIDEND POLICY

We have historically paid semi-annual cash dividends on both our common stock and Class A common stock. In January 2004, we paid our 51st consecutive semi-annual cash dividend since 1979. Our Board of Directors presently intends to continue the payment of regular semi-annual cash dividends on both classes of our common stock. Our ability to pay dividends could be affected by future business performance, liquidity, capital needs, alternative investment opportunities and loan covenants under our revolving credit facility. For the frequency and amount of cash dividends paid on our common stock and Class A common stock for the three most recent fiscal years, see the section "Price Range of Common Stock and Class A Common Stock and Dividends" below.

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PRICE RANGE OF COMMON STOCK AND CLASS A COMMON STOCK AND DIVIDENDS

Our common stock is listed and traded on the NYSE under the symbol "HEI" and our Class A common stock is listed and traded on the NYSE under the symbol "HEI.A." The following tables set forth, for the periods indicated, the high and low share prices for the common stock and the Class A common stock as reported on the NYSE, as well as the amount of cash dividends paid per share during such periods.

COMMON STOCK

	HIGH	LOW	CASH DIVIDEND PER SHARE

FISCAL 2001:			
First quarter.....	\$ 15.79	\$ 9.92	\$.021
Second quarter.....	15.45	10.75	--
Third quarter.....	17.60	12.02	.021
Fourth quarter.....	19.00	9.82	--
FISCAL 2002:			
First quarter.....	\$ 16.45	\$ 12.45	\$.023
Second quarter.....	15.95	12.91	--
Third quarter.....	15.68	10.18	.023
Fourth quarter.....	12.17	6.95	--
FISCAL 2003:			
First quarter.....	\$ 11.09	\$ 8.18	\$.023
Second quarter.....	10.11	6.68	--
Third quarter.....	11.58	6.75	.023
Fourth quarter.....	14.30	9.16	--
FISCAL 2004:			
First quarter.....	\$ 18.45	\$ 13.71	\$.025
Second quarter (through April 29)....	17.45	12.90	--

CLASS A COMMON STOCK

	HIGH	LOW	CASH DIVIDEND PER SHARE

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FISCAL 2001:			
First quarter.....	\$ 11.97	\$ 8.32	\$.021
Second quarter.....	14.14	10.00	--
Third quarter.....	16.28	12.48	.021
Fourth quarter.....	15.98	8.55	--
FISCAL 2002:			
First quarter.....	\$ 12.95	\$ 9.68	\$.023
Second quarter.....	13.16	11.05	--
Third quarter.....	13.17	8.36	.023
Fourth quarter.....	9.44	5.32	--
FISCAL 2003:			
First quarter.....	\$ 8.64	\$ 6.59	\$.023
Second quarter.....	7.79	5.18	--
Third quarter.....	8.63	5.53	.023
Fourth quarter.....	11.43	7.10	--
FISCAL 2004:			
First quarter.....	\$ 14.40	\$ 10.77	\$.025
Second quarter (through April 29)....	13.89	9.99	--

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As of April 22, 2004, there were 1,016, holders of record of our common stock and 1,087 holders of record of our Class A common stock.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES

	FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED OCTOBER			
	1999	2000	2001	2002
EARNINGS:				
Earnings before minority interests and income taxes....	\$ 31,536	\$ 50,537	\$ 30,103	\$ 21,103
Fixed charges	2,684	6,442	3,446	3,446
Adjusted earnings	\$ 34,220	\$ 56,979	\$ 33,549	\$ 24,657
FIXED CHARGES:				
Interest expense	\$ 2,173	\$ 5,611	\$ 2,486	\$ 2,486
Amortization of debt issuance costs	186	151	221	221
Portion of rental payments deemed to be interest/(1)/..	325	680	739	739
Total fixed charges	\$ 2,684	\$ 6,442	\$ 3,446	\$ 3,446
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges:	12.7	8.8	9.7	7.2

/(1)/ Interest portion of rental expense estimated to be one-third of rental expense.

SELLING SHAREHOLDERS

The table below sets forth, as of April 22, 2004, the number of shares of our common stock and our Class A common stock that each selling shareholder beneficially owns and the number of such shares being registered for sale by the selling shareholders under this prospectus. The percentage of outstanding shares of common stock and Class A common stock beneficially owned before the offering is based on 9,871,438 shares of our common stock and 14,283,279 shares of our Class A common stock outstanding as of April 22, 2004 and is calculated in accordance with rule 13d-3 under the Exchange Act. The percentage of outstanding shares of common stock and Class A common stock beneficially owned after the offering assumes that all of the shares of common stock and Class A common stock offered by the selling shareholders under the prospectus have been sold.

The term "selling shareholders," as used in this prospectus, includes each of the holders listed below and its donees or heirs receiving shares from the holder listed below after the date of this prospectus. The selling shareholders may sell, transfer or otherwise dispose of some or all of their shares of common stock and Class A common stock, including shares of common stock and Class A common stock and other of our securities not covered by this prospectus, in transactions exempt from the registration requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, including in open-market transactions in reliance on Rule 144 under the Securities Act. We will update, amend or supplement this prospectus from time to time to update the disclosure in this section as may be required.

The selling shareholders will not bear the expenses of the registration in connection with the offering of their shares. The registration of the selling shareholders' shares of common stock and Class A common stock does not necessarily include that the selling shareholders will offer or sell any of their shares.

Name	Shares Beneficially Owned Prior to Offering	Percentage of Outstanding Shares Beneficially Owned Prior to Offering	Maximum Number of Shares Owned Which May Be Offered Hereby	Ben Owe O
Mendelson Reporting Group				
Common Stock/(1)/	2,288,926	21.6%	0	
Class A Common Stock/(2)/	1,206,463	8.1%	500,000	

 /1/ Consists of 1,222,773 shares deemed to be beneficially owned by Laurans A. Mendelson, 460,788 shares deemed to be beneficially owned by Eric A. Mendelson, 448,083 shares deemed to be beneficially owned by Victor H. Mendelson and 157,282 shares owned by Mendelson International Corporation, which may be deemed to be beneficially owned by each or any of Laurans, Eric or Victor Mendelson, however Laurans Mendelson disclaims beneficial ownership of these shares.

