



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INFORMATION SERVICE

#10 ²⁸#10.38
(estimate)

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release Upon Receipt

MARKED INCREASE SHOWN IN PRICES AT FALL FUR-SEAL AUCTION

Black fur-seal skins, fashion's present favorite, jumped nearly 84 percent in price at the fall auction of Government-owned fur-seal skins, the Fish and Wildlife Service reported today to Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman.

The auction, held October 9 by the Fouke Fur Company in St. Louis, included 25,697 fur-seal skins from the Government-administered Pribilof Islands in Bering Sea, 2,000 Canadian-owned Pribilof Islands skins, 2,159 Cape of Good Hope fur-seal skins for the Union of South Africa, and about 3,000 Cape of Good Hope, New Zealand and North American sealskins for private shippers. Included in the sale were 279 blue fox pelts from the Pribilof Islands.

Fur buyers paid an average of \$95.52 for all United States government seal-skins, an increase of 52 percent over the average price paid at the previous sale on April 17, 1950. The Government-owned fur-seal and fox pelts sold for a total of \$2,456,928.35.

Black sealskins sold for an average of \$106.10, an advance of nearly 84 percent over the spring average for blacks. Dyed "Matara" (brown) skins sold for an average of \$98.25, an increase of 48 percent. Average price of "Safari" (lighter-brown skins) was \$74.60—which was 51 percent over the figure of the spring sale.

Canadian-owned skins, part of the treaty-provided allotment to Canada from the Pribilof Islands' fur-seal take, sold for substantially the same as the United States-owned skins. Cape of Good Hope sealskins averaged \$34.57—an advance of nearly 58 percent. Blue fox pelts sold for an average \$8.65. This was an increase of 99 percent over last October's sale price.

One factor that apparently entered into the advance in prices was the large attendance of fur buyers, with spirited bidding—which was reported to represent greater-than-average competition for the skins. In addition, the prices of most other furs have been increasing.

x x x