



POTLATCH

Every important event demands a lavish ceremony which is called a "potlatch," the equivalent of a banquet.

- 1) birth of a child to the elite
- 2) burial of a relative
- 3) building of a new house
- 4) erecting of a new totem pole

Large stores of food and gifts are accumulated in advance for such occasions. Great amounts of furs, blankets, baskets, food and many other gifts are given away by the host of the potlatch. No man becomes a leader or acquires rank without giving a potlatch. Acceptance of gifts at a potlatch involves an obligation to repay them with interest when the guest in turn gives a potlatch.

¹Peratrovich, Robert, Source Book on Alaska,
Department of Education, 1971 Page 31.