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Secretary

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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL SALES, JANUARY 1960

Total sales of retail stores in January were \$16.1 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, was 2 percent above December and about 2 percent above January 1959.

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 2,000 retail firms which, in total, operate some 39,000 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 for January are shown in table 1 of this release. The Office of Business Economics noted that, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, the advance from December to January was largely the result of the sharp rise in sales of the automotive group from the relatively low December rate. Retail sales, exclusive of the automotive group, showed little change from December. Final estimates for December indicate that seasonally adjusted retail sales were 2 percent below November.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES REPORT--PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES FOR JANUARY 1960
 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)		
	1960	1959	1959
	January	December	January
Retail stores, total ¹	16,083	21,454	16,225
Durable-goods stores, total ¹	4,904	6,025	5,121
Nondurable-goods stores, total ¹	11,179	15,429	11,104
Food Group.....	4,317	4,698	4,382
Grocery stores.....	3,871	4,158	3,914
Eating and drinking places.....	1,257	1,350	1,158
General merchandise group.....	1,481	3,552	1,444
Department stores.....	2861	2,056	842
Apparel group.....	936	1,975	868
Furniture and appliance group.....	773	1,229	784
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group..	854	1,199	903
Automotive group.....	2,908	2,723	3,017
Gasoline service stations.....	1,336	1,437	1,282
Drug and proprietary stores.....	604	783	581

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	Percentage change Jan. 1960 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change Dec. 1959 from--	
	Dec. 1959	Jan. 1959	1960	1959		1958	Nov. 1959	Dec. 1958
			Jan.	Dec.	Nov.	Dec.		
Retail stores, total ¹	+2	+2	17,839	17,485	17,842	17,605	-2	-1
Durable-goods stores, total ²	+7	-3	5,681	5,328	5,682	5,827	-6	-9
Nondurable-goods stores, total ²	0	+5	12,158	12,157	12,160	11,778	0	+3
Food Group.....				4,363	4,390	4,242		+3
Eating and drinking places.....				1,351	1,306	1,243		+9
General merchandise group.....				1,991	1,966	1,887		+6
Apparel group.....				1,150	1,119	1,101		+4
Furniture and appliance group.....				903	935	868		+4
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group..				1,281	1,282	1,219		+5
Automotive group.....				2,667	2,961	3,256		-18
Gasoline service stations.....				1,423	1,438	1,356		+5
Drug and proprietary stores.....				612	607	580		+6

Source: Office of Business Econom¹

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

² Based on preliminary estimates supplied by Federal Reserve Board.

³ Comparable data not available.

NOTE: Excludes Alaska and Hawaii which in 1954, according to the Retail Census, had