



Children attending the Cook Inlet Native Association annual Christmas party wait eagerly for the cutting of the Christmas cake which was decorated with a miniature Santa and reindeer. To find out if the-real Santa came, turn to pages 14 and 15.

PHOTO BY BILL HESS

Santa brings candy, toys,



Children at the CINA Christmas party gather excitedly around Santa Claus shortly after he entered the CINA Bingo Hall with a bag full of goodies.

By Bill Hess
Tundra Times

"No, no, I think that's just a story," a small black-haired boy of about nine said after swallowing the last piece of meat from a Kentucky-Fried

Chicken drumstick. "I don't really think there's a Santa Claus. Maybe he's just your dad!"

A younger lad, perhaps seven years old, sat next to him at one of the tables at the Cook

Inlet Native Association Bingo Hall in Anchorage, looking rather distressed. Elsewhere in the hall, hundreds of youngsters scurried about.

"Look! Look! See? Look!" the younger of the two sudden-

ly burst out as the main door flew open and a fat guy in red walked in, making the little bells on his belt jingle.

"See," the smaller one said again, "Santa Claus. And there's my dad!" he pointed

at a smiling man seated at the next table who obviously was not Santa Claus. "So there!"

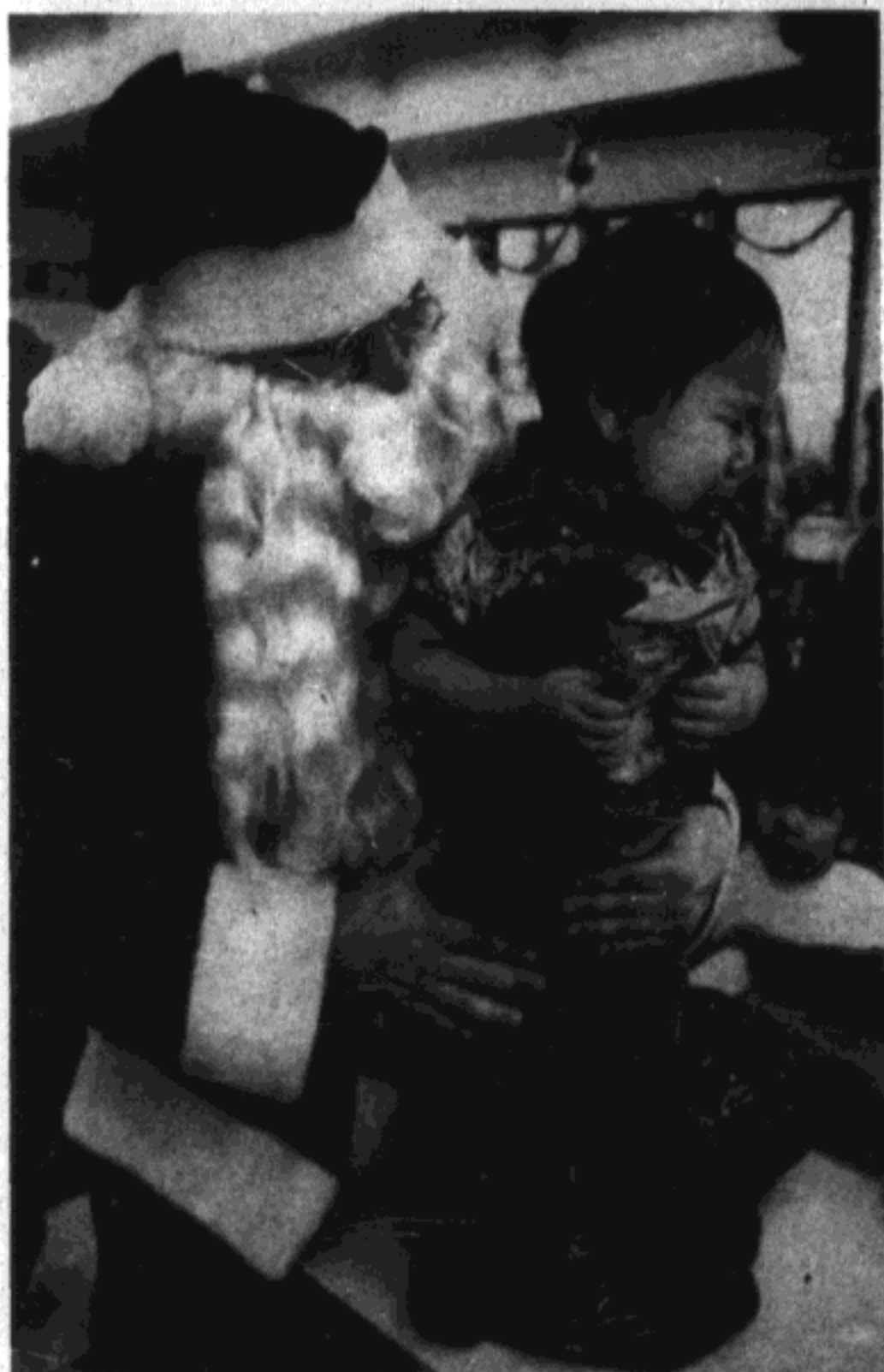
Yes, Santa had come once again to give out gifts to the many Native children who had gathered for the annual CINA Christmas party. May Stanley, who coordinated the party for CINA, said that more than 300 children were on the gift list this year.

