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RESERVE BANK
ST. LOUIS

BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MONTHLY DEPARTMENT STORE SALES AND STOCKS, BY DEPARTMENTS

UNITED STATES - FEBRUARY 1956
(Based on retail dollar amounts)

	Summary By Selected Department Groups							Base- ment store total
	Main Store							
	Main store total	Women's apparel and acces- sories	Men's and boys' wear	Home furnish- ings	Piece goods and house- hold textiles	Small wares	Miscel- laneous	
SALES INDEXES (Unadjusted, 1947-49 average monthly sales = 100)								
Dec. 1953	189	177	266	134	116	248	325	171
Jan. 1954	80	77	72	82	129	80	55	76
Feb. 1954	75	77	64	82	70	78	63	71
Oct. 1954	109	112	109	113	89	105	95	110
Nov. 1954	127	120	148	123	94	137	172	128
Dec. 1954	195	181	277	139	114	258	335	177
Jan. 1955	86	80	74	95	132	85	58	78
Feb. 1955	76	74	65	88	68	81	65	69
Oct. 1955	116	119	116	124	92	111	102	116
Nov. 1955	134	126	157	131	96	146	184	132
Dec. 1955	203	189	285	148	118	269	350	180
Jan. 1956	87	80	73	100	134	90	61	76
Feb. 1956	82	80	68	97	72	90	66	74
STOCKS INDEXES (Unadjusted, 1947-49 average of end-of-month stocks = 100)								
Dec. 1953	108	107	111	109	111	111	94	98
Jan. 1954	105	107	104	106	99	105	99	94
Feb. 1954	110	116	115	108	100	107	97	103
Oct. 1954	132	140	149	115	110	131	158	124
Nov. 1954	135	142	152	115	111	146	165	126
Dec. 1954	108	109	110	106	111	110	94	100
Jan. 1955	106	110	105	103	103	107	103	98
Feb. 1955	112	121	115	106	105	109	100	107
Oct. 1955	138	149	156	120	115	137	163	128
Nov. 1955	143	153	160	122	117	155	172	132
Dec. 1955	115	117	116	114	116	118	100	102
Jan. 1956	116	121	114	114	109	116	111	104
Feb. 1956	122	133	125	117	111	119	109	115
RATIO OF STOCKS TO SALES								
Feb. 1954	4.1	3.3	5.9	4.6	4.4	4.4	3.8	2.9
Feb. 1955	4.0	3.5	5.7	4.1	4.7	4.3	3.9	3.1
Feb. 1956	4.1	3.6	5.9	4.1	4.7	4.2	4.1	3.2

Figures for departments within groups given on following pages.

