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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL TRADE, NOVEMBER 1956

Total sales of retail stores in November were \$16.8 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, was 3 percent above October of this year, and about 5 percent above November a year ago.

The November 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 1½ 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, sales in November reached a new high. All major categories of retail trade showed advances from October to November. Marked increases in seasonally adjusted sales occurred in the automotive and general merchandise sectors.

(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)		
	1956		November 1955
	November	October	
Retail stores, total ¹	16,836	16,290	15,895
Food group.....	4,068	3,881	3,648
Grocery stores.....	3,487	3,305	3,078
Eating and drinking places.....	1,194	1,236	1,126
General merchandise group.....	2,048	1,807	1,957
Department stores ²	1,148	1,007	1,076
Apparel group.....	1,092	1,034	988
Furniture and appliance group.....	981	956	927
Lumber, building, hardware group ³	1,138	1,290	1,140
Automotive group.....	3,014	2,830	3,039
Gasoline service stations.....	1,185	1,181	1,085
Drug and proprietary stores.....	478	480	432

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)			Percent change, Oct. 1956 from--	
	1956		Oct. 1955	Sept. 1956	Oct. 1955
	Oct.	Sept.			
Retail stores, total ¹	16,050	16,018	15,777	0	+2
Durable goods stores, total ¹	5,490	5,356	5,764	+3	-5
Nondurable goods stores, total ¹ ..	10,560	10,662	10,013	-1	+5
Food group.....	3,915	3,918	3,686	0	+6
Eating and drinking places.....	1,184	1,178	1,159	+1	+2
General merchandise group.....	1,674	1,773	1,693	-6	-1
Apparel group.....	982	977	908	+1	+8
Furniture and appliance group.....	864	908	849	-5	+2
Lumber, building, hardware group ³ ..	1,156	1,205	1,206	-4	-4
Automotive group.....	3,035	2,780	3,280	+9	-7
Gasoline service stations.....	1,150	1,165	1,042	-1	+10
Drug and proprietary stores.....	492	492	447	0	+10

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.