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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL TRADE, SEPTEMBER 1957

Total sales of retail stores in September were \$16.2 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences was 2 percent below August of this year and 5 percent above September a year ago.

The September 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 factors and trading day differences retail sales in September declined at both durable and nondurable goods stores with the decreases centered in the automotive group and in apparel and general merchandise stores.

(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)		
	1957		September 1956
	September	August	
Retail stores, total ¹	16,191	17,490	15,583
Food group.....	3,852	4,353	3,749
Grocery stores.....	3,392	3,876	3,323
Eating and drinking places.....	1,311	1,420	1,240
General merchandise group.....	1,684	1,774	1,699
Apparel group.....	1,000	967	981
Furniture and appliance group.....	856	912	860
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group..	1,200	1,285	1,253
Automotive group.....	3,054	3,352	2,676
Gasoline service stations.....	1,278	1,374	1,181
Drug and proprietary stores.....	511	527	465

See footnote 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, Sept. 1957 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Aug. 1957 from--	
	Aug. 1957	Sept. 1956	1957			1956	July 1957	Aug. 1956
			Sept.	Aug.	July	Aug.		
Retail stores, total ¹	-2	+5	16,727	17,030	17,034	16,101	0	+6
Durable goods stores, total ¹ ...	-2	+5	5,639	5,740	5,839	5,512	-2	+4
Nondurable goods stores, total ¹	-2	+6	11,088	11,290	11,195	10,589	+1	+7
Food group.....				4,057	4,027	3,738	+1	+9
Eating and drinking places.....				1,278	1,257	1,215	+2	+5
General merchandise group.....				1,861	1,861	1,718	0	+8
Apparel group.....				1,092	1,038	1,039	+5	+5
Furniture and appliance group.....				897	877	886	+2	+1
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group....				1,144	1,206	1,167	-5	-2
Automotive group.....				3,245	3,304	3,022	-2	+7
Gasoline service stations.....				1,272	1,281	1,164	-1	+9
Drug and proprietary stores.....				534	524	487	+2	+10

Source: Office of Business Economics

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