



## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### INFORMATION SERVICE

#### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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The famous fur-seal herd of the Pribilof Islands has so increased in size that it now represents a capital value of approximately \$100,000,000, according to a report to Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes.

At current prices, according to the report by Dr. Ira W. Gabrielson, Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, this year's take of 117,164 skins will be worth approximately \$5,000,000 after processing. The number of skins taken this year was the greatest for any year since Government operation of the sealing went into effect in 1910.

Dr. Gabrielson pointed out that so far nearly \$9,000,000 had been turned into the U.S. Treasury from sealing operations after payment of expenses and amounts due other governments under international treaties. "With the seal herd now in good condition and of increasing size it is expected that we will continue to take large numbers of skins each year," he declared, "and the profits to the people of the United States should show a substantial increase."

When the United States purchased Alaska in 1867 the herd had an estimated population of some 4,000,000 animals. Sealing rights were leased to private firms for two 20-year periods, ending in 1910. At that time the herd had been reduced to only 130,000 animals and it was feared that it might soon face extinction. Treaties which stopped pelagic sealing and the following of sound conservation practices since that time have resulted in the growth of the herd to a figure somewhere between 2,500,000 and 2,750,000 animals today.

This year's take of furs has now arrived safely in the United States and processing will shortly begin at the plant of the Fouke Fur Company, St. Louis, agents of the Government.