"There are children from all over Alaska here," she said proudly. "There is no criteria before a child can be eligible. There is no income limitation. All it takes is for the children's families to call in and put their names on the list."

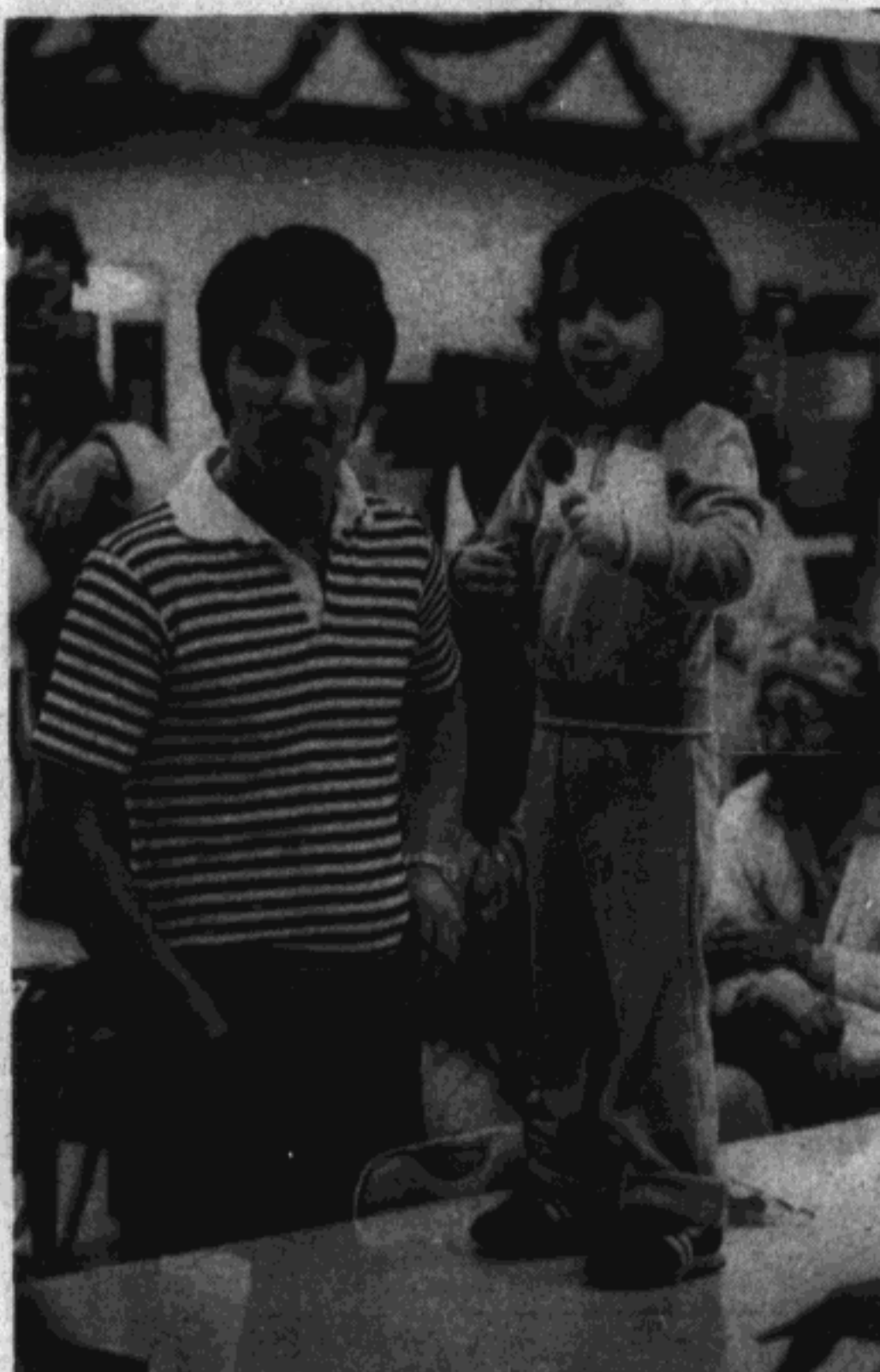
The children receive high-quality gifts, paid for out of CINA's bingo earnings. Children this year found themselves with such presents as model helicopters, teddy bears, "Nerf" basketballs, chess and checker sets, monopoly games, dolls and many other toys.

