

# FNA POTLATCH . . . A GREAT, BIG SUCCESS



**INVITATIONAL DANCE**—A mass of Eskimo dancers are happily dancing to the beat of Barrow drummers and chanters. Many white people, including Sen. Ted Stevens, joined in the dance. —JOHN METZGER Photo



**CHARMING POTLATCH SERVER**—Beautiful Mrs. Mary Jane Fate of Athabascan descent, is helping to serve food for over 2,000 FNA Potlatch customers. Mary Jane is Tundra Times board member. —JOHN METZGER Photo



**ESKIMO DANCE**—Eskimo dancer is warming up vigorously. He will later be joined by many dancers in the invitational dance. Drummers are from Barrow and Fairbanks. —IGOR-FLYNN Photo



**PONDERS SPEECH**—An elderly Indian lady listens to the microphone dressed in her costume. —JOHN METZGER Photo



**TOSSED HIGH**—A pretty Eskimo girl is performing on the nalukatuk (blanket toss). —JOHN METZGER Photo

## Superb Potlatch Where Friends Meet, Renew Acquaintances, Dance

By SUSAN TAYLOR  
Staff Writer

Saturday night . . . annual Potlatch . . . Lathrop High School cafeteria and gymnasium over 2,000 people slopping through a muddy parking lot to face a line that seemed to have no end . . . people from Fairbanks and rural villages all over Alaska . . . all waiting in line . . . young natives in mini skirts, older natives in the traditional dress of their people, Caucasian Alaskans . . .

For many, the waiting was a time for reunion, for a smile, a handshake, or warm hug for

friends not seen in a long time . . . finally, a stamp on the hand and the food was a little nearer.

Inside the cafeteria . . . more greetings and more friends . . . food donated by the village people . . . plates stacked with moose, caribou, muktuk, fish, beaver, reindeer and salmon along with potato salad, macaroni, ham, chicken and bread . . . village natives eating familiar foods . . . others taking that unforgettable first bite of muktuk and chewing, and chewing, and chewing.

An evening more rewarding to Caucasians when shared with an

Eskimo or Indian friend . . . and possibly vice versa . . . a lot to be taught and a lot to be learned . . . and a chance to do both.

Politicians mingling among the cafeteria crowd . . . knowing that the natives comprise about 30 per cent of the eligible voting population . . . wanting to win in August . . . shaking hands, waving, signing autographs, meeting friends of friends and smiling.

Like a big reunion or family dinner except for one thing: no small children running around.

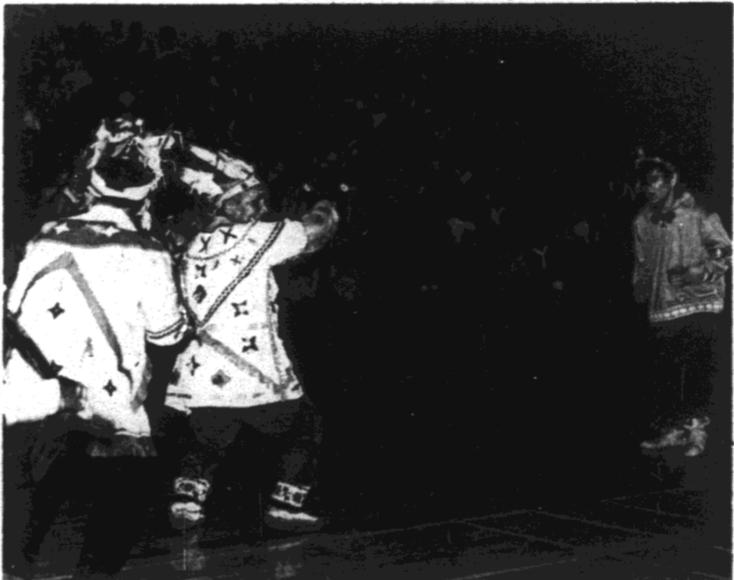
A cafeteria line that finally ended . . . enough food for all with a little left over . . . ticket sales reaching the \$8,000 mark . . . but not all was profit . . . bills for ham, chicken, plates.

Native dancers in the gym following dinner . . . young dancers from St. Mary's carrying on a tradition centuries old . . . colorful costumes . . . hands telling a story as no words ever could . . . drums that accompanied age-old chants . . . an older native who laid down his drum and stick to show the audience how it is really done . . . a swell of laughter and applause following his dance.

A large group . . . about 25 . . . young and old from Minto and Nenana . . . more chanting . . . more drum beats . . . modern themes in ancient dances . . . first the twist, then the sno-go dance.

Other dancers from Point Barrow.

An evening termed a complete success by one of the organizers, Mrs. Mary Jane Fate.



**MINTO DANCERS**—Ever popular Minto dancers are performing their colorful dances with modern touches as the Snow-go Dance. —IGOR-FLYNN Photo



**CLASSIC GESTURE**—Mrs. Olga Amaouak is Eskimo dancing to the beat of the drum of her husband, Oliver. —JOHN METZGER Photo