

unique cultural experience of visiting eastern Europe which makes Czechoslovakia and East Germany so attractive. Tourist visas are far easier to get than one might think because eastern bloc countries are always eager to get the western currency that American tourists bring. Advance planning and letters to the embassies in Washington to get visa applications are all that is necessary.

MICHAEL WARBURTON

ASIA

Sikkim

Simvu Southeast, Sikkim. A 15-man team from the National Cadet Corps was led by Major Puskar Chand. They trekked from Gangtok with 30 porters. They had no high-altitude porters. They crossed the Theula Pass (17,100 feet), built a log bridge over the Lhonak Chu and set up Base Camp at 18,400 feet on May 20. Camp I was established on May 22. Camp II was set up on May 26 only 800 feet from the summit. On May 27 Chering Norbu, Khushal Singh and Cadet S.C. Pathak left Camp II and reached the virgin summit (22,289 feet) in six hours, through waist-deep powder snow on steep slopes.

KAMAL K. GUHA, *Himalayan Club*

Siniolchu, Sikkim. Eighteen members of a team from the Sonam Gyatso Mountaineering Institute of Gangtok climbed this peak (22,610 feet) in four groups from May 18 to 23.

KAMAL K. GUHA, *Himalayan Club*

Nepal

Kangchungtse (Makalu II). All members of an eight-man expedition climbed Kangchungtse's east ridge from the north col. Base Camp was established on September 8 and Camp IV at 24,475 feet on October 8. On October 9 a Swiss and an American reached the summit (25,066 feet), followed on the 12th by a Swiss and a Sherpa, on the 15th by the German leader Gerhard Lenser, a Swiss and five Sherpas, and on the 17th by two Swiss, a German and two Sherpas, one of whom had already reached the summit on the 12th.

MICHAEL J. CHENEY, *Himalayan Club*

Makalu, Polish Attempt, 1978. The Polish expedition, led by Janusz Kurczab, had difficulties at the Indian frontier and lost weeks with truck-engine trouble. Base Camp at 15,750 feet was not set up until September 27, 1978. After Camps I and II were established at 17,400 and 20,000

feet on September 28 and October 3, bad weather came with such heavy snowfall that Andrzej Młynarczyk was overwhelmed by an avalanche in Base Camp on October 6 and died. Camps III and IV were occupied at 23,000 and 24,275 feet on October 17 and 26, but violent storms prevented their going any higher. The doctor from the French Kangchungtse expedition saved the life of a Pole who had pulmonary edema at Camp I.

JÓZEF NYKA, *Editor, Tatarnik, Poland*

Jannu Attempt. A Czechoslovak expedition led by Ivan Galfy unsuccessfully attempted a new route on Jannu, the west ridge. They gave up the attempt on May 24. Details are lacking.

Mount Everest. Our expedition consisted of New Zealander Nick Banks, American Ray Genet, Swiss Hans von Känel, Germans Tilman Fischbach, Günter Kämpfe, Dr. Herman Warth, my wife Hannelore Schmatz and me as leader. We left Kathmandu on July 31 but stayed for some time at Khumjung and Periche since the latest government regulations do not allow Base Camp to be established till September. We set up Base Camp at 17,400 feet on August 31. We set up the following Camps: I at 19,350 feet above the Khumbu Icefall on September 4, II at 21,000 feet in the Western Cwm on September 7, III at 23,625 feet on the Lhotse Face on September 12 and IV at 26,200 feet on the South Col. The eight members and five Sherpas all reached the summit on October 1 and 2. We were the smallest successful expedition, the fastest (32 days), the first in which all members reached the summit and the first married couple. My wife was the fourth woman and first Western woman to get to the top. Dr. Warth, Sherpa Lhakpa Gyalzo, von Känel, Sherpa Pertemba and I left the South Col at six A.M. on October 1 in cloudy but still conditions. We got to the summit at two o'clock after some difficulties at the Hillary Step. We descended to the South Col at seven P.M. and descended the next day to Camp II. At five A.M. on October 2 Fischbach and Sherpa Ang Phurba set out on one rope, followed by Banks, Kämpfe and Genet on a second and Hannelore Schmatz, Sherpa Sundare and Ang Jangbo on a third. Shortly after leaving the South Col, Genet* elected to unrope and climbed alone despite protests from the party. The whole party traveled close together and in deteriorating weather reached the summit between 1:00 and 1:30 P.M. A very short time was spent on the top and the descent was begun in quite heavy snowfall and moderate wind. Genet again elected to travel alone behind the others. As the group descended, the snow and clouds decreased but the wind became very strong and the tem-

