

Guardsmen in Unique Adventure—

National Guardsmen Parachutists Visit Gambell

For 22 Anchorage area National Guardsmen, last weekend proved to be a highlight of the past training year.

The men, members of the Guard's 38th Special Forces, flew nearly 600 miles to the Eskimo village of Gambell on St. Lawrence Island for a two day training session with their Gambell-based detachment.

CPT Lowell Barrick, commander of the 38th, led the men aboard an Alaska Air Guard C-123 on Friday morning (May 5) for the five hour flight. A two hour stop in Nome allowed time for lunch and a bit of souvenir shopping for the green beret troopers, many of whom had never been to the Norton Sound city.

Taking off from Nome, the twin-engine C-123 flew through drifting fog banks for most of the 200 mile trip to Gambell.

Almost as if by divine interference, the fog cleared away and the sun shone brilliantly as the airplane touched down on the Gambell landing strip. As usual in the remote native villages of Alaska, the entire village population met the airplane

For the Guardsmen, the first order of business was parachuting. A number of the Gambell members of the 38th needed to make at least two jumps to keep their parachute proficiency current.

The parachutes were off-loaded from the airplane along with baggage and other cargo.

Jumpers donned their chutes in the shadow of the airplane's tail, and were checked by the jumpmaster, CPT Dell Husted, prior to reboarding the C-123.

The airplane turned, taxied to the end of the runway, and with a roar of engines, took off over the village, accompanied by the shouts of excited villagers.

A long, climbing turn, and the aircraft headed back toward the frozen lake surface adjacent to the village which had been selected as the drop zone.

Villagers on snowmobile, all-terrain vehicles and on foot lined the lake shore, awaiting the drop.

As the airplane passed over the lake at 1250 feet, the jumpers began to tumble from its rear ramp, looking much like puppets being jerked off by the string of their opening chutes.

As they landed, the people of Gambell rushed to help gather up chutes and jumpers, loading them aboard sleds for the short

trip back to the runway, where the aircraft was approaching for a landing. Only a matter of minutes, and the aircraft was approaching for a landing. Only a matter of minutes, and the aircraft was loaded again and airborne for the second drop.

Sea Mammal Hearings...

(Continued from page 1)

cold storage to preserve everything so that we learn from our forefathers.

"A pair of slippers would make a meal for a family. Welfare checks don't go very far."

Robert Willard, representing the Alaska Commission on Human Rights, reported that 10,000 Natives count on manufacture of arts and crafts products come from sea mammals. In addition, he said, over half the Native population receives some income from this source.

"We have survived to this day with an abundance of sea mammals," Frank Degnan, Eskimo leader from Unalakleet, said proudly.

"Out students on return from other parts of the world where this food is not in use, ask for it on arrival.

"Some Eskimos who live up here got educated and moved outside because they needed to improve their standard of living

capita with the settlement."

Testimony also came in to indicate Alaskan mammals are not as endangered as many scientists and television writers have lead people to believe.

"It looks like 2,000 to 3,000 seals come in on our ice," reported Martin Olson of Golivan. "They just like ducks out there sitting in a pond when you see heads come up out of the water."

John Burns and John Vania of the State Fish and Game Department reported the stella seal numbers of 300,000 and harbor seal population is 200,000 in spite of continued harvesting.

The sea otter population, according to their count, numbers 50,000 to 100,000 even though the state has harvested 2,463 and the Amchitka blast killed 1,000.

In addition, they claimed the bowhead whale nomulation num-

WHALE Open Letter...

(Continued from page 2)

late June or early July.

The well-financed, highly-organized conservation and environmental groups throughout the Nation have been carrying out, for several months now, an extensive campaign to ban ocean mammal hunting, including important and needed uses of by-products of the animals; therefore, once again, affecting adversely the traditional way of life and the culture of the First Americans. Though these organizations may have well meaning, they have failed to take into consideration the basic needs of our culture and have not sought advice on these bills from the first and natural conservationists — the Indians, Eskimos and Aleuts of Alaska.

No doubt, there is agreement that the present economy of the Native people is sparse, as compared to the rest of the Nation; thus making it hard to do effective lobbying activities which relate to

Huntington...

(Continued from page 1)

Cuba and that James Huntington was very definitely not a sky-jacker.

Hunter...