

Bush urges development of resources

7,500 attend talk

by Holly F. Reimer

Tundra times reporter

Elmendorf Air Force Base was swamped Wednesday morning with more than 7,500 people who were all trying to get a good peek at the president of the United States.

George Bush, who was in Anchorage for about two hours was accompanied by his wife Barbara, Secretary of State James Baker and an entourage of White House press personnel, secret service agents and body guards. They stopped in Anchorage to re-fuel their plane while en route to Japan for Emperor Hirohito's funeral.

Dancers get close

—Page Thirteen

After a formal introduction by Congressman Don Young, R-Alaska, Bush extended a late happy birthday wish to Alaska's 30 years of statehood. Alaska turned 30 on Jan. 3.

During his speech Bush talked about his interest in Alaska's resources and said he is convinced that Alaska's natural resources can be developed without damaging the environment.

"The plan to open the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge meets these twin objectives. As a businessman, I know that we can and must develop our energy resources for the sake of economic development and national security," Bush said.

Because Alaska serves as the American gateway to Asia, Bush said the United States is also a Pacific power. He added that his administration plans to have the nation remain a Pacific power.

Bush said that during his trip he is also going to visit China and Korea where he will strengthen existing relations. And he stressed that the Pacific regions are of great and growing importance in international trade.

"I am here on my way to Japan for the funeral of the late emperor. It was here, at Hanger 5 at Elmendorf, that he became the first Emperor in Japan's long history to set foot outside his homeland, 18 years ago," Bush said.

While the crowd was waiting for the president to arrive about 270 people sang and danced for the audience. The performers included Alaska Natives, Gospel singers, Anchorage elementary school children and others.