

The Festival: Living History

which for efficiency's sake would mold us all—our thoughts as well as our actions—to a new life where differences between groups would be smoothed out. Communications, education and international economics would gradually wipe out group differences.

In the United States we still recognize cultural diversity or pluralism. In the United Nations, nationalism is rampant. Nationalism is a political extension of the individual's yearning for the family, the clan, the tribe.

Is it any wonder that the persistent quest for identity surfaces in nationalist (*i.e.* tribal) strivings in India? Nagas prefer to keep themselves identifiable as Nagas. Persistent tribal patterns in Africa, religious patterns in Northern Ireland, nationalist actions in the Middle East all have a close correlation with the persistence of folk cultures and tribal or clan relations. I suspect that the continuing tensions in the Middle East would be placed in clearer perspective if they were understood to have strong folk roots far deeper than economics or even religion. Recent experience in the less developed parts of the world shows that fear of the iron fist can only temporarily still these folk strivings. International law and order, lacking even an iron fist, has failed to control international anarchy. Perhaps there is another way through understanding and accommodating the basic human fears of loss of identity, and the basic persistence of folkways. For these are urges so strong as to confound the planners, let alone the diplomats.

In view of the harmony and delight that our Folklife Festivals produce, are our museum experiences perhaps telling us something that we should hearken to in a larger theater?

S. Dillon Ripley
Secretary, Smithsonian Institution



In this year when we are preparing to celebrate our nation's Bicentennial in 1976 many of our efforts are being directed toward reviewing, interpreting and displaying the contributions made by all our peoples to the political, technological, cultural and social development of our country.

Throughout the nation appropriate activities will be staged in 1976 to commemorate the people and events that made our history. Obviously, not all Americans will be able to visit all these sites. However, millions of Americans will visit our nation's capital this year and next. The estimates on the number expected during the Bicentennial reach

as high as 35 million.

Those Americans fortunate enough to visit Washington this year will share in "the great national family reunion" represented in the ninth annual Festival of American Folklife. We in the National Park Service are proud to be a part of the Festival and believe it represents what the folk of America are all about . . . where they come from and their own unique contributions to our way of life. In a sense this Festival epitomizes the Bicentennial. We are pleased to be partners with the Smithsonian Institution in bringing to the Mall this collage of cultures.

In national parks throughout the United States Americans and foreign visitors can see re-creations of incidents and the folkways of early Americans. From our great western parks to those along our eastern shore, the dwellings and lifestyles of the earliest Native Americans and the "discoverers" of the new world are preserved or re-created. These living history lessons provide for Americans a deeper feeling for their land.

The 1975 Festival of American Folklife represents one of the biggest living history programs ever presented on one site. But it still will not surpass the Festival planned for 1976. The National Park Service is indeed delighted to be a sponsor of this year's program, looking forward to its culmination in the Bicentennial Festival next year.

Gary Everhardt
Director, National Park Service