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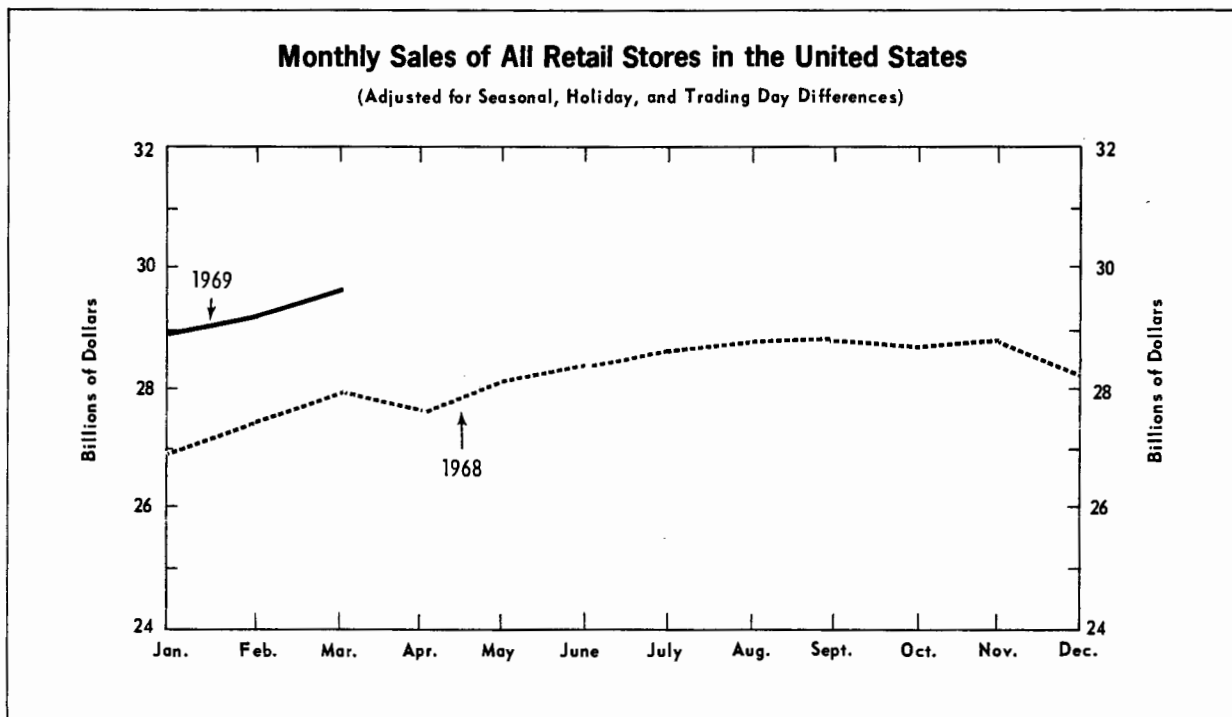
## MARCH 1969

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in March were estimated at \$28.6 billion; this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not for price changes, was \$29.6 billion. The advance estimate, after adjustment, was about 1 percent above February sales and about 6 percent above March sales last year. Adjusted January-through-March sales averaged about 2 percent above the prior 3 months and 7 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

After adjustment, sales of both durable goods stores and nondurable goods stores increased about 1 percent over February. Average monthly sales

for durable goods stores during the January-through-March period were about 3 percent above the average for the prior 3 months, and the average for nondurable goods stores for the comparable period increased 2 percent. The year-to-year gain in the 3-month average for nondurable goods stores was about 6 percent and about 9 percent for durable goods stores.

Based on the full sample, the total U.S. unadjusted sales estimate for February was about \$0.3 billion above the \$24.6 billion published earlier in the February Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released March 10, 1969. The seasonally adjusted sales for February as revised were 1 percent above January.



For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Annual subscription to Current Retail Trade Reports (Weekly Retail Sales Report, Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report, Monthly Retail Trade Report, and Annual Retail Trade Report sold as a single subscription) \$6.00. Single copies, available only from the Bureau of the Census, 10¢.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE Maurice H. Stans, Secretary  
William H. Chartener, Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS A. Ross Eckler, Director

The March sales figures are based on advance reporting of a small subsample of the Census Bureau's panel of retail firms. Beginning with the October 1967 report, the advance figures have been modified on the basis of the relationship between the advance estimates and full sample estimates. The advance estimates are subject to revision by estimates subsequently derived from the full sample.

The revision of the total seldom exceeds 1.5 percent and for the past year has averaged

0.7 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.9 percent for food stores to 4.1 percent for the lumber group.

It should be noted that even for figures derived from the full sample, sales movements from one month to the next tend to be relatively irregular. Data for several months are generally required to indicate the underlying trend.

## SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP

Part A. NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations or trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1969		1968
	March <sup>1</sup>	February <sup>2</sup>	March
Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	28,632	24,909	27,049
Durable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	9,525	8,262	8,916
Nondurable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	19,107	16,647	18,133
Food group.....	6,359	5,777	6,113
Grocery stores.....	5,956	5,417	5,705
Eating and drinking places.....	2,038	1,820	2,022
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	4,238	3,379	3,901
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	3,825	3,008	3,487
Department stores.....	2,562	2,010	2,334
Apparel group.....	1,626	1,227	1,430
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,321	1,226	1,253
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....	1,537	1,248	1,460
Automotive group.....	5,863	5,049	5,526
Gasoline service stations.....	2,059	1,853	1,970
Drug and proprietary stores.....	956	894	901

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, Mar. 1969 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)					Percentage change, Feb. 1969 from--	
	Feb. 1969	Mar. 1968	1969		1968		Jan. 1969	Feb. 1968	
			Mar. <sup>1</sup>	Feb. <sup>2</sup>	Jan.	Mar.			Feb.
Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	+1	+6	29,585	29,359	28,989	27,996	27,449	+1	+7
Durable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> ...	+1	+7	9,675	9,621	9,446	9,018	8,828	+2	+9
Nondurable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> ..	+1	+5	19,910	19,738	19,543	18,978	18,621	+1	+6
Food group.....				6,366	6,315	6,026	5,929	+1	+7
Eating and drinking places.....				2,126	2,094	2,108	2,081	+2	+2
General merchandise group with nonstores.....				4,651	4,601	4,422	4,349	+1	+7
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....				4,228	4,176	3,988	3,928	+1	+8
Apparel group.....				1,720	1,640	1,649	1,558	+5	+10
Furniture and appliance group.....				1,446	1,402	1,369	1,357	+3	+7
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....				1,685	1,593	1,572	1,602	+6	+5
Automotive group.....				5,600	5,574	5,319	5,189	0	+8
Gasoline service stations.....				2,110	2,097	2,049	1,994	+1	+6
Drug and proprietary stores.....				970	979	924	932	-1	+4

Source: Bureau of the Census

<sup>1</sup>Advance sample estimates. <sup>2</sup>Preliminary estimates of full sample.

<sup>3</sup>Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.