/2/ Consists of 666,759 shares deemed to be beneficially owned by Laurans A.

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Mendelson, 182,916 shares deemed to be beneficially owned by Eric A. Mendelson, 209,379 shares deemed to be beneficially owned by Victor H. Mendelson and 147,409 shares owned by Mendelson International Corporation, which may be deemed to be beneficially owned by each or any of Laurans, Eric or Victor Mendelson, however Laurans Mendelson disclaims beneficial ownership of these shares.

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- * We have determined the number and percentage of shares beneficially owned in accordance with Rule 13d-3 of the Exchange Act and this information does not necessarily indicate beneficial ownership for any other purpose.

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DESCRIPTION OF OUR CAPITAL STOCK

GENERAL

We are authorized to issue 30,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$.01 per share, 30,000,000 shares of Class A common stock, par value \$.01 per share, and 10,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$.01 per share, of which 300,000 shares have been designated as Series B Junior Participating Preferred Stock and 300,000 shares have been designated as Series C Junior Participating Preferred Stock. As of April 22, 2004, (i) 9,871,438 shares of common stock were outstanding and such shares were held by approximately 1,016 holders of record and (ii) 14,283,279 shares of Class A common stock were outstanding and such shares were held by approximately 1,087 holders of record. None of the Preferred Stock is outstanding.

The following descriptions of the common stock, the Class A common stock, the Preferred Stock, the Series B Preferred Stock and the Series C Preferred Stock are based on our Articles and Bylaws and applicable Florida law.

COMMON STOCK

Each holder of common stock is entitled to one vote for each share owned of record on all matters presented to the shareholders. In the event of a liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the company, the holders of common stock are entitled to share equally and ratably in the assets of the company, if any, remaining after the payment of all of our debts and liabilities and the liquidation preference of any outstanding Preferred Stock. The common stock has no preemptive rights, no cumulative voting rights and no redemption, sinking fund or conversion provisions. Currently, 4,273,432 shares are reserved for issuance as either common stock or Class A common stock under our existing stock option plans.

Holders of common stock are entitled to receive dividends if, as and when declared by the Board of Directors out of funds legally available therefor, subject to the dividend and liquidation rights of any Preferred Stock that may be issued and outstanding and subject to any dividend restrictions in our revolving credit facility. No dividends or other distributions (including redemptions or repurchases of shares of capital stock) may be made if, after giving effect to any such dividends or distributions, we would not be able to pay our debts as they become due in the usual course of business or our total assets would be less than the sum of its total liabilities plus the amount that would be needed at the time of a liquidation to satisfy the preferential rights of any holders of Preferred Stock.

The transfer agent and registrar for the common stock is Mellon Investor

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Services, Atlanta, Georgia.

CLASS A COMMON STOCK

Each holder of Class A common stock is entitled to the identical rights as the holders of common stock except that each share of common stock will entitle the holder thereof to one vote in respect of matters submitted for the vote of holders of common stock, whereas each share of Class A common stock will entitle the holder thereof to one-tenth of a vote on such matters.

PREFERRED STOCK, SERIES B PREFERRED STOCK AND SERIES C PREFERRED STOCK

Our Board of Directors is authorized, without further shareholder action, to designate and issue from time to time one or more series of Preferred Stock, including the Series B Preferred Stock and Series

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C Preferred Stock. The Board of Directors may fix and determine the designations, preferences and relative rights and qualifications, limitations or restrictions of any series of Preferred Stock so established, including voting powers, dividend rights, liquidation preferences, redemption rights and conversion privileges. Because the Board of Directors has the power to establish the preferences and rights of each series of Preferred Stock, it may afford the holders of any series of Preferred Stock preferences and rights, voting or otherwise senior to the rights of holders of common stock and Class A common stock. Subject to adjustment, holders of shares of the Series B and Series C Preferred Stock will be entitled to, among other things, (i) receive, when, as and if declared by the Board of Directors cash dividends in an amount per share equal to 100 times the aggregate per share amount of all cash dividends declared or paid on the applicable class of stock and (ii) 100 votes per share of Series B Preferred Stock and 10 votes per share of Series C Preferred Stock on all matters submitted to a vote of the shareholders and the right to vote together with the holders of shares of common stock and Class A common stock as a single voting group on all matters submitted to a vote of the shareholders. As of the date of this Prospectus, the Board of Directors has not issued any Preferred Stock or Series B or Series C Preferred Stock, and has no plans to issue any shares of Preferred Stock or Series B or Series C Preferred Stock.

Anti-Takeover Effects of Certain Provisions of Florida Law, our Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, and the Preferred Stock Purchase Rights

Articles and Bylaws. Some of the provisions of our articles of incorporation and bylaws may be deemed to have anti-takeover effects and may discourage, delay, defer or prevent a takeover attempt that a shareholder might consider in its best interest. These provisions do the following:

- . establish advance notice procedures for the nomination of candidates for election as directors and for shareholder proposals to be considered at annual shareholders' meetings;
- . provide that special meetings of the shareholders may be called by the Chairman of the Board of Directors or the President of HEICO or by a majority of the Board;
- . authorize the issuance of 10,000,000 shares of Preferred Stock with the designations, rights, preferences and limitations as may be determined from time to time by the Board;
- . authorize the issuance of 30,000,000 shares of common stock having one vote per share; and

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- . authorize the issuance of 30,000,000 shares of Class A common stock having 1/10th vote per share.

Accordingly, without shareholder approval, the Board can, among other things,

- . issue preferred stock with dividend, liquidation, conversion, voting or other rights that could adversely affect the voting powers or other rights of holders of our common stock and Class A common stock; and
- . help maintain the voting power of existing common stock shareholders and deter or frustrate takeover attempts that existing holders of common stock might consider to be in their best interest by issuing additional shares of Class A common stock.