* Genet had fallen ill with flu in Kathmandu and had been hospitalized. It is doubtful that he had yet recovered his prodigious strength by this time.

—*Editor.*

perature dropped. Banks, Kämpfe, Ang Phurba and Fischbach looked back from the former site of the Ridge Camp at five P.M. and saw the others descending the steep section of the southeast ridge. At the base of the steep section Genet ran out of oxygen; he expressed a strong desire to bivouac and refused to descend. Sundare and Hannelore Schmatz stayed with him and Jangbo continued to descend to the South Col, arriving at 9:30. Because the snow was soft, no suitable shelter could be prepared and the night was spent in high winds and extreme cold at 8400 meters (27,560 feet). In the morning Genet was dead. Sundare and Hannelore began the descent. Very early in the morning of October 3 six Sherpas left Camp III with oxygen and supplies for a rescue. Nawang Tensing arrived at the South Col at 8:30 and with Fischbach began ascending towards the two descending persons, now visible. When they reached Sundare, he told them that Hannelore Schmatz had collapsed and died shortly before. Sundare was in critical condition and was evacuated with oxygen and medical care to Camp II and on the 5th to Base Camp.

GERHARD SCHMATZ, *Deutscher Alpenverein*

Lhotse. The world's fourth-highest peak, 27,923-foot Lhotse, was first climbed by Swiss in 1956 and then by Germans in 1977. Our Austrian expedition was the third to ascend this difficult 8000er. Led by Erich Vanis, we were Hans Ladreiter, Ivan Exnar, Rainer Göschl, Hanns Schell, Ruth Steinmann, Peter Schier, Bruno Klausbruckner, Dr. Wolfgang Schindler and I. The closing of the Iranian frontier forced us to send four tons of gear at great cost by air instead of by truck. We flew as far as Lukla but moved on slowly in order to acclimatize and did not get to Base Camp at 17,725 feet beside the Yugoslavian Everest expedition until March 27. We secured the Khumbu Icefall in a record five days. Camps I (19,850 feet) and II (21,825 feet) were soon in the Western Cwm. Then began a hard time for our 16 Sherpas moving supplies to Camp II. Meanwhile the sahibs fixed ropes up Lhotse's west slope to Camp III at 23,950 feet. Camp IV was set up and stocked by the Sherpas alone at 25,750 feet. By the beginning of May we were ready for the summit try. Klausbruckner, Schier, Exnar, Ladreiter and I on May 3 headed up from Camp III, testing our oxygen outfits. A drifted-over two-man tent stood at Camp IV. It was hard work to free it and to make a second tent platform. That night it blew so hard under a clear sky that we feared for the tents. Toward morning the others' tent ripped to shreds. Since a summit attempt in such an icy wind was unthinkable, Klausbruckner, Schier and Exnar descended to Camp II while Ladreiter and I endured a second and then a third night, the latter without oxygen in order to spare it. On the morning of May 5 the strong wind shifted from northwest to southwest. We prepared to descend but at nine o'clock the wind stopped. We decided

