

to be surmounted before the site of Camp V was reached on June 20. The summit was attained on June 21 via easy snow slopes although there was one tricky pitch where belaying was welcome. Clouds prevented a good view from the summit. We took four days to return to Reni, including a very long day from Sarson Patal down the upper gorge to the Trisul Nala in monsoon weather. After returning to Joshimath we spent three days at an Indian army inquiry into the death of our liaison officer.

MICHAEL D. CLARKE

Ecological Impact on the Nanda Devi Area. It appears that many expeditions that enter the Garhwal leave the campsites, both on the march in and on the mountains, in a mess. There is no reason why a campsite on the march in should not be left clean. We burned a large quantity of litter and cans with Japanese and Czech labels on them. Burned cans soon rust away. Expeditions going to the Garhwal (and other places too!) should give real thought to the garbage and sanitation problems they cause by their presence. Large camp fires are causing destruction in many areas. The porters seem to be the main culprits. I was shocked at the number of trees that had been felled at Deodi since 1975. 1978 was apparently the first year that goats and sheep have entered the Sanctuary which is supposed to be a wild-life sanctuary. Having seen the damage done by sheep in the Valley of Flowers, I am apprehensive for the future of the Sanctuary. I hope that pressure can be brought to bear on this latter problem by the Indian authorities. Large expeditions should be discouraged since they are disruptive in terms of the number of porters required and in general impact on the area.

MICHAEL D. CLARKE

Nanda Devi, North Ridge Attempt. Our expedition comprised Vladimír Starcala, leader, Dr. Jan Charousek, Kamil Karafa, Ludek Záhoranský, Ceslav Wojcik, Bretislav Husicka, Petr Hapala, Jan Marek, Josef Zeitler, Josef Kývala, Leos Horka, Petr Gribek, Josef Kulhavý, Otokar Srovnal, Milan Martaus, Augustin Milata and me as climbing leader. Our arrival in India was delayed by the revolution in Afghanistan, where we lost four days, and then we lost ten days in customs. The approach march began on May 17 from the village of Reni. We faced heavy troubles with hiring porters because of other expeditions, there being only 28 available. We divided into several groups; the last one with 80 porters arrived on May 28 at Base Camp on the lake Haaj Kund in the center of the northern branch of the Nanda Devi Sanctuary. Because of a lack of fixed rope and the time delay, we finally decided on the north ridge of Nanda Devi. The access route was along the left edge of the triangular wall seen from Haaj Kund. The buttress starts with rotten black rock. In the middle, rotten rock is replaced by steep ice and firn.

Camp I was established at 18,000 feet on May 27. Three days later Camp II was pitched at 20,000 feet. Camp III was established on the top of the first peak (P 6600, 21,654 feet) where the two spurs of the north ridge join. This camp was separated from Camp II by a 60° ice slope, the most difficult section of the ascent. From P 6600 to P 6895 (22,621 feet) the route was not as difficult, here mostly firn and ice, but some easy rock. On June 7 Záharanský, Hapala and Husicka reached P 6895 followed the next day by Gribek and me. Another six members of the party got this high afterwards. We aimed at making Camp V under the north buttress of Nanda Devi. The next part of the north ridge was not simple. After a short descent from P 6895, a long sharp ridge of rocky towers partially covered by unstable snow made a serious obstacle. The rotten rock made fixing ropes difficult, but it had to be done, pitch by pitch. The last attempt to establish Camp V began on June 19. Srovnal, Kulhavý, Horka and I quickly reached Camp IV but were caught by a heavy snowstorm and wind. We dug a small snow cave and spent a bad night. The next day we continued. The fixed ropes were extended from the sharp rocky ridge up the next peak of the north ridge, but because of deep snow it became necessary to give up further climbing. The approach of the monsoon and the date of the arrival of the porters forced us to abandon the attempt.

VLASTIMIL ŠMÍDA, *Czechoslovak Central Sporting Organization,
North Moravian Section*

Nanda Devi, attempt from the north. The aim of our expedition was to make the first ascent of Nanda Devi's north face as a two-man team, climbing alpine-style, and to descend down the south face to a pre-placed camp. To be fully acclimatized for the rapid gain of altitude, we spent four weeks training in Ladakh before-hand. We suffered a long delay in Delhi, following the recent exposé about the CIA's placing a nuclear-powered bugging device on the mountain. The normally slow bureaucratic channels closed altogether and final permission was not forthcoming until the personal action of the Prime Minister and Home Secretary had been sought. We were obliged to take two liaison officers instead of the normal one, something of a burden upon the scant resources of two impetuous Englishmen. After two days of walking in what was one of the worst monsoon's in history, they turned back. The attempt on the face began on September 15 and involved seven days of upward progress. It snowed everyday. The climbing was often hard and always slow, due to deep powder snow. The bivouacs ranged from good to dismal. We reached 22,500 feet on the ridge* which commands the centre of the face,

* The leftmost of the three ridges as seen from Changabang or Kalanka.—
Editor.