Rights. In addition, each common stock right entitles the registered holder to purchase from us one one-hundredth of a share of our Series B Junior Participating Preferred Stock, par value \$0.01 per share, at a price of \$45.00 per one one-hundredth of a share of Series B Preferred Stock, subject to adjustment. Furthermore, each Class A common stock right entitles the registered holder to purchase from us one one-hundredth of a share of our Series C Junior Participating Preferred Stock, par value \$0.01 per share, at a price of \$39.00 per one one-hundredth of a share Series C Preferred Stock, subject to

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adjustment. The rights trade with each outstanding share of common stock and Class A common stock, as applicable. The rights applicable to the common stock or Class A common stock are not exercisable or transferable apart from the respective class of stock until a person or group acquires 15% or more of the outstanding shares of that class of stock or commences, or announces an intention to commence, a tender offer for 15% or more of the outstanding shares of that class of stock. The rights applicable to the common stock or Class A common stock expire on November 2, 2013, and will cause substantial dilution to a person or a group who attempts to acquire our company on terms not approved by the Board or who acquires 15% or more of the outstanding shares of common stock or Class A common stock without approval of the Board. We can redeem the rights at \$.01 per right at any time until the close of business on the tenth day after a person or group has obtained beneficial ownership of 15% or more of the outstanding common stock or Class A common stock or until a person commences or announces an intention to commence a tender offer for 15% or more of the outstanding common stock or Class A common stock.

Subject to adjustment, holders of shares of the Series B and Series C Preferred Stock will be entitled to, among other things, (i) receive, when, as and if declared by the Board of Directors, cash dividends in an amount per share equal to 100 times the aggregate per share amount of all cash dividends declared or paid on the applicable class of stock and (ii) 100 votes per share of Series B Preferred Stock and 10 votes per share of Series C Preferred Stock on all matters submitted to a vote of the shareholders and the right to vote together with the holders of shares of common stock as a single voting group on all matters submitted to a vote of the shareholders.

Florida Law. Furthermore, some of the provisions of the Florida Business Corporation Act could have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change in control.

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

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The following description, together with the additional information we include in any applicable prospectus supplements, summarizes the material terms and provisions of the debt securities that we may offer under this prospectus. While the terms we have summarized below will generally apply to any future debt securities we may offer under this prospectus, we will describe the particular terms of any debt securities that we may offer in more detail in the applicable prospectus supplement. The terms of any debt securities we offer under a prospectus supplement may differ from the terms we describe below.

We may offer under this prospectus up to \$120,000,000 in aggregate principal amount of debt securities, or if debt securities are issued at a discount, or in a foreign currency or composite currency, such principal amount as may be sold for an aggregate offering price of up to \$120,000,000. We may offer debt securities in the form of either senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities. The senior debt securities and the subordinated debt securities are together referred to in this prospectus as the "debt securities." Unless otherwise specified in a supplement to this prospectus, the senior debt securities will be our direct, unsecured obligations and will rank equally with all of our other unsecured and unsubordinated indebtedness. The subordinated debt securities generally will be entitled to payment only after payment of our senior debt. See "--Subordination" below.

The debt securities will be issued under an indenture between us and a trustee. We have summarized below the general features of the debt securities to be governed by the indenture. The form of summary is not complete. The form of indenture has been filed as an exhibit to the registration statement that we have filed with the Commission, of which this prospectus forms a part. We encourage you to read the applicable prospectus supplements related to the debt securities that we sell under this

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prospectus, as well as the indenture. Capitalized terms used in the summary have the meanings specified in the indenture.

GENERAL

The terms of each series of debt securities will be established by or pursuant to a resolution of our board of directors, or a committee thereof, and set forth or determined in the manner provided in an officers' certificate or by a supplemental indenture. The particular terms of each series of debt securities will be described in a prospectus supplement relating to such series, including any pricing supplement.

We can issue an unlimited amount of debt securities under the indenture that may be in one or more series with the same or various maturities, at par, at a premium or at a discount. We will set forth in a prospectus supplement, including any pricing supplement, relating to any series of debt securities being offered, the aggregate principal amount and the following terms of the debt securities:

- . the title;
- . the principal amount being offered, and, if a series, the total amount authorized and the total amount outstanding;
- . any limit on the amount that may be issued;
- . whether or not we will issue the series of debt securities in global form and, if so, the terms and who the depository will be;

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- . the maturity date;
- . the principal amount due at maturity, and whether the debt securities will be issued with any original issue discount;
- . whether and under what circumstances, if any, we will pay additional amounts on any debt securities held by a person who is not a United States person for tax purposes, and whether we can redeem the debt securities if we have to pay such additional amounts;
- . the annual interest rate, which may be fixed or variable, or the method for determining the rate, the date interest will begin to accrue, the dates interest will be payable and the regular record dates for interest payment dates or the method for determining such dates;
- . whether or not the debt securities will be secured or unsecured, and the terms of any secured debt;
- . the terms of the subordination of any series of subordinated debt;
- . the place where payments will be payable;
- . restrictions on transfer, sale or other assignment, if any;
- . our right, if any, to defer payment of interest and the maximum length of any such deferral period;
- . the date, if any, after which, the conditions upon which, and the price at which we may, at our option, redeem the series of debt securities pursuant to any optional or provisional redemption provisions, and any other applicable terms of those redemption provisions;
- . provisions for a sinking fund purchase or other analogous fund, if any;

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- . the date, if any, on which, and the price at which we are obligated, pursuant to any mandatory sinking fund or analogous fund provisions or otherwise, to redeem, or at the holder's option to purchase, the series of debt securities;
- . whether the indenture will restrict our ability and/or the ability of our subsidiaries to:
 - . incur additional indebtedness;
 - . issue additional securities;
 - . create liens;
 - . pay dividends and make distributions in respect of our capital stock and the capital stock of our subsidiaries;
 - . redeem capital stock;

