A healthy upward trend in the sales of records is revealed by the Board of Trade figures for 1961. Valued at £1,643,000,000, sales were 20 per cent higher than in the first three months of the year. The highest January sales achieved since 1958. However, export sales continued to decline and were 6 per cent less than in January 1960. While 6 per cent of all sales were discs, the remainder were recorded tapes. During January, 933,000,000 discs remained unchanged. Production of 78 r.p.m. discs continued to fall.

Pye Records has launched a new label on the British market—Piccadilly. Borne of necessity owing to the enormous growth of the Pye label, Piccadilly will initially be treated as an independent label, run by Ian Baltini. Although most of the artists and material for release on Piccadilly will be taken from leased tape produced by independent production companies, individual artists will be signed up.


Louis Bernstein, assistant general manager of Pye, returned from his American trip much impressed with the enthusiasm and activity of state-side recording companies. What particularly impressed him was the interest shown by American executives during exchanges of ideas concerning our two markets and now has a much clearer idea of American thinking. Ben- jamin, speaking in the States, has accused the label for making "no worthwhile business" of sales and recordings in the States. As a result of his trip the following British records will be released in America: "Bomber" by The Who, "At The Hop" by Del Shannon, "Shock of the Century" by Joe Brown, "Love Me Tender" by Elvis Presley and "She Loves Me" by Tommy Steele.

Sid Nathan, president, and Hal Neely, general manager, of King Records, America, together with the company's attorney and station relations manager, John J. DeRosa, last week via London. While in the United States they had meetings with Bernard Taylor (Odeon)—King's French dis- trict manager; Alan Halder (Vanguard)—King's German distributor for U.S. Forces in Germany; Ted Cross of Pathe-Marconi (EMI Group) and Rudi Revill of Editions Tropical which looks after King's publishing interest in France. They were joined in the meetings by special representatives of EMI's American agents,—— distributors for King in Germany and Austria. A highlight of their London stay was a lunch with the highly specialized music band "Don't Dawes," at EMI's Manchester Square headquarters. Those attending were L. G. Wood (managing director), Roland Rennie and A. J. Smith, of EMI; P. F. Godfrey, President of EMI; Roy Hattersley (HMV); Alan Hall, John (Holland), John Paul (Denmark), Ivan Nordstrom (Sweden) and Peter chimney (Switzerland), whose companies are part of the EMI's respective territories. The European tour was designed to develop closer liaison and co-ordination of operations with members of the EMI group and to further the King label concept. As a result of the tour, EMI King are to release certain material, both singles and albums, from EMI's U.K. and Con- tinental labels in the States, through its new distribution outlet. Lois Ltd, is handled in the UK by Jimmy Phillips of Peter Maurice.

Harry Walters, of EMI pop repertoire division, recently returned from the States, where he had been engaged in establishing EMI's new operation there. Of the record scene generally, Walters reports that in a market as wide open as expansion for major new product is that, despite an all out promotion of the early three months of the year, 78 r.p.m. sales remained at about one million, up on the previous 78 r.p.m. to 45 r.p.m. disks. Distribution also presents a major difficulty in view of the long-distance involved. As a result, the distribution system is being revised. The four main outlets in London, which handle 78s, are: Pye, EMI, HMV and Decca. Although the release of new material is still slower than usual, sales are increasing. The top selling hits for February are: "It's Friday Night" by Billy Fury; "A Little Lovin'" by Manfred Mann; "Lennon and McCartney" by the Beatles; and "Another Saturday Night" by Lonnie Donegan.

In the States, the first of several releases from the RIAA's recently issued report, "The Cash Box Top 100's Publishers," is that the current list is dominated by the major labels. As with previous lists, the Top 100's are based on sales of 78's, 45's and 100's, and cover the period from January 29 to February 11.

Although the list is dominated by the big labels, several independent publishers are represented, including EMI-labels. For example, EMI's U.K. label, Decca, is represented by 10 hits, while its American label, Capitol, is represented by 11. The latter is also represented by its subsidiary label, Chess, which has two hits. EMI's German label, Polydor, has one hit, while its Dutch label, Philips, has none. EMI's Italian label, RCA, has two hits, while its French label, Pye, has five.

The list is dominated by the major labels, with EMI-labels, including EMI-labels, being represented by 25 hits. Of these, 10 are Decca hits, 11 are Capitol hits, and 4 are EMI hits. The other major labels represented, in order of importance, are Sony (15 hits), Warners (12), and Mercury (11). The list also includes a number of independent labels, including Chess (2 hits), RCA (2 hits), and Pye (2 hits). The list is dominated by the major labels, with EMI-labels, including EMI-labels, being represented by 25 hits. Of these, 10 are Decca hits, 11 are Capitol hits, and 4 are EMI hits. The other major labels represented, in order of importance, are Sony (15 hits), Warners (12), and Mercury (11). The list also includes a number of independent labels, including Chess (2 hits), RCA (2 hits), and Pye (2 hits).