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Photo by Wolfgang Axt

**Khumbu Icefall with Everest (left)
and Lhotse.**



on a summit attempt. We were off at 10:30, each with two oxygen cylinders. On wind crust we made good progress up the steep slope, feeling fit despite the three nights in Camp IV. At 26,250 feet we reached the steep couloir that cuts through the summit cliffs and lies at about a 50° angle. This was not ice but firm snow. Halfway up, just before the crux, we each left an oxygen cylinder. Then the couloir narrowed and steepened; it was smooth rock and for 150 feet we had tricky rock climbing on crampons. About 150 feet below the summit I suddenly felt terribly weak and had to drive myself to go on. On the top I was horrified to find that my oxygen was all gone, the cause of my sudden weakness. Ladreiter's was also finished. It was five P.M. The weather was glorious except for clouds to the east. The descent was a struggle. The wind picked up and stung our faces like needles. Because of the steep angle and the lack of oxygen, we had to belay down the whole couloir. Night came on but we continued in the moonlight. Tears froze in our eyes. We estimated the temperature at -40°. Exhausted, we reached Camp IV at 1:30 A.M. In the tent we discovered we had frozen faces, hands and feet. The rest of the descent was a torture. After our arrival in Base Camp, the doctor decided on a helicopter evacuation. Ladreiter has lost several fingers on his right hand and six toes. I have lost all my toes. On May 10 a second pair, Klausbruckner and Exnar, reached the summit.

WOLFGANG AXT, *Österreichischer Alpenverein*

Lhotse, Polish Ascent. An expedition from Gliwice was the fourth to climb Lhotse (27,923 feet), following the original route and establishing the regular number of high camps. Three parties got to the top, including one oxygenless one, Andrzej Czok and Jerzy Kukuczka, on October 4. On the same day the peak was also climbed by Zygmunt Andrzej Heinrich and Janusz Skorek. Five days later, on October 9, the summit was reached by Janusz Baranek, the leader Adam Bilczewski, Stanislaw Cholewa and Robert Niklas. The latter is a West German who has lived in the Polish Tatra Mountains.

MAREK BRNIAK, *Klub Wysokogórski, Kraków, Poland*

Kusum Kangguru and Nuptse. A plan emerged to climb several peaks that would not only offer interesting climbing but would also enable the members to acclimatize sufficiently to tackle Everest in alpine style. Georges Bettembourg (French), Michael Covington (American) and I (British) planned to climb Kusum Kangguru, whilst Alan Rouse and Brian Hall were busy on the British Kangtega Expedition. All five climbers arranged to meet up at Everest Base Camp around October 10 to 15

to try the west ridge of Mount Everest in alpine style. This plan did not quite work out—although some of it did. After a three-day walk from Lukla, Base Camp was established for Kusum Kangguru on grass at the snout of the Kyasha Glacier. Bettembourg, Covington and I then began to climb the north buttress of Kusum Kangguru. We reached the north summit on September 16 after three days of mixed climbing over the rock and snow of the 3000-foot buttress. We continued on but did not climb the final twenty feet owing to the delicate nature of the cornices laden with fresh monsoon snow. Although this was the first ascent of the mountain, several expeditions had launched themselves at this route. Wherever the snow cover was thin, Japanese fixed rope was in evidence, usually attached to drilled anchors. This rope detracted from the enjoyment of a superb alpine climb. We descended the same route and moved around to Khumjung and eventually reached the Everest Base Camp towards the end of September. Our object was to climb the north face of Nuptse directly to the main summit without Sherpa support and in alpine style. This would be a new route and the second ascent of Nuptse. We had moved in this direction in 1977, but unfortunately, after the royalty had been paid, I broke both ankles and Paul Braithwaite smashed his thigh, both on The Ogre. With only one good leg between us, we withdrew. In 1978 Covington, Joe Tasker and I attempted the north face, but were beaten back by nine feet of snow in one storm and six in another. The German Everest and Polish Lhotse expeditions were well advanced in their respective climbs. We easily climbed the Khumbu Icefall with the help of ladders fixed by the Germans and went on to establish Camp II in the Western Cwm and to check snow conditions on Nuptse and also on the south buttress of Everest. Just as the reconnaissance was complete, two members of the German expedition died from exposure above the South Col. Covington, who was out of action from a severe intestinal infection, volunteered to accompany the American wife and child of Ray Genet down from Base Camp to the Syanboche airstrip. Bettembourg and I, meanwhile, went up to the Lho La in order to inspect the west ridge of Everest and to view the north buttress of Nuptse from the side. With the help of 300 feet of Yugoslav ladders already in place, the "pass" was reached in six hours from Base Camp. The west ridge was in reasonable condition considering it was just into the post-monsoon period. Interesting views of the north ridge and tantalizing glimpses down the Rongbuk Glacier made this a worthwhile visit, although rockfall made it a dangerous one. Brian Hall and Alan Rouse arrived from Kangtega on October 7 and the next day went up to Camp II in the Western Cwm to acclimatize. Covington saw the bereaved wife off to Kathmandu and then remained in Namche Bazar to marry Chumjee Sherpani. The Sherpa marriage ceremony was completed by mid-October, after several colourful days and after copious amounts of chang had been drunk. On October 14, Rouse,



