

Trends in the different regions of the country showed considerable variation in April. Wholesalers in the Prairie Provinces recorded the greatest increase at 14 per cent, while sales of wholesalers in Ontario were up two per cent. A decline of four per cent was reported for Quebec, while in British Columbia, sales were down six per cent, and in the Maritime Provinces by eight per cent.

Retail Sales Up: The value of Canada's retail trade was sharply higher in April when sales reached \$669,000,000 and exceeded April, 1948 dollar volume of \$573,000,000 by 17 per cent. The occurrence of Easter and the prevalence of favourable weather conditions in April this year were partially responsible for the high level of consumer spending. Last year seasonal Easter buying was concentrated in March. Tax reductions provided in the budget released additional purchasing power which also helped to swell retail sales.

Sales in the January-to-April period of 1949 were \$2,211,610,000, while volume in the same period of last year amounted to \$2,055,590,000, a gain of eight per cent.

The April increase was the largest recorded in several months and is in contrast to the more moderate gains in earlier months of the year. The advance in January was one per cent, February five per cent, and March, six per cent.

Inventory Values: Total inventory values in Canadian manufacturing industries appear to have fallen slightly at the end of April for the second consecutive month, according to preliminary reports received by the Bureau of Statistics.

The Bureau's preliminary index of estimated inventory values at the end of the month stood at 130.6 per cent of the average 1947 value as against a revised 132.5 per cent at the end of March. The decline is the largest in total value since the Bureau began the series in January, 1947. It may indicate, the Bureau says, that the rate of postwar inventory accumulation, which had been decreasing during 1948, may have reached its peak in February.

Across Canada: In the general election campaign, the Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, spoke at Smith's Falls, Ont., at the week-end; the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, Mr. Drew, spoke at Three Rivers, Que., and the Leader of the C.C.F. Party, Mr. Coldwell, spoke at Winnipeg....The Minister of Transport, Mr. Chevrier, on June 20 announced two new Air Transport Board directives having an important bearing on domestic civil aviation.