

out the generous help of the Indian expedition on the normal route, which offered tents, oxygen, food and even medicine. Savov suffered frostbite and was evacuated from Base Camp. Valtchev healed in the Indian camps and Base Camp and suffered no serious consequences.

SVETOSLAV KOLEV, *Bulgarian Mountaineering Federation*

*Everest.* After the brilliant success in 1965, India waited 19 years to put a woman on top of Everest. A seasoned team during May climbed Everest by the traditional southeast ridge. On May 9, from Camp V at 27,800 feet, Phu Dorjee became the first Indian to reach the summit solo. On May 23 Miss Bachendri Pal, Dorjee Lhatoo, Sonam Palzor and Sherpa sirdar Ang Dorje made an ascent directly from the South Col in excellent time. (Lhatoo took under five hours.) Bachendri Pal was the first Indian woman and the fifth in the world to climb Everest. Ang Dorje was the second man to make the ascent twice without oxygen. We established Base Camp, Camps I, II, III and IV at 17,700, 20,000, 21,600, 24,000 and 26,200 feet on March 16 and 24 and April 9, 15 and 29 respectively. The potential of the team was greatly marred by continuous bad luck. At the beginning, an avalanche from the Lho La claimed the life of one Sherpa and injured six others. A kitchen boy died of pulmonary edema. A group, already poised at the South Col, had to come to the help of the Bulgarian summit pair of Ivan Valtchef and Metodi Savov, who on request had been permitted to come down the southeast ridge. An ice avalanche on the night of May 15 buried one of our strongest groups at Camp III and all save Bachendri Pal were injured. Out of our 40 Sherpas, only 12 reached the South Col. Of the climbers, 4 out of 7 women and 11 out of 13 men reached the South Col. The composition of the team was Lieutenant Colonel Prem Chand, deputy leader; Majors Kiran I. Kumar and Jai Bahaguna, N.D. Sherpa, Dorjee Lhatoo, Rattan Singh, Lopsang Tshering, Magan Bissa, Phu Dorjee, Sonam Palzor, Chandra Prabha Aitwal, Bachendri Pal, Rekha Sharma, Rita Gombu, Harshwanti Bisht, Sharawati Prabhu, Dr. Minoo Mehta, Dr. Meena Agarwal and I as leader.

D.K. KHULLAR, *Colonel, Principal, Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Darjeeling, India*

*First Sagarmatha Preservation Expedition.* The First Sagarmatha Preservation Expedition, a unique environmental project to remove the debris of previous mountaineering attempts on Everest, finished the second phase of its operation during the autumn climbing season of 1984. Nepal Mountaineering Police and Sherpa climbers joined forces with American volunteers to clean up after the more than 70 expeditions that had gone before them during the past 32 years. The project was conceived by Inspector Yogendra Thapa of the Nepal Police and Pemba Tsering Sherpa of Journeys International, a trekking agency in Kathmandu. They wanted to reverse the growing reputation of Everest as being the garbage pit of the Himalaya. The project was scheduled in two phases,

a spring campaign to clean up the Everest Base Camp area and an autumn campaign to clean up the Icefall and upper camp sites up to the South Col. Funding was provided for the spring phase by the Nepal Department of Tourism and for the autumn phase by the Earth Preservation Fund and private American donations. During the spring campaign in May 1984, 1200 loads of rubbish were removed from the upper part of the Khumbu Valley and the Base Camp site (one load approximates the size of a large household aluminum trash can). Virtually all of the trash came from foreign trekking and climbing groups and consisted of paper food wrappers, tin cans, plastic food containers, liquor bottles, empty film canisters, broken tent stakes, discarded clothing, and other assorted pieces of camping and climbing equipment. The autumn campaign began in August when an advance team from the Police arrived at Base Camp and forged a route through the Khumbu Icefall. The route which was also used by the Dutch, New Zealand, and Czechoslovakian expeditions was maintained by the Police with equipment supplied by those groups. The main team of climber-cleaners arrived at Base Camp in September and began the dangerous task of retrieving debris from the high wind-swept slopes and carrying it down through the Icefall. After cleaning the lower part of the Icefall, the Police team went up to Camp I just above the Icefall and worked its way up the Western Cwm towards the upper camp sites retrieving material from as high as Camp IV at the South Col. Everything collected was carried back by hand to Base Camp. From there Sherpa porters and yaks moved the debris to lower elevations where it was buried at Gorak Shep, a small summer yak herder village off the edge of the glacier. The more significant material such as aluminum ladders and oxygen cylinders was sent to Namche Bazar where it is to be housed in a small museum to be built at Sagarmatha (Everest) Park Headquarters. The autumn campaign collected over 600 loads, 150 loads coming from the Base Camp area and the rest from the Icefall and the upper camps. Unfortunately, the Police expedition ended in tragedy. Expedition Leader Yogendra Thapa and Ang Dorje Sherpa were killed as the result of a fall from the South Summit while searching for the body of Hannelore Schmatz, a German woman who perished while descending from a successful summit bid in October 1979.

RICHARD A. SALISBURY

*Nepal Police Everest "Clean-Up" Expedition.* This expedition (First Sagarmatha Preservation Expedition) was certainly a most controversial expedition and has caused much of a stir in Kathmandu. Looked at from different points of view, it was either (1) a blatant and irresponsible attempt to climb Everest without permission with fraudulently obtained large sums of money from foreigners (much of it unaccounted for) under the pretense of a clean-up operation or (2) an expression of deep concern for the sanctity of the high Himalayan peaks, a courageous attempt to rescue Sagarmatha from the mantle of defiling trash left there by uncaring foreign climbers and trekkers. The truth is somewhere between the two, perhaps exactly in the middle. The tragic end of the enterprise was a bold, foolhardy attempt to retrieve the situation to reach the