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Photo by Doug Scott

REUTERS' North Face seen from Everest's Southwest Face, taken in 1975, showing Dougal Haston at 24,000 feet above the Yellow Band. Camp II (22,000 feet) and bivouac sites are marked at 23,500 and 24,750 feet.

Hall, Bettembourg and I left Base Camp for Camp II. By this time the Germans and Poles had withdrawn. The top of the icefall was already breaking up and was, in fact, quite dangerous. Camp II was reached by late afternoon and the next day tents and supplies were reorganized to withstand the strong winds howling down the Cwm. Food boxes from the German expedition were a welcome reserve to the twelve days of food we had carried up. On October 15 Rouse, Bettembourg and I reconnoitred a route through the icefall at the foot of the north face. We left a total of 250 feet of rope hanging down five short cliffs which had been climbed with pegs. On October 16 all four set off through the icefall and on up to the base of the prominent snow-and-ice spur, an obvious feature of the north face. There we dug a snow cave into the bergschrund at 23,500 feet. The next day we climbed 1000 feet with the climbing gear and left two climbing ropes fixed for the night. On the 18th we left the comfortable snow cave and set off, carrying three days' food. By late afternoon we had reached the top of the spur and after another 1000 feet of climbing, we found a terrace of snow suitable for another snow cave at 24,750 feet. On the 19th, after climbing steep snow arêtes, we reached the summit (25,850 feet) at 2:30 P.M. All the country to the west and south was now visible, with incredible views of Gaurishankar, Kangtega and many other fine peaks. The actual summit this year consisted of a huge "whipped cream roll" of a cornice. As it seemed in danger of collapsing, it was not ascended, but we could see Makalu behind. We descended in violent winds to the top snow cave, which had partly filled with wind-blown snow. Precipitation in the night gave concern for the descent. Luckily, there was not enough snow to avalanche and we reached Camp II safely at three P.M. Early on October 20 we descended the Cwm into the icefall. This was in complete chaos with giant chasms where none had been before. Leaning séracs had to be climbed with ice pegs and snow stakes, whilst we made several abseils down rickety flakes of ice. The central "eggshell" section was also broken about. It took from early morning until evening to negotiate. We finally staggered into Base Camp, which we found full of tourists. After a few days recovering from the Nuptse climb we turned our attention to Everest. The weather was now clear but very cold. We were reminded of the cold winds at the end of the Nuptse climb, when Brian had three fingers frost-bitten. The mist and snow blowing off the west shoulder of Everest indicated that westerly winter winds were now blowing from Tibet. We all felt it was too late for an alpine-style climb of the west ridge.

DOUGLAS SCOTT, *Alpine Climbing Group*

Kusum Kangguru, South Face. Takeshi Kanazawa, leader, Hideaki Naoi, Hajime Uematsu, Masanori Miyano and Tomooh Toyoda of the

Japanese Workers Alpine Federation climbed Kusum Kangguru (20,895 feet) by its south face. Base Camp was established at 14,300 feet on October 9. They slept in a snow cave carved into a bergschrund at 17,725 feet on October 20, bivouacked the next night on the ridge at 20,350 feet and reached the summit on the 22nd. The summit reached was the northernmost one. They said it was difficult to decide whether this or two other summits along the ridge to the south was the highest.

