

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP

(X) Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16.  
 Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instructions 1(b).

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person  
 HEINRICHS, NELSON W.  
 7220 NORTH MORRISON ROAD  
 MUNCIE, IN 47304
2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol  
 FIRST MERCHANTS CORPORATION  
 FRME
3. IRS or Social Security Number of Reporting Person (Voluntary)  
 ###-##-####
4. Statement for Month/Year  
 July 1997
5. If Amendment, Date of Original (Month/Year)
6. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable)  
 Director  10% Owner  Officer (give title below)  Other (specify below)  
 First Merchants Bank, N.A.
7. Individual or Joint/Group Filing (Check Applicable Line)  
 Form filed by One Reporting Person  
 Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

Table I -- Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Security	2. Transaction Date	3. Transaction Code	4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) Amount	A/D	Price	5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned at End of Month	6. Direct (D) or Indirect (I)	7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership
Common Stock						2,411 (1)	D	
						5,000	I	Spouse-Revocable Trust

Table II -- Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Derivative Security	2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	3. Transaction Date	4. Transaction Code	5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) Amount	6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date Date/Date	7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities Title and Number of Shares	8. Price of Derivative Security	9. Number of Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned at End of Month	10. Direct (D) or Indirect (I)	11. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership
Non-Employee Director Stock Option (Right to Buy)	31.25	07-01-97	A	600	01-01-98 / 06-30-07	Common 600		2,400	D	

Explanation of Responses:  
 (1) includes 44,1121 shares purchased through the First Merchants Corporation dividend reinvestment plan since last report.

Reporting person resigned as a director of First Merchants Corporation effective midnight December 31, 1996.

SIGNATURE OF REPORTING PERSON  
 Nelson W. Heinrichs (Confirming Statement on File)  
 DATE  
 July 31, 1997