MONTHLY DEPARTMENT STORE SALES AND STOCKS, BY DEPARTMENTS

UNITED STATES - FEBRUARY 1956

Department	Percentage change from corresponding period a year ago			Ratio of stocks to sales 1/		Unadjusted indexes (1947-49 av.=100 2/)	
	Sales during period		Stocks (end of month)	Feb.		Feb.	
	Feb.	Jan-Feb.	Feb.	1956	1955	Sales	Stocks
<u>GRAND TOTAL—entire store</u>	+ 8	+ 5	+ 9	3.9	3.9	--	--
<u>MAIN STORE TOTAL</u>	+ 8	+ 5	+10	4.1	4.0	82	122
<u>PIECE GOODS, HOUSEHOLD TEXTILES</u>	+ 6	+ 3	+ 5	4.7	4.7	72	111
Piece goods	+ 7	+ 1	0	3.7	4.0	71	95
Silks, velvets, synthetics	+10	+ 3	- 3	3.5	4.0	64	82
Woolen yard goods	+10	+ 5	- 5	4.0	4.7	60	84
Cotton yard goods	+ 4	- 2	+ 4	3.6	3.6	93	128
Household textiles	+ 5	+ 4	+ 8	5.3	5.1	72	119
Linens and towels	+ 6	+ 3	+ 8	5.6	5.5	69	107
Domestics—muslins, sheetings	+ 5	+ 6	+ 9	4.8	4.6	73	176
Blankets, comforters, spreads	+ 3	+ 3	+ 8	5.4	5.2	75	121
<u>SMALL WARES</u>	+11	+ 8	+ 9	4.2	4.3	90	119
Laces, trimmings, embroideries, and ribbons	+ 6	+ 3	+ 3	4.7	4.9	73	116
Notions	+13	+ 9	+ 8	4.5	4.7	84	132
Toilet articles, drug sundries	+14	+10	+13	3.7	3.8	102	115
Silverware and jewelry	+ 6	+ 6	+11	5.9	5.7	75	130
Silverware and clocks	+ 1	+ 6	+13	8.0	6.8	72	142
Costume jewelry	+ 5	+ 3	+11	3.6	3.4	78	116
Fine jewelry and watches	+24	+20	+ 9	10.4	11.4	79	132
Art needlework	+ 3	0	- 2	4.4	4.6	85	100
Books and stationery	+10	+ 9	+ 5	3.2	3.4	100	114
Books and magazines	+18	+15	+ 5	2.4	2.7	110	101
Stationery	+ 6	+ 5	+ 5	3.7	3.7	95	118
<u>WOMEN'S APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES</u>	+ 8	+ 4	+10	3.6	3.5	80	133
Women's accessories	+ 6	+ 3	+10	4.2	4.1	79	134
Neckwear and scarfs	+10	+ 7	+13	3.2	3.1	86	151
Handkerchiefs	+ 2	0	+ 2	4.1	4.1	52	71
Millinery	+ 8	+ 2	+ 8	1.6	1.6	74	117
Women's and children's gloves	+ 7	+ 2	+ 8	5.2	5.2	62	92
Corsets and brassieres	+ 8	+ 6	+ 9	3.7	3.7	109	154
Women's, children's hosiery	0	0	+ 5	3.0	2.9	73	121
Underwear, slips, and negligees	+ 3	0	+ 9	3.9	3.7	65	114
Knit underwear	+ 5	+ 1	+ 9	3.9	3.8	84	148
Silk & muslin underwear, slips	+ 1	- 1	+11	4.3	3.9	55	105
Negligees, robes, loung. apparel	+ 7	+ 1	+ 8	2.8	2.7	69	90
Infants' wear	+ 9	+ 4	+ 8	3.9	4.0	84	131
Handbags, small leather goods	+ 9	+ 5	+14	3.5	3.3	78	133
Women's and children's shoes	+ 8	+ 5	+13	6.9	6.6	88	165
Children's shoes	+ 6	+ 3	+16	7.7	7.1	69	166
Women's shoes	+ 8	+ 5	+13	6.7	6.4	91	161

MONTHLY DEPARTMENT STORE SALES AND STOCKS, BY DEPARTMENTS (Continued)

UNITED STATES - FEBRUARY 1956

Department	Percentage change from corresponding period a year ago			Ratio of stocks to sales 1/		Unadjusted indexes (1947-49 av.=100 2/	
	Sales during Period		Stocks (end of month)	Feb.		Feb.	Feb.
	Feb.	Jan-Feb.	Feb.	1956	1955	Sales	Stocks
WOMEN'S APPAREL, ACCESSORIES (Cont.)							
Women's apparel	+ 9	+ 4	+11	2.9	2.9	81	131
Women's, misses' coats & suits	+ 7	+ 2	+ 1	2.5	2.6	76	115
Women's, misses' coats	+10	+ 4	+ 1	2.1	2.2	76	103
Women's, misses' suits	+ 2	- 3	- 1	3.1	3.2	83	142
Juniors' and girls' wear	+14	+ 9	+13	3.2	3.2	79	145
Juniors' coats, suits, dresses	+15	+10	+14	2.5	2.5	76	132
Girls' wear	+14	+ 7	+13	3.9	4.0	83	155
Women's and misses' dresses	+ 9	+ 4	+12	2.5	2.4	82	135
Inexpensive dresses	+ 9	+ 4	+10	2.0	2.0	78	130
Better dresses	+ 9	+ 6	+13	3.0	2.8	90	143
Blouses, skirts, sportswear	+ 9	+ 7	+15	3.4	3.3	86	150
Aprons, housedresses, uniforms	+ 6	+ 1	+ 7	2.5	2.5	89	122
Furs	+ 5	- 1	+13	4.6	4.2	77	93
MEN'S AND BOYS' WEAR	+ 6	+ 2	+ 9	5.9	5.7	68	125
Men's clothing	+ 7	+ 2	+10	6.7	6.6	72	137
Men's furnishings and hats	+ 3	0	+ 6	5.0	4.9	65	113
Boys' wear	+ 9	+ 3	+11	6.0	5.9	68	122
Men's & boys' shoes, slippers	+ 6	+ 5	+11	7.6	7.3	80	135
HOMEFURNISHINGS	+10	+ 7	+10	4.1	4.1	97	117
Furniture and bedding	+11	+ 8	+15	3.5	3.4	127	123
Mattresses, springs, studio beds	+ 8	+ 6	+ 8	1.9	1.9	142	150
Upholstered, other furniture	+14	+ 9	+15	3.9	3.9	126	120
Domestic floor coverings	+ 8	+ 6	+10	4.4	4.3	87	104
Rugs and carpets	+ 8	+ 6	+ 9	4.4	4.4	94	112
Linoleum	+17	+18	+14	4.7	4.8	50	64
Draperies, curtains, upholstery	+11	+ 8	+ 9	5.1	5.2	86	121
Lamps and shades	+ 8	+ 7	+ 6	4.0	4.1	83	109
China and glassware	+ 4	+ 3	+ 3	7.4	7.5	91	125
Major household appliances	+11	+12	+16	2.6	2.5	77	107
Housewares (incl. small appliances)	+11	+ 8	+ 9	4.2	4.3	96	127
Gift shop	+11	+ 8	+13	5.6	6.5	84	140
Radios, phonographs, television, pianos, records, sheet music, instr.	+ 5	+ 3	+10	2.9	2.8	98	103
Radios, phonographs, television	- 2	- 3	+10	2.8	2.6	83	94
Records, sheet music, instr.	+23	+16	+ 7	3.4	3.8	117	101
MISCELLANEOUS MERCHANDISE DEPT'S.	+ 3	+ 4	+ 9	4.1	3.9	66	109
Toys, games, sporting goods, cameras	+ 9	+ 9	+10	8.0	7.9	48	120
Toys and games	+ 4	+ 5	+11	8.4	7.9	37	116
Sporting goods and cameras	+14	+13	+ 9	7.4	7.8	66	118
Luggage	+ 9	+19	+10	5.4	5.4	65	114
Candy	+ 6	+ 5	+16	1.4	1.2	97	120