Thamserku, Southwest Face. The expedition was composed of Takeshi Kimura, leader, Satoshi Kimura, Sakae Hosogai, Takashi Kamo, Yasuhiko Hayashi, Hideaki Goto, Takashi Hayakawa, Yuji Mizutani and Kozo Narakai. They placed Base Camp at 14,750 feet on March 20 and Advanced Base Camp at 17,400 feet on March 22. They climbed a ridge on the face to the west col and thence up the west ridge. Camp I was pitched on April 6 at 19,000 feet. The route from Camp I to Camp II was difficult and ropes were fixed on the steep ice. Camp II was placed at 20,675 feet just below the col on April 16. The first two summit attempts from there failed. The route was then prepared along the corniced and gendarmed west ridge, which was much more difficult than anticipated. Camp III was placed on the ridge at 21,000 feet. On April 27 S. Kimura and Hosogai climbed 15 rock and mixed pitches (UIAA Grade IV) to reach the jagged central peak, which was less than 100 feet lower than the summit. They bivouacked there before continuing on to the summit (21,680 feet) on April 28. An article with photos and diagrams appears in *Iwa To Yuki* N° 70.

Thamserku, North Face Attempt. A Sangaku Doshikai expedition was made up of Shomi Suzuki, leader, Katsuhuki Masunaga, Koji Okano, Noboru Okada and Dr. Toshitaka Sakano. Base Camp was established at 12,800 feet on April 2 and Advanced Base Camp at 16,000 feet on April 10. The steep north face reminded them of the Grandes Jorasses. They fixed ropes on the central buttress for ten days up to 18,700 feet, where on April 21 all five occupied a snow cave bivouac. They worked upwards alpine style, bivouacking at 19,350 and 20,000 feet though it was difficult to find sites on the very steep ice and snow. They then traversed right on steep ice at 20,675 feet. On April 27 Okada fell ill and the doctor thought it dangerous to continue. They descended with still 1000 feet left to climb. A full report, photos and diagrams appear in *Iwa To Yuki* N° 70.

Kangtega from the North. A second Sangaku Doshisha expedition, composed of Kazuo Yuda, leader, Makoto Ishibashi, Yoshiyasu Hondo, Koichi Takeuchi and Dr. Hiroshi Maruyama, climbed a new north-face route on Kangtega from the Hinku Nup Glacier. After setting up Base Camp at 16,000 feet on April 5, they soon moved it to 17,400 feet. Camp I was established on the glacier at 18,375 feet on April 12. Yuda and

Takeuchi started up the steep ice-and-rock face which led directly to the col between Kangtega I and II but gave it up after only three pitches because of avalanche danger. They moved north to a very steep 2300-foot couloir ($60^{\circ}+$) which led to the col between Kangtega II and III. It took three days to climb and fix ropes in the couloir. On April 21 Yuda, Hondo, Ishibashi and Tekeuchi set out from a bivouac at 21,000 feet for the summit, slabbing west of the peak of Kangtega II. The latter two moved ahead and reached the summit (22,340 feet) at 2:10 P.M. and descended to bivouac at 21,325 feet. They did not yet know that the first two had fallen 125 feet into a crevasse at 21,000 feet. Yuka broke an ankle and the middle finger of his right hand. Hondo fell on him and was not injured and so climbed out and returned to the bivouac site. The next morning the three returned to the crevasse but could not extricate Yuda. Ishibashi descended into the crevasse to supply Yuda with food and fuel and to stay with him. Takeuchi with a frostbitten leg and Hondo shocked by his fall returned to Base Camp. On the morning of the 23rd Ishibashi wondered if help could be brought and climbed out of the crevasse. Yuda jūmared out, taking three-and-a-half hours since he could use only his left hand. When he emerged, he had been in the crevasse for 52 hours. On the evening of April 26 Dr. Maruyama and Sherpas reached them. They finished the evacuation to Base Camp on April 28. A full account, photographs and diagrams are found in *Iwa To Yuki* N° 70.