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- . place restrictions on our subsidiaries' ability to pay dividends, make distributions or transfer assets;
- . make investments or other restricted payments;
- . sell or otherwise dispose of assets;
- . enter into sale-leaseback transactions;
- . engage in transactions with shareholders and affiliates;
- . issue or sell stock of our subsidiaries; or
- . effect a consolidation or merger;

- . whether the indenture will require us to maintain any interest coverage, fixed charge, cash flow-based, asset-based or other financial ratios;
- . a discussion of any material or special United States federal income tax considerations applicable to the debt securities;
- . information describing any book-entry features;
- . the procedures for any auction and remarketing, if any;
- . the denominations in which we will issue the series of debt securities, if other than denominations of \$1,000 and any integral multiple thereof;
- . if other than dollars, the currency in which the series of debt securities will be denominated; and
- . any other specific terms, preferences, rights or limitations of, or restrictions on, the debt securities, including any events of default that are in addition to those described in this prospectus or any covenants provided with respect to the debt securities that are in addition to those described above, and any terms which may be required by us or be advisable under applicable laws or regulations or advisable in connection with the marketing of the debt securities.

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We may issue debt securities that provide for an amount less than their stated principal amount to be due and payable upon declaration of acceleration of their maturity pursuant to the terms of the indenture. We will provide you with information on the federal income tax considerations and other special considerations applicable to any of these debt securities in the applicable prospectus supplement.

CONVERSION OR EXCHANGE RIGHTS

We will set forth in the prospectus supplement the terms on which a series of debt securities may be convertible into or exchangeable for common stock or other securities of ours or a third party, including the conversion or exchange rate, as applicable, or how it will be calculated, and the applicable conversion or exchange period. We will include provisions as to whether conversion or exchange is mandatory, at the option of the holder or at our option. We may include provisions pursuant to which the number of our securities or the securities of a third party that the holders of the series of debt

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securities receive upon conversion or exchange would, under the circumstances described in those provisions, be subject to adjustment, or pursuant to which those holders would, under those circumstances, receive other property upon conversion or exchange, for example in the event of our merger or consolidation with another entity.

COVENANTS

We will set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement any restrictive covenants applicable to any issue of debt securities.

CONSOLIDATION, MERGER AND SALE OF ASSETS

The indenture in the form initially filed as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part does not contain any covenant which restricts our ability to merge or consolidate, or sell, convey, transfer or otherwise dispose of all or substantially all of our assets. However, any successor of ours or acquiror of such assets must assume all of our obligations under the indenture and the debt securities.

If the debt securities are convertible for our other securities, the person with whom we consolidate or merge or to whom we sell all of our property must make provisions for the conversion of the debt securities into securities which the holders of the debt securities would have received if they had converted the debt securities before the consolidation, merger or sale.

EVENTS OF DEFAULT

The following are events of default under the indenture with respect to any series of debt securities that we may issue:

- . if we fail to pay interest when due and payable and our failure continues for 30 days and the time for payment has not been extended or deferred;
- . if we fail to pay the principal, or premium, if any, when due and payable and the time for payment has not been extended or delayed;
- . if we fail to observe or perform any other covenant contained in the debt securities or the indenture, other than a covenant specifically relating to another series of debt securities, and our failure continues for 30 days after we receive

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notice from the trustee or holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the applicable series;

- . if specified events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization occur; and
- . any other event of default provided with respect to debt securities of that series that is described in the applicable prospectus supplement accompanying this prospectus.

No event of default with respect to a particular series of debt securities (except as to certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization) necessarily constitutes an event of default with respect to any other series of debt securities. The occurrence of an event of default may

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constitute an event of default under our bank credit agreements in existence from time to time. In addition, the occurrence of certain events of default or an acceleration under the indenture may constitute an event of default under certain of our other indebtedness outstanding from time to time.

If an event of default with respect to debt securities of any series at the time outstanding occurs and is continuing, then the trustee or the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series may, by a notice in writing to us (and to the trustee if given by the holders), declare to be due and payable immediately the principal (or, if the debt securities of that series are discount securities, that portion of the principal amount as may be specified in the terms of that series) of, and accrued and unpaid interest, if any, on all debt securities of that series. In the case of an event of default resulting from certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization, the principal (or such specified amount) of and accrued and unpaid interest, if any, on all outstanding debt securities will become and be immediately due and payable without any declaration or other act on the part of the trustee or any holder of outstanding debt securities. At any time after a declaration of acceleration with respect to debt securities of any series has been made, but before a judgment or decree for payment of the money due has been obtained by the trustee, the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series may rescind and annul the acceleration if all events of default, other than the non-payment of accelerated principal and interest, if any, with respect to debt securities of that series, have been cured or waived as provided in the indenture. We refer you to the prospectus supplement relating to any series of debt securities that are discount securities for the particular provisions relating to acceleration of a portion of the principal amount of such discount securities upon the occurrence of an event of default.

The indenture provides that the trustee will be under no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under the indenture at the request of any holder of outstanding debt securities, unless the trustee receives indemnity satisfactory to it against any loss, liability or expense. Subject to certain rights of the trustee, the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series will have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee or exercising any trust or power conferred on the trustee with respect to the debt securities of that series.

No holder of any debt security of any series will have any right to institute any proceeding, judicial or otherwise, with respect to the indenture or for the appointment of a receiver or trustee, or for any remedy under the indenture, unless:

- . that holder has previously given to the trustee written notice of a continuing event of default with respect to debt securities of that series; and

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- . the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series have made written request, and offered reasonable indemnity, to the trustee to institute the proceeding as trustee, and the trustee has not received from the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series a direction inconsistent with that request and has failed to institute the proceeding within 60 days.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the holder of any debt security will have

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an absolute and unconditional right to receive payment of the principal of, and any premium and interest on, that debt security on or after the due dates expressed in that debt security and to institute suit for the enforcement of payment.

