



SURVEY OF CURRENT BUSINESS WEEKLY SUPPLEMENT



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC COMMERCE**

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SUMMARY OF BUSINESS TRENDS

BUSINESS statistics for the most recent period reported show a moderately rising tendency. Virtually all production data currently available—bituminous coal being an important exception—show gains for the last week reported. Steel is now scheduled at 94.9 percent of ingot capacity, an advance of half a point over the previous peak. Automobile assemblies approached the 115,000 mark. At a higher level than a year ago, miscellaneous freight carloadings continued to rise week by week. Following a period of little change in sales from a year ago, department stores reported moderate improvement.

Exports of United States merchandise fell in September by more than \$53 million as declines occurred in a broad list of commodities. The month's aggregate totaled \$288 million against \$342 million in August. Decreases in aircraft, copper, and lubricating oil contributed about \$29 million to the total decline, with the balance spread over a wide range of industrial and agricultural commodities. While data as to the country distribution of exports are not yet available for September, it is apparent that the United Kingdom, Japan, and Russia decreased their takings in the month. Aircraft shipments, which advanced

by about \$15 million in August, largely to Britain, dropped off by a similar amount last month. The large movement of copper to Russia and Japan in August fell as total copper shipments declined from \$13 million to \$3 million. Export of lubricating oil to Japan likewise was substantially lower than in August.

Steel exports decreased relatively little from the high August level as the total held substantially above June and July figures. Under pressure of domestic requirements, scrap steel shipped abroad was again in smaller volume. Export gains in September were confined largely to brass and bronze semimanufactures, motor fuels, and metal-working machinery, though industrial machinery as a whole declined. Little change was noted in exports of automotive equipment, firearms, and explosives. Cotton and tobacco exports remained low as did most other agricultural commodities.

General imports declined substantially to \$195 million from \$220 million in August. Rubber imports, however, reached record proportions, and increases were registered in tin, copper, and wool. With these exceptions, all major import items declined.

SELECTED BUSINESS INDICATORS