In addition, they all received stockings stuffed with small toys and games, plus candy. All this after a meal of Kentucky-Fried chicken, potatoe chips, Coca-cola and cake. Stanley estimated the final price-tag at between \$7,000 to \$8,000. Money is raised from the CINA Bingo Hall operations.

Jim Henderson, a local puppeteer, put on a free Christmas performance and some 25 parents and other interested people served as volunteers.

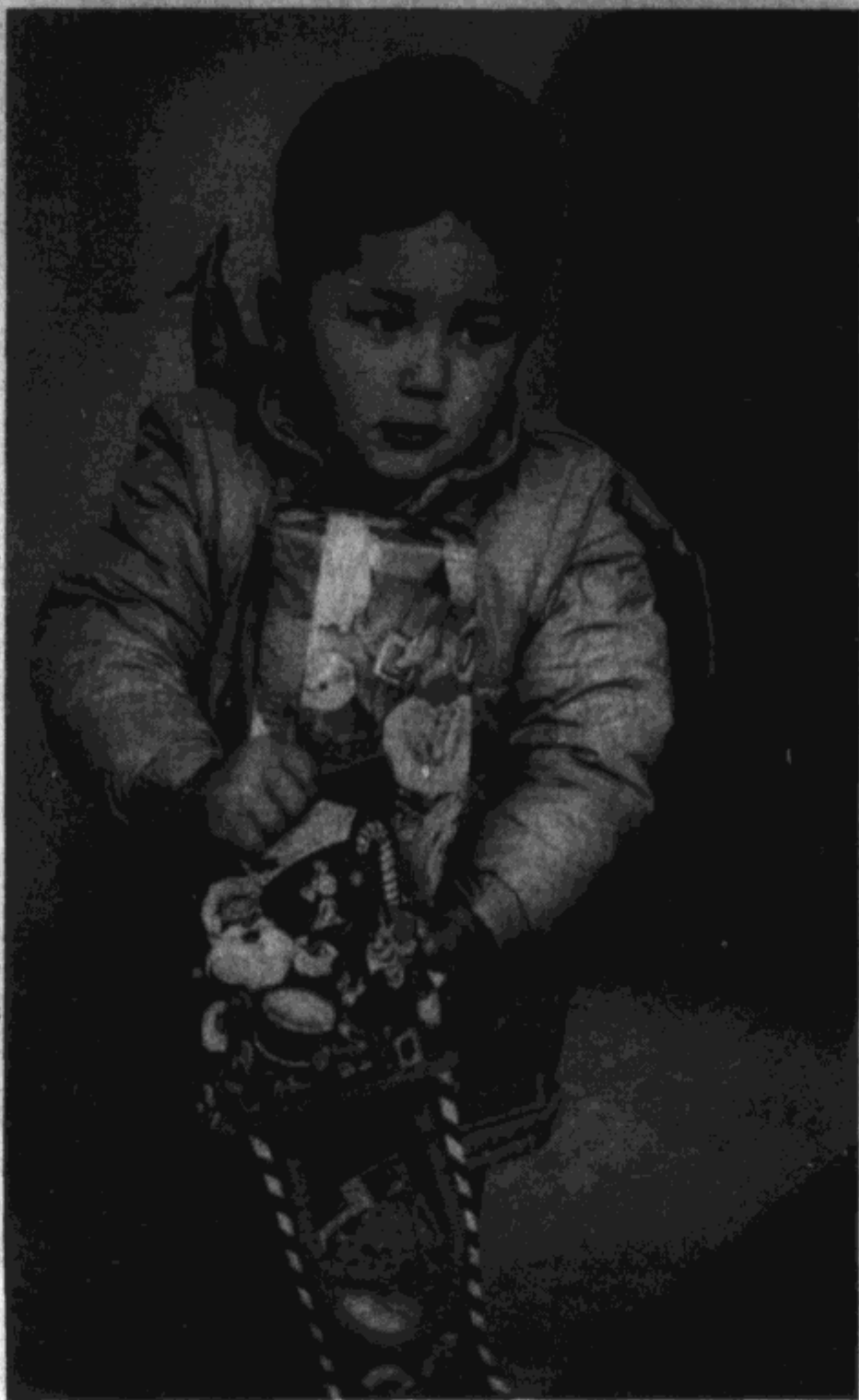


Not all the children were delighted to see the old man from the North Pole. Laney Moses found him rather terrifying.



The coming of Santa was an exciting event for both Nikole Tiedeman and her father, Bruce. Bruce is executive director of CINA.

joy to CINA youngsters



Two-and-a-half-year-old Sonny Hayes leaving with his take.



A group of youngsters waiting for their packages.



Matthew Kakfaelrea wonders about the use of an item he found in his stocking.

Photos by Bill Hess



During Jim Henderson's puppet show, one little girl gets the courage to give the dog a pat, and then is amazed at her own actions.