If any securities are outstanding under the indenture, the indenture requires us, within 120 days after the end of our fiscal year, to furnish to the trustee a statement as to compliance with the indenture. The indenture provides that the trustee may withhold notice to the holders of debt securities of any series of any default or event of default (except in payment on any debt securities of that series) with respect to debt securities of that series if it in good faith determines that withholding notice is in the interest of the holders of those debt securities.

MODIFICATION AND WAIVER

We may modify and amend the indenture with the consent of the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of each series affected by the modifications or amendments. We may not make any modification or amendment without the consent of the holders of each affected debt security then outstanding if that amendment will:

- . reduce the amount of debt securities whose holders must consent to an amendment or waiver;
- . reduce the rate of or extend the time for payment of interest (including default interest) on any debt security;
- . reduce the principal of or premium on or change the fixed maturity of any debt security or reduce the amount of, or postpone the date fixed for, the payment of any sinking fund or analogous obligation with respect to any series of debt securities;
- . reduce the principal amount of discount securities payable upon acceleration of maturity;
- . waive a default in the payment of the principal of, or premium or interest on, any debt security (except a rescission of acceleration of the debt securities of any series by the holders of at least a majority in aggregate principal amount of the then outstanding debt securities of that series and a waiver of the payment default that resulted from such acceleration);
- . make the principal of, or premium or interest on, any debt security payable in currency other than that stated in the debt security;
- . make any change to certain provisions of the indenture relating to, among other things, the right of holders of debt securities to receive payment of the principal of, and premium and interest on, those debt securities and to institute suit for the enforcement of any such payment and to waivers or amendments; or
- . waive a redemption payment with respect to any debt security.

Except for certain specified provisions, the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series may on behalf of the holders of all debt securities of that series waive our compliance with provisions of the indenture. The holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series may on behalf

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of the holders of all the debt securities of such series waive any past default under the indenture with respect to that series and its consequences, except a default in the payment of the principal of, or any premium or interest on, any debt security of that series or in respect of a covenant or provision, which cannot be modified or amended without the consent of the holder of each outstanding debt security of the series affected; provided, however, that the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series may rescind an acceleration and its consequences, including any related payment default that resulted from the acceleration.

DEFEASANCE OF DEBT SECURITIES AND CERTAIN COVENANTS IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES

Legal Defeasance. The indenture provides that, unless otherwise provided by the terms of the applicable series of debt securities, we may be discharged from any and all obligations in respect of the debt securities of any series (except for certain obligations to register the transfer or exchange of debt securities of such series, to replace stolen, lost or mutilated debt securities of such series, and to maintain paying agencies and certain provisions relating to the treatment of funds held by paying agents). We will be so discharged upon the deposit with the trustee, in trust, of money and/or U.S. government obligations or, in the case of debt securities denominated in a single currency other than U.S. dollars, foreign government obligations, that, through the payment of interest and principal in accordance with their terms, will provide money in an amount sufficient in the opinion of a nationally recognized firm of independent public accountants to pay and discharge each installment of principal of, premium and interest on and any mandatory sinking fund payments in respect of the debt securities of that series on the stated maturity of those payments in accordance with the terms of the indenture and those debt securities.

This discharge may occur only if, among other things, we have delivered to the trustee an opinion of counsel stating that we have received from, or there has been published by, the United States Internal Revenue Service a ruling or, since the date of execution of the indenture, there has been a change in the applicable United States federal income tax law, in either case to the effect that, and based thereon such opinion shall confirm that, the holders of the debt securities of that series will not recognize income, gain or loss for United States federal income tax purposes as a result of the deposit, defeasance and discharge and will be subject to United States federal income tax on the same amounts and in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if the deposit, defeasance and discharge had not occurred.

Defeasance of Certain Covenants. The indenture provides that, unless otherwise provided by the terms of the applicable series of debt securities, upon compliance with certain conditions:

- . we may omit to comply with the covenant described under the heading "Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets" and certain other covenants set forth in the indenture, as well as any additional covenants which may be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement; and
- . any omission to comply with those covenants will not constitute a default or an event of default with respect to the debt securities of that series, or covenant defeasance.

The conditions include:

- . depositing with the trustee money and/or U.S. government obligations or, in the case of debt securities denominated in a single currency other than U.S. dollars, foreign government obligations, that, through the payment of interest and principal in accordance

with their terms, will provide money in an amount sufficient in the opinion of a nationally recognized firm of independent public accountants to pay and discharge each installment of principal of, premium and interest on and any mandatory sinking fund payments in respect of the debt securities of that series on the stated maturity of those payments in accordance with the terms of the indenture and those debt securities; and

- . delivering to the trustee an opinion of counsel to the effect that the holders of the debt securities of that series will not recognize income, gain or loss for United States federal income tax purposes as a result of the deposit and related covenant defeasance and will be subject to United States federal income tax on the same amounts and in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if the deposit and related covenant defeasance had not occurred.

Covenant Defeasance and Events of Default. In the event we exercise our option to effect covenant defeasance with respect to any series of debt securities and the debt securities of that series are declared due and payable because of the occurrence of any event of default, the amount of money and/or U.S. government obligations or foreign government obligations on deposit with the trustee will be sufficient to pay amounts due on the debt securities of that series at the time of their stated maturity but may not be sufficient to pay amounts due on the debt securities of that series at the time of the acceleration resulting from the event of default. In such a case, we would remain liable for those payments.

"Foreign Government Obligations" means, with respect to debt securities of any series that are denominated in a currency other than U.S. dollars:

- . direct obligations of the government that issued or caused to be issued such currency for the payment of which obligations its full faith and credit is pledged which are not callable or redeemable at the option of the issuer thereof; or
- . obligations of a person controlled or supervised by or acting as an agency or instrumentality of that government the timely payment of which is unconditionally guaranteed as a full faith and credit obligation by that government which are not callable or redeemable at the option of the issuer thereof.