MONTHLY DEPARTMENT STORE SALES AND STOCKS, BY DEPARTMENTS (Continued)

UNITED STATES - FEBRUARY 1956

Department	Percentage change from corresponding period a year ago			Ratio of stocks to sales 1/		Unadjusted indexes (1947-49 av.=100 2/)	
	Sales during period		Stocks (end of month)	Feb.		Feb.	
	Feb.	Jan-Feb.	Feb.	1956	1955	Sales	Stocks
<u>BASILEMENT STORE TOTAL</u>	+ 6	+ 2	+ 7	3.2	3.1	74	115
Domestics and blankets	+ 4	+ 3	+ 7	3.9	3.7	78	123
Women's, misses' ready-to-wear	+ 5	+ 1	+ 6	2.6	2.5	70	111
Intimate apparel	+ 4	+ 1	+ 6	2.9	2.9	83	121
Hosiery	+ 1	- 1	+ 9	2.5	2.4	3/	3/
Underwear, corsets & brassieres	+ 5	+ 1	+ 4	3.1	3.1	3/	3/
Coats and suits	+ 2	- 4	- 1	2.2	2.3	58	95
Dresses	+11	+ 5	+ 5	1.6	1.6	68	98
Blouses, skirts, and sportswear	+ 3	+ 3	+17	2.7	2.3	76	120
Girls' wear	+ 8	+ 2	+11	3.2	3.0	70	131
Infants' wear	+ 4	+ 2	+10	3.5	3.3	78	127
Aprons, housedresses, uniforms	+ 7	+ 1	- 8	2.3	2.6	3/	3/
Men's and boys' wear	+ 6	+ 2	+12	3.8	3.6	77	124
Men's wear	+ 5	+ 2	+10	3.6	3.4	78	121
Men's clothing	+ 4	+ 2	+16	3.6	3.2	93	135
Men's furnishings	+ 5	+ 2	+ 5	3.5	3.5	70	111
Boys' wear	+10	+ 3	+16	4.5	4.3	73	144
Homefurnishings	+ 9	+ 3	+ 7	3.4	3.5	85	115
Shoes	+ 7	+ 2	+ 4	5.1	5.2	76	123
<u>NONMERCHANDISE TOTAL</u>	+11	+ 7	3/	3/	3/	101	3/
Barber and beauty shop	+ 7	+ 5	3/	3/	3/	119	3/

1/ The ratio of stocks to sales is obtained by dividing stocks at the end of the month by sales during the month and hence indicates the number of months' supply on hand at the end of the month in terms of sales for that month.

2/ The 1947-49 average of monthly sales and end-of-month stocks for each department is used as the base in computing sales and stocks indexes, respectively, for that department. For description of series, see pages 1146-49 of the November 1953 Federal Reserve Bulletin. A brochure containing back data for the departmental series for the period 1940-1952, inclusive, may be obtained from the Division of Administrative Services, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Washington 25, D. C.

3/ Data not available.

Note:--Based on reports from a group of large department stores located in various cities throughout the country. In 1955, sales and stocks at these stores accounted for almost 50 per cent of estimated total department store sales and stocks. Not all stores report data for all of the departments shown; consequently, the sample for the individual departments is not so comprehensive as that for the total.

February this year had one more trading day than last.