

Fisherman Disputed

Testimony presented by fisherman Alika Cooper at a recent public hearing, which was reported in the *Star-Bulletin* on May 5, stated that Hawaiian monk seals are endangered because of indiscriminate killing over the years by military personnel stationed in our Leeward Islands.

I wonder if Cooper can provide any evidence to support this serious accusation. Personally I doubt it.

Over the years I have made numerous visits to the small U.S. Coast Guard loran stations on French Frigate Shoals and Kure Atoll, as well as the naval facility on Midway. I have never heard of a monk seal being killed by military personnel, nor is there any mention of such an occurrence in the historical literature.

Unless his charge can be substantiated with facts, I feel that Cooper owes an apology to these men who have served their county with honor under isolated and difficult conditions.

George H. Balazs

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