

CinClant on Deck

ATKA's crew joined the wintering-over Seabees at Hut Point February 15 as the biggest field day in Antarctic history took place. The word was out:

"Admiral Jerauld Wright, Commander in Chief of the Atlantic Fleet, is arriving tomorrow."

Admiral Wright's three-day visit followed a rapid pace. He inspected McMurdo Sound, the ships and surrounding area, surveyed Adare Station from the air, flew a drop mission over the pole (which was aborted by weather) and another which was successful, flew one to Byrd Station, looked over Little America V, then personally addressed men of each ship and base personnel gathered at McMurdo (aside to Admiral Dufek: "Where do you get such men?") He even took Sir Edmund Hillary along on a pole flight so that the noted New Zealand explorer could check the path he will take in his leg of the British Trans-Antarctic trek in late 1957.

By now the second tractor train which had left Little America January 28 had reached Byrd Station, unloaded, and was securing Little America again. The round trip was completed in 29 days.

ATKA led MARBULA out of McMurdo Sound February 24, then supported the fly-out of planes February 25. There was no pack ice in evidence, so NISSELEN had already sailed homeward after delivering her avgas at McMurdo.

The last Globemaster flew out of McMurdo February 25 leaving only the B4Ds, Otters, and helicopters on the ice until *Deep Freeze III*. The next visitor would be the *NORTHWIND*, her propeller replaced, which would arrive March 2 with fresh provisions, more food and fuel for the Ross Sea bases, then leave the 318-man wintering party for the long winter night ahead.

CENTRA, with Seabees embarked, arrived Port Lyttelton, New Zealand at 4 p.m. February 17. She stopped there two hours to discharge mail and men, then steamed for Wellington. There three-and-a-half hours, she sailed for Auckland, arriving February 20. Thus some 140 Seabees who'd spent the long night in Antarctica and waited 14 months for liberty, streamed into and out of two harbors before they could get a foot on land. Some say they made up the deficit in Auckland before sailing for Sydney, Australia, and six more days' liberty there.



ADMIRAL JERAULD WRIGHT AND CTF AT McMURDO.

