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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL TRADE, JANUARY 1957

Total sales of retail stores in January were \$14.9 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences showed no change from December, but was about 5 percent above January a year ago.

The January sales figures are based on the Advance Report on Retail Trade, a monthly survey of the Bureau of the Census conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 1,700 retail firms which, in total, operate some 35,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger group which furnishes figures at a later date. The advance estimates are preliminary and subject to revision, but the revision of the total seldom exceeds $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent.

The preliminary Census figures are shown in table 1 on the reverse side. The Office of Business Economics noted that after adjustment for seasonal factor and trading day differences, January total trade activity continued at the high December rate. A small increase in sales at durable goods stores was offset by a comparable decline in the nondurable group.

(more)

Table 1.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP
(NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	January 1957	1956	
		December	January
Retail stores, total ¹	14,913	19,531	13,866
Food group.....	3,794	4,204	3,517
Grocery stores.....	3,211	3,572	2,986
Eating and drinking places.....	1,085	1,201	1,084
General merchandise group.....	1,321	3,033	1,278
Department stores ²	716	1,627	693
Apparel group.....	813	1,694	721
Furniture and appliance group.....	821	1,194	761
Lumber, building, hardware group ³	850	1,036	835
Automotive group.....	3,019	3,122	2,744
Gasoline service stations.....	1,143	1,182	1,013
Drug and proprietary stores.....	488	632	459

See footnotes below table 2.

Source: Bureau of the Census

Table 2.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP
(ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)			Percentage change December 1956 from--	
	1956		December 1955	November 1956	December 1955
	December	November			
Retail stores, total ¹	16,491	16,358	15,795	+1	+4
Durable goods stores, total ¹	5,814	5,664	5,677	+3	+2
Nondurable goods stores, total ¹ ..	10,677	10,694	10,118	0	+6
Food group.....	3,977	3,925	3,726	+1	+7
Eating and drinking places.....	1,194	1,188	1,158	+1	+3
General merchandise group.....	1,738	1,760	1,672	-1	+4
Apparel group.....	991	1,004	912	-1	+9
Furniture and appliance group.....	932	912	873	+2	+7
Lumber, building, hardware group ³ ..	1,129	1,126	1,132	0	0
Automotive group.....	3,285	3,159	3,233	+4	+2
Gasoline service stations.....	1,164	1,179	1,083	-1	+7
Drug and proprietary stores.....	497	488	459	+2	+8

Source: Office of Business Economics

¹ Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

² Based on preliminary estimates supplied by Federal Reserve Board.

³ Includes farm equipment dealers.