SUBORDINATION

Unless indicated differently in a prospectus supplement, our subordinated debt securities will be subordinated in right of payment to the prior payment in full of all our senior debt. This means that upon:

- . any distribution of our assets upon our dissolution, winding-up, liquidation or reorganization in bankruptcy, insolvency, receivership or other proceedings, or
- . the acceleration of the maturity of the subordinated debt securities, or
- . a failure to pay any senior debt or interest thereon when due and the continuance of that default beyond any applicable grace period, or

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- . the acceleration of the maturity of any senior debt as a result of a default,

the holders of all of our senior debt will be entitled to receive:

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- . in the case of the first two bullet points above, payment of all amounts due or to become due on all senior debt, and
- . in the case of the second two bullet points above, payment of all amounts due on all senior debt,

before the holders of any of the subordinated debt securities are entitled to receive any payment. So long as any of the events in the bullet points above has occurred and is continuing, any amounts payable on the subordinated debt securities will instead be paid directly to the holders of all senior debt to the extent necessary to pay the senior debt in full and, if any payment is received by the subordinated indenture trustee under the subordinated indenture or the holders of any of the subordinated debt securities before all senior debt is paid in full, the payment or distribution must be paid over to the holders of the unpaid senior debt. Subject to paying the senior debt in full, the holders of the subordinated debt securities will be subrogated to the rights of the holders of the senior debt to the extent that payments are made to the holders of senior debt out of the distributive share of the subordinated debt securities.

The term "senior debt" means with respect to the subordinated debt securities, the principal of, premium, if any, and interest, if any, on and any other payment in respect of indebtedness due pursuant to any of the following, whether outstanding on the date the subordinated debt securities are issued or thereafter incurred, created or assumed:

- . all of our indebtedness evidenced by notes, debentures, bonds or other securities sold by us for money or other obligations for money borrowed;
- . all indebtedness of others of the kinds described in the preceding bullet point assumed by or guaranteed in any manner by us or in effect guaranteed by us through an agreement to purchase, contingent or otherwise, as applicable; and
- . all renewals, extensions or refundings of indebtedness of the kinds described in either of the first two bullet points above,

unless, in the case of any particular indebtedness, renewal, extension or refunding, the instrument creating or evidencing the same or the assumption or guarantee of the same by its terms provides that such indebtedness, renewal, extension or refunding is not superior in right of payment to or is pari passu with such securities.

Due to the subordination, if our assets are distributed upon insolvency, certain of our general creditors may recover more, ratably, than holders of subordinated debt securities. The subordination provisions will not apply to money and securities held in trust under the satisfaction and discharge and the defeasance provisions of the applicable subordinated indenture.

The subordinated debt securities and the subordinated indenture do not limit our ability to incur additional indebtedness, including indebtedness that will rank senior to the subordinated debt securities. We may incur substantial

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additional amounts of indebtedness in the future.

GOVERNING LAW

The indenture and the debt securities will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the internal laws of the State of New York.

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DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES

This section describes the general terms of the depositary shares we may offer and sell by this prospectus. This prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement will contain the material terms and conditions for the depositary shares. The accompanying prospectus supplement may add, update, or change the terms and conditions of the depositary shares as described in this prospectus.

GENERAL

We may, at our option, elect to offer depositary shares, each representing a fraction (to be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to a particular series of preferred stock) of a share of a particular class or series of preferred stock as described below. In the event we elect to do so, depositary receipts evidencing depositary shares will be issued to the public.

The shares of any class or series of preferred stock represented by depositary shares will be deposited under a deposit agreement among us, a depositary selected by us, and the holders of the depositary receipts. The depositary will be a bank or trust company having its principal office in the United States and having a combined capital and surplus of at least \$50,000,000. Subject to the terms of the deposit agreement, each owner of a depositary share will be entitled, in proportion to the applicable fraction of a share of preferred stock represented by such depositary share, to all of the rights and preferences of the shares of preferred stock represented by the depositary share, including dividend, voting, redemption and liquidation rights.

The depositary shares will be evidenced by depositary receipts issued pursuant to the deposit agreement. Depositary receipts will be distributed to those persons purchasing the fractional shares of the related class or series of preferred shares in accordance with the terms of the offering described in the related prospectus supplement.

Pending the preparation of definitive depositary receipts, the depositary may, upon our written order, issue temporary depositary receipts substantially identical to, and entitling the holders thereof to all the rights pertaining to, the definitive depositary receipts but not in definitive form. Definitive depositary receipts will be prepared without unreasonable delay, and temporary depositary receipts will be exchangeable for definitive depositary receipts without charge to the holder.

DIVIDENDS AND OTHER DISTRIBUTIONS

The depositary will distribute all cash dividends or other cash distributions received for the preferred stock to the entitled record holders of depositary shares in proportion to the number of depositary shares that the holder owns on the relevant record date; provided, however, that if we or the depositary is required by law to withhold an amount on account of taxes, then the amount distributed to the holders of depositary shares shall be reduced accordingly. The depositary will distribute only an amount that can be distributed without attributing to any holder of depositary shares a fraction of

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one cent. The depositary will add the undistributed balance to and treat it as part of the next sum received by the depositary for distribution to holders of the depositary shares.

If there is a non-cash distribution, the depositary will distribute property received by it to the entitled record holders of depositary shares, in proportion, insofar as possible, to the number of depositary shares owned by the holders, unless the depositary determines, after consultation with us, that it is not feasible to make such distribution. If this occurs, the depositary may, with our approval, sell such property and distribute the net proceeds from such sale to the holders. The deposit agreement also will contain provisions relating to how any subscription or similar rights that we may offer to holders of the preferred stock will be available to the holders of the depositary shares.

