



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE

For Release TO
PMS, FRIDAY, JUNE 2, 1944.

Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes today announced the successful return to the Pribilof Islands of 400 Aleut natives who had been evacuated nearly two years ago due to Japanese activities in the area.

The natives were moved to Funter Bay in Southeastern Alaska where many of them were quartered in a onetime salmon canning plant. Last year most of the men were sent back to the Islands to assist in fur-sealing operations, but the women and children, and some of the elderly men remained in Southeastern Alaska.

The Pribilof Islands are the summer home of the famous herd of fur seals which includes some 85 percent of all such seals in the world. The capital value of this famous herd is now estimated as being in the neighborhood of \$100,000,000. The natives, wards of the Government, earn their livelihood by helping in the sealing operations and in the taking of the blue Arctic foxes which roam the Islands.