

'Tremendous Send-Off' For Isle Guardsmen

The Schofield Barracks-bound officers and men of the First Battalion, 299th Infantry, 29th Infantry Brigade, received a tremendous send-off at Kahului Airport Monday morning from families, relatives, and well-wishers in a crowd estimated at "well over 1,500 people."

With latest, unofficial reports indicating that the 299th will be stationed on Oahu for "at least three weeks of refresher" training, the National Guardsmen left Maui in what a ranking officer described as a "high state of morale."

The Guardsmen were activated for regular U. S. Army duty as of 7 a.m. Monday, in conjunction with President Johnson's April 11 announcement of their May 13 call-up.

Their commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel John D'Araujo, allayed "fears" of families, wives, and sweethearts by stating, in a brief address at the "Send-Off" program: "Your loved ones are in good hands. There is no finer group that the officers and men of the First Battalion."

Colonel D'Araujo, who arrived on Maui from the Big Island last December to take command of the battalion, praised the "warmth and friendliness" of Valley Islanders, and said the "spirit of cooperation which characterizes this community"

is really no ka oi.

The Chamber of Commerce, which coordinated the "Send-Off" program, was represented by President George Bogar, who called attention to "draft-card burnings" in noting: "I saw honest tears and smiles today. They are unusual because protests seem to be the rule."

He praised the Guardsmen for their "commitment" in assuring them: "Your jobs will be waiting for you when you get back. We need men like you on Maui. We know you'll be back soon. God speed and aloha."

County Chairman Elmer F. Cravalho spoke on behalf of the government. He said: "We deeply regret the necessity of having so many young people leaving us. We recognize the fact that they feel it is worth fighting and defending what is important to us."

He gave assurance that the County of Maui is "ready and willing to assist, in every way possible, those who remain" and expressed "a personal loss" in the call-up of Captain Shigeto (Mustard) Murayama, who, as County Treasurer, was "one of the more important people in the new program and direction we tried to bring to Maui County government in the last eight months."

He also said the Guard is

"being called on today, to demonstrate that there is something special and unique about the people who come from Maui County."

Father Andrew Putnam, of Kahului's Christ the King Church, offered the invocation on behalf of the Maui Council of Churches. He asked for Divine guidance and protection of "all soldiers of the National Guard and their families."

The Guardsmen were literally buried in leis when they left the crowded terminal to march out, in formation, to the waiting C-124 planes shortly after 10:15 a.m. The planes left Kahului after 11 a.m. for Oahu, each carrying about 125 men and officers, who were to be joined, at Schofield, by members of the advance party, who left Maui last week.

Webb Beggs, manager of the Chamber of Commerce, emceed the airport program, which featured entertainment by the Danny Kapoi and Buddy Fo groups, and martial music by

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OFFICER AND FAMILY — First Lieutenant Patrick Ulep's wife, four children and sister gave him a fitting "Send-Off" Monday, when he left Maui with the First Battalion, 299th Infantry, 29th Brigade.

Lieutenant Ulep is commanding officer of Headquarters and Headquarters Company. He is pictured with his wife, Paulette; daughters, Wendy, 5, Marcy, 6, and Kristie, six months; son, Marc, 1 1/2, and sister, Jane. —Photo by Charles C. Young.



GOOD LUCK! — Lieutenant Colonel John D'Araujo, commanding officer, First Battalion, 299th Infantry, 29th Brigade, received the best wishes and aloha of County Chairman Elmer F. Cravalho prior to his departure for Oahu with the National Guardsmen on Monday. In background is Webb Beggs, Jr., manager of the Chamber of Commerce, which coordinated the "Send-Off" program at Kahului Airport. —Photo by Charles C. Young.

Guard Sendoff

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the Baldwin High School band.

One of the departing Guardsmen was Private First Class Jimmy Funai, who played—for the last time, for the call-up duration—with the Buddy Fo group.

Interviews conducted by Radio Station KMVI's Dick Graham, during the live broadcast carried on Maui's Own station, indicated that the general feeling of the Guardsmen and families being separated was one of sadness, mixed with pride.

William Neilson, airports manager for the State Department of Transportation, praised the cooperation of U-drive

operators, and Aloha and Hawaiian air lines in making operation "Send-Off" a success.



PRESSMAN ON LEAVE — Private First Class Stephen L. Garcia is on military leave from Maui Publishing Company, where he is employed as a pressman. He is a member of the First Battalion, 299th Infantry, 29th Brigade, which was activated for Army service on Monday.

The soldier is pictured with his father, Antone, and mother, Emily, at the "Send-Off" program held at Kahului Airport. —Photo by Charles C. Young.