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WITHDRAWAL OF SHARES

Upon surrender of the depositary receipts at the corporate trust office of the depositary, unless the related depositary shares have previously been called for redemption, converted or exchanged into our other securities, the holder of the depositary shares evidenced thereby is entitled to delivery of the number of whole shares of the related class or series of preferred stock and any money or other property represented by such depositary shares. Holders of depositary receipts will be entitled to receive whole shares of the related class or series of preferred stock on the basis set forth in the prospectus supplement for such class or series of preferred stock, but holders of such whole shares of preferred stock will not thereafter be entitled to exchange them for depositary shares. If the depositary receipts delivered by the holder evidence a number of depositary shares in excess of the number of depositary shares representing the number of whole shares of preferred stock to be withdrawn, the depositary will deliver to such holder at the same time a new depositary receipt evidencing such excess number of depositary shares. In no event will fractional shares of preferred stock be delivered upon surrender of depositary receipts to the depositary.

CONVERSION, EXCHANGE AND REDEMPTION

If any class or series of preferred stock underlying the depositary shares may be converted or exchanged, each record holder of depositary receipts representing the shares of preferred stock being converted or exchanged will have the right or obligation to convert or exchange the depositary shares represented by the depositary receipts.

Whenever we redeem or convert shares of preferred stock held by the depositary, the depositary will redeem or convert, at the same time, the number of depositary shares representing the preferred stock to be redeemed or converted. The depositary will redeem the depositary shares from the proceeds it receives from the corresponding redemption of the applicable series of preferred stock. The depositary will mail notice of redemption or conversion to the record holders of the depositary shares that are to be redeemed between 30 and 60 days before the date fixed for redemption or conversion. The redemption price per depositary share will be equal to the applicable fraction of the redemption price per share on the applicable class or series of preferred stock. If less than all the depositary shares are to be redeemed, the depositary will select which shares are to be redeemed by lot on a pro rata basis or by any other equitable method as the depositary may decide.

After the redemption or conversion date, the depositary shares called for redemption or conversion will no longer be outstanding. When the depositary shares are no longer outstanding, all rights of the holders will end, except the

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right to receive money, securities or other property payable upon redemption or conversion of the depositary shares.

VOTING THE PREFERRED STOCK

When the depositary receives notice of a meeting at which the holders of the particular class or series of preferred stock are entitled to vote, the depositary will mail the particulars of the meeting to the record holders of the depositary shares. Each record holder of depositary shares on the record date may instruct the depositary on how to vote the shares of preferred stock underlying the holder's depositary shares. The depositary will try, if practical, to vote the number of shares of preferred stock underlying the depositary shares according to the instructions. We will agree to take all reasonable action requested by the depositary to enable it to vote as instructed.

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AMENDMENT AND TERMINATION OF THE DEPOSIT AGREEMENT

We and the depositary may agree at any time to amend the deposit agreement and the depositary receipt evidencing the depositary shares. Any amendment that (a) imposes or increases certain fees, taxes or other charges payable by the holders of the depositary shares as described in the deposit agreement or (b) otherwise materially adversely affects any substantial existing rights of holders of depositary shares, will not take effect until such amendment is approved by the holders of at least a majority of the depositary shares then outstanding. Any holder of depositary shares that continues to hold its shares after such amendment has become effective will be deemed to have agreed to the amendment.

We may direct the depositary to terminate the deposit agreement by mailing a notice of termination to holders of depositary shares at least 30 days before termination. The depositary may terminate the deposit agreement if 90 days have elapsed after the depositary delivered written notice of its election to resign and a successor depositary is not appointed. In addition, the deposit agreement will automatically terminate if:

- . the depositary has redeemed all related outstanding depositary shares;
- . all outstanding shares of preferred stock have been converted into or exchanged for common stock; or
- . we have liquidated, terminated or wound up our business and the depositary has distributed the preferred stock of the relevant series to the holders of the related depositary shares.

REPORTS AND OBLIGATIONS

The depositary will forward to the holders of depositary shares all reports and communications from us that are delivered to the depositary and that we are required by law, the rules of an applicable securities exchange or our amended and restated articles of incorporation to furnish to the holders of the preferred stock. Neither we nor the depositary will be liable if the depositary is prevented or delayed by law or any circumstances beyond its control in performing its obligations under the deposit agreement. The deposit agreement limits our obligations to performance in good faith of the duties stated in the deposit agreement. The depositary assumes no obligation and will not be subject to liability under the deposit agreement except to perform such obligations as are set forth in the deposit agreement without negligence or bad faith. Neither

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we nor the depositary will be obligated to prosecute or defend any legal proceeding connected with any depositary shares or class or series of preferred stock unless the holders of depositary shares requesting us to do so furnish us with a satisfactory indemnity. In performing our obligations, we and the depositary may rely and act upon the advice of our counsel or accountants, on any information provided to us by a person presenting shares for deposit, any holder of a receipt, or any other document believed by us or the depositary to be genuine and to have been signed or presented by the proper party or parties.

PAYMENT OF FEES AND EXPENSES

We will pay all fees, charges and expenses of the depositary, including the initial deposit of the preferred stock and any redemption of the preferred stock. Holders of depositary shares will pay taxes and governmental charges and any other charges as are stated in the deposit agreement for their accounts.

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RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL OF DEPOSITARY

At any time, the depositary may resign by delivering notice to us, and we may remove the depositary at any time. Resignations or removals will take effect upon the appointment of a successor depositary and its acceptance of the appointment. The successor depositary must be appointed within 90 days after the delivery of the notice of resignation or removal and must be a bank or trust company having its principal office in the United States and having a combined capital and surplus of at least \$50,000,000.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

This section describes the general terms of the warrants that we may offer and sell by this prospectus. This prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement will contain the material terms and conditions for each warrant. The accompanying prospectus supplement may add, update or change the terms and conditions of the warrants as described in this prospectus.

GENERAL

We may issue warrants to purchase debt securities or equity securities, including common stock, Class A common stock or preferred stock. Warrants may be issued independently or together with any securities and may be attached to or separate from those securities. The warrants will be issued under warrant agreements to be entered into between us and a bank or trust company, as warrant agent, all of which will be described in the prospectus supplement relating to the warrants we are offering. The warrant agent will act solely as our agent in connection with the warrants and will not have any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders or beneficial owners of warrants. A copy of the warrant agreement will be filed with the SEC in connection with the offering of the warrants.

DEBT WARRANTS

We may issue warrants for the purchase of our debt securities. As explained below, each debt warrant will entitle its holder to purchase debt securities at an exercise price set forth in, or to be determinable as set forth in, the related prospectus supplement. Debt warrants may be issued separately or together with debt securities.

The debt warrants are to be issued under debt warrant agreements to be entered into between us, and one or more banks or trust companies, as debt warrant agent, as will be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the

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debt warrants being offered by the prospectus supplement and this prospectus. A copy of the debt warrant agreement, including a form of the debt warrant certificate representing the debt warrants, will be filed with the SEC in connection with the offering of the debt warrants.

The particular terms of each issue of debt warrants, the debt warrant agreement relating to the debt warrants and the debt warrant certificates representing debt warrants will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement, including, as applicable:

- . the title of the debt warrants;
- . the initial offering price;
- . the title, aggregate principal amount and terms of the debt securities purchasable upon exercise of the debt warrants;
- . the currency or currency units in which the offering price, if any, and the exercise price are payable;

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- . the title and terms of any related debt securities with which the debt warrants are issued and the number of the debt warrants issued with each debt security;
- . the date, if any, on and after which the debt warrants and the related debt securities will be separately transferable;
- . the principal amount of debt securities purchasable upon exercise of each debt warrant and the price at which that principal amount of debt securities may be purchased upon exercise of each debt warrant;
- . if applicable, the minimum or maximum number of warrants that may be exercised at any one time;
- . the date on which the right to exercise the debt warrants will commence and the date on which the right will expire;
- . if applicable, a discussion of United States federal income tax, accounting or other considerations applicable to the debt warrants;
- . whether the debt warrants represented by the debt warrant certificates will be issued in registered or bearer form, and, if registered, where they may be transferred and registered;
- . anti-dilution provisions of the debt warrants, if any;
- . redemption or call provisions, if any, applicable to the debt warrants; and
- . any additional terms of the debt warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the debt warrants.

Debt warrant certificates will be exchangeable for new debt warrant certificates of different denominations and, if in registered form, may be presented for registration of transfer, and debt warrants may be exercised at the corporate trust office of the debt warrant agent or any other office indicated in the related prospectus supplement. Before the exercise of debt warrants, holders of debt warrants will not be entitled to payments of principal

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of, premium, if any, or interest, if any, on the debt securities purchasable upon exercise of the debt warrants, or to enforce any of the covenants in the indenture.

EQUITY WARRANTS

We may issue warrants for the purchase of our equity securities, such as our common stock, Class A common stock or preferred stock. As explained below, each equity warrant will entitle its holder to purchase equity securities at an exercise price set forth in, or to be determinable as set forth in, the related prospectus supplement. Equity warrants may be issued separately or together with equity securities.

The equity warrants are to be issued under equity warrant agreements to be entered into between us and one or more banks or trust companies, as equity warrant agent, as will be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the equity warrants being offered by the prospectus supplement and this prospectus. A copy of the equity warrant agreement, including a form of the equity warrant certificate representing the equity warranty, will be filed with the SEC in connection with the offering of the equity warrants.

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The particular terms of each issue of equity warrants, the equity warrant agreement relating to the equity warrants and the equity warrant certificates representing equity warrants will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement, including, as applicable:

- . the title of the equity warrants;
- . the initial offering price;
- . the aggregate number of equity warrants and the aggregate number of shares of the equity security purchasable upon exercise of the equity warrants;
- . the currency or currency units in which the offering price, if any, and the exercise price are payable;
- . if applicable, the designation and terms of the equity securities with which the equity warrants are issued, and the number of equity warrants issued with each equity security;
- . the date, if any, on and after which the equity warrants and the related equity security will be separately transferable;
- . if applicable, the minimum or maximum number of the equity warrants that may be exercised at any one time;
- . the date on which the right to exercise the equity warrants will commence and the date on which the right will expire;
- . if applicable, a discussion of United States federal income tax, accounting or other considerations applicable to the equity warrants;
- . anti-dilution provisions of the equity warrants, if any;
- . redemption or call provisions, if any, applicable to the equity warrants; and

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- . any additional terms of the equity warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the equity warrants.

Holders of equity warrants will not be entitled, solely by virtue of being holders, to vote, to consent, to receive dividends, to receive notice as shareholders with respect to any meeting of shareholders for the election of directors or any other matter, or to exercise any rights whatsoever as a holder of the equity securities purchasable upon exercise of the equity warrants.

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DESCRIPTION OF UNITS

We may issue units comprised of one or more debt securities, common stock, shares of preferred stock and warrants in any combination. Each unit will be issued so that the holder of the unit is also the holder of each security included in the unit. Thus, the holder of a unit will have the rights and obligations of a holder of each included security. The unit agreement under which a unit is issued may provide that the securities included in the unit may not be held or transferred separately, at any time or at any time before a specified date.

The prospectus supplement may describe:

- . the designation and terms of the units and of the securities comprising the units, including whether and under what circumstances those securities may be held or transferred separately;
- . any provisions of the governing unit agreement that differ from those described below; and
- . any provisions for the issuance, payment, settlement, transfer or exchange of the units or of the securities comprising the units.

We may issue units in such amounts and in as many distinct series as we wish. This section summarizes terms of the units that apply generally to all series.

UNIT AGREEMENTS

We will issue the units under one or more unit agreements to be entered into between us and a bank or other financial institution, as unit agent. We may add, replace or terminate unit agents from time to time. We will identify the unit agreement under which each series of units will be issued and the unit agent under that agreement in the prospectus supplement.

The following provisions will generally apply to all unit agreements unless otherwise stated in the prospectus supplement.

ENFORCEMENT OF RIGHTS

The unit agent under a unit agreement will act solely as our agent in connection with the units issued under that agreement. The unit agent will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders of those unit