

## INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

GSA-23

India: Ladakh, Strategic scenery-I.

25A Nizamuddin West

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 366 Madison Avenue  
 New York, New York

Dear Dick,

If you take the Grand Canyon, raise the floor and tilt it so that it runs upward from 10,000 feet above sea level to 14,000 feet, put a dish of gravelly sloping plains at either end, parallel it with another river system, run a few side gorges into it, and surround everything with a jumble of barren and snow-covered peaks reaching up to 25,000 feet, then you will have created something like Ladakh, where Indian and Chinese armies face each other in as beautiful and strategic but otherwise useless a piece of scenery as can be imagined. Thanks to the Indian Army, I spent a few days there in late May.

Nehru's description of the Aksai Chin—the northeastern corner of Ladakh now held by the Chinese—as a place where not a blade of grass grows could be applied with few exceptions to all of Ladakh. Flying there makes the barrenness especially apparent. We left Pathankot in the northwest corner of the Punjab just after dawn, snarling into the air in a once-American C-119 with the relatively light load that this plane must carry at high altitudes. After skimming the Banihal Pass, we crossed the lower tip of the Vale of Kashmir and flew over Pahalgam, where Nancy and the kids tented last summer. In the Vale silver snakes curled through the young, green-gold rice, and the hills above Pahalgam were green with grass and spired with pines and spruces. The lushness led upward to the snows that nourished it, and suddenly the world changed. Glaciers and snow couloirs curved under us and jagged rocks and wind-sharpened cornices slipped by our wing-tips. We flew through valleys and over ridges at between 17,500 and 20,000 feet altitude, the mountains beside us rising to 21,000 feet. To our right Nunkun, with three peaks like Matterhorns, reached 23,000. To our left, in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, stood Nanga Parbat, a massive white wall more than 26,000 feet high, tame in the gilding sun and not at all the mountain of spectacular climbing accidents and more than a dozen dead mountaineers.

Under us now and a bit to our left was the Zoji La (12,600 feet—La means pass), where the road from Srinagar crosses from the Vale into Ladakh and the valley of the Dras River. As the road wound down this valley I noticed that trees didn't begin again with the decreasing altitude. Nor did the grass. The country was barren: rocks, gravel, sand, and snow. Except for wedges of green—young barley and a few willows and poplars—where a valley widened or a side valley entered a main valley, there was no vegetation anywhere, nor is there until hundreds of miles eastwards into Tibet. Yet this world was not colorless; the sand was gray

and brown, the rocks were mauve and purple, rust-colored and golden brown. Sometimes a faint green like verdegriis made stony slopes look grassy. The streams flashed bright, ran gray and shallow over boulders, and in places were deep enough to be blue. And under the deep blue sky but above everything else extended the crested sea of peaks and the snow, shining and clean and peaceful—but no place to crash. I puffed occasionally on my oxygen bottle (the plane wasn't pressurized) and feasted my eyes.

The plane followed the road down the Dras valley, left it for a bit near Kargil, and turned due east to rejoin the road as it hairpinned up the Fatu La (13,300 feet). Near Chalatse we came into the Indus Valley. The river flowed toward us from its source in Tibet and descended behind us—through Baltistan, Gilgit, Kohistan, and other areas storied with battles between British officers and wild tribesmen—to Pakistan and to the sea near Karachi. Soon we were over a saucer with a landing-strip where the cup would be. The plane made a horseshoe turn around a rocky hill and swooped onto the tarmac, braking hard and reversing propellor pitch against the downward incline of the runway. We disembarked—a dozen soldiers, Michael Brecher of McGill University, Steven Harper of the Daily Express, London, myself, and our guide, Major Sharma of the Army Information Office—into the cold air of 11,000 feet. A Brigadier of artillery greeted us and drove us in a Nissan (Japanese jeep now manufactured in India) to the transit officers mess above the airfield. As we left the landing strip, the first of the C-119's was heading back for Pathankot for another load and the last of our sortie came in to land.

We were at one of the great crossroads of Asia. Not just Leh alone, but all of Ladakh, has been a strategic area for hundreds of years. The Chinese, more practical students of history and of power politics than the Indians, knew this and acted on it to their profit. The Indians ignored it to their loss. Lakakh, like all kingdoms petty and not so petty up to modern times, expanded and contracted with the fortunes of the ruler and the strength of his neighbors. Traditionally, Ladakh has been the area of about 50,000 square miles bounded on the South and South-west by the Zaskar Range up to the Zoji La, from there roughly northeastward to where the Shyok River joins the Indus, and from there across the Karakorum Range to the Karakorum Pass. The border of Ladakh here becomes an international frontier and runs—leaving aside the changes made by the Chinese—generally eastward and southward around the Aksai Chin or Soda plains, turning the corner at about 80 degrees east longitude. It then continues southward and gradually southwestwards to the Indus just below Demchok, and finally westward and a bit northward back to the Zaskar Range. (See Map 1.)

This mountainous desert was a cockpit of imperial rivalries and a crossroads of cultural and commercial traffic as early as the Tang era of China (618-907), when the Chinese government and a powerful line of Tibetan kings competed on and off for three hundred years to control the passes between Tibet and Turkestan (modern Sinkiang). During these years robed monks telling their beads were carrying Buddhism from India to China through Kashmir, Baltistan, the Karakorum Pass, and Turkestan. And from the middle of this period onward, the new faith of Islam, brought by the Arabs, added another ingredient to the politics of the roof of Asia.

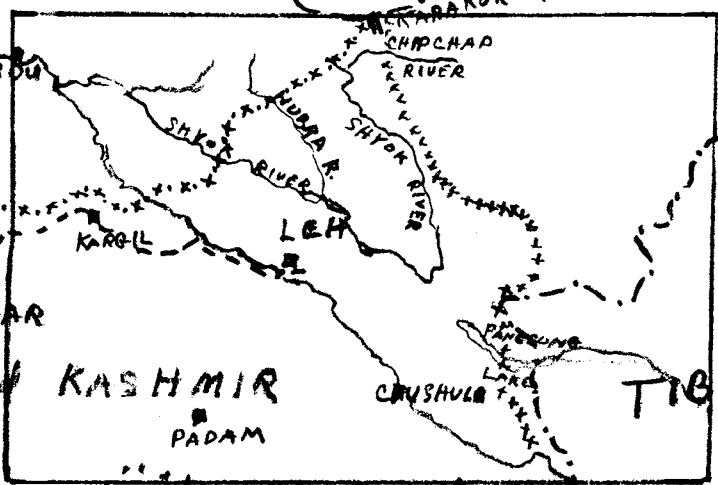
RUSSIA

# SINKIANG KHOTAN

AFGHANISTAN

PAMIRS

INDUS RIVER  
 SHARDA RIVER  
 KAROