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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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PRICES DECLINE SLIGHTLY AT GOVERNMENT FUR-SEAL AUCTION

A slight decline in prices from last fall—3.2 percent—but an increase in total revenue because of a greater volume characterized the semiannual auction of Government-owned fur seal skins at St. Louis on April 16, Acting Secretary of the Interior Clarence A. Davis announced today.

A total of 27,017 skins, products of the sealing industry administered by the Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service on the Pribilof Islands, Alaska, brought \$2,519,994. This compares with 24,610 skins sold for \$2,316,735 at the October 10, 1955 sale. The grand average for all skins sold for the account of the United States Government was \$93.27; at the October sale it was \$94.14.

The sale was well attended by United States, Canadian, and European buyers.

Of the Alaska skins, 16,193 were dyed "Matara" (brown), 1,705 were "Safari" brown (a lighter brown), and 9,119 were blacks. The Matara skins brought an average of \$90.58, a decline of 4.8 percent below the October auction. The Safari skins sold for an average of \$65.90, a decline of 7.6 percent. The black skins averaged \$103.18, virtually unchanged from last October's price of \$103.46.

In addition to the United States skins, 4,525 Cape of Good Hope fur seal skins were sold for the account of the Government of the Union of South Africa at an average of \$26.94, a decline of 12.1 percent from the last sale. Four hundred and fifty Uruguay fur seal skins were sold for the Government or Uruguay at an average of \$45.12, a slight increase over last October's price of \$44.30.

The tentative date for the next auction is October 5, 1956.

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