Kangtega Attempt. This British expedition was made up of Rab Crington, Alan Rouse and Brian Hall. They attempted to climb Kangtega (22,340 feet) by the northwest ridge, up a short icefall to a rock buttress leading to a long summit ridge. On the first attempt on September 25 they bivouacked at 20,000 feet but bad weather and snowfall forced them back. A second attempt started on the 29th but again bad weather forced them to return to Base Camp. Since Rouse and Hall were to join Doug Scott on Nuptse, they made no further attempts.

MICHAEL J. CHENEY, *Himalayan Club*

Ama Dablam, North Ridge. On October 21 Francis Chaud, Yvan Estienne, Jean-François Magnificat, Raymond Renaud, Marc Salomez, Bruno Solemieux and I reached the summit of Ama Dablam by the north ridge. On the 22nd it was the turn of Bernard Charbonnel, Gérard Estienne and Jean-Marie Flandin. On October 23 Claude Belli, Michel Drapier, Daniel Colot and Daniel Bovero went to the top. While we were leaving Base Camp on the 25th we learned that Peter Hillary's expedition on the south-east face had suffered a death and given up. Our north ridge was extremely delicate and difficult with enormous overhanging cornices which we could not avoid. Moreover the soft snow was of bad quality, except for the final 1000 feet, and rendered progress dangerous. We were on the

mountain for twenty days and placed Camps I, II and III at 18,875, 19,700 and 20,825 feet. We saw vestiges of the campsites at 18,875 and 19,700 feet, of the 1959 English expedition on which Fraser and Harris perished. The unsettled weather turned good during the last week. It was a lovely climb, airy, sustained, almost entirely on ice except for a few vertical rock walls.

LOUIS AUDOUBERT, *Club Alpin Français*

Ama Dablam, West Face Attempt. Our expedition, consisting of Merv English, Geoff Cribites, Ken Hyslop and me as leader, was attempting a direct line on the west (Mingbo) face of Ama Dablam. We climbed up the right side of the great central gully below the right-hand ice bulge on which the American expedition in the spring of 1979 had its Camp III. This involved continuous water-ice with some steep bulges. We bivouacked a short distance below the ice bulge on a steep ice arête. The following day, October 24, we climbed steep water-ice for two pitches and then up a rock step to easier ground adjacent to the left ice cliff. Just before exiting left onto the top of this ice cliff at 21,000 feet to spend the second night, a large ice avalanche came off the central "dablam" ice cliff, directly under the summit. Armchair-sized blocks of green ice came screaming down at us. Ken Hyslop was killed; I suffered a broken arm, finger, rib and ankle and the other two were badly bruised and shocked. Two days of arduous descent rappels brought us to the lower slopes of the face. Here we were kindly helped by Reinhold Messner and Dr. Oswald Ölz, members of the Austrian Ama Dablam expedition, led by Wolfgang Nairz, to descend the remaining distance to our advanced camp at the bottom of the face at 17,500 feet.

PETER HILLARY, *New Zealand Alpine Club*

Numbur. A joint Nepalese-Swiss expedition was co-led by Jacques Bouvier and Rinze Pasang Lama. There were seven Swiss and four Nepalese trying the 1963 Japanese route on the southwest ridge. They failed at 22,000 feet on May 21, having climbed from Camp II at 20,500 feet. The mountain is 22,815 feet high.

MICHAEL J. CHENEY, *Himalayan Club*

Numbur Attempt. Five Norwegians, led by Arne Naess, attempted to climb Numbur (22,815 feet) by its southwest ridge. The expedition was delayed when Aeroflot took over three weeks to fly their equipment from Oslo to Kathmandu. All members got to 19,850 feet on October 29 but they gave up due to dangerous snow conditions, avalanche danger and bad weather.

MICHAEL J. CHENEY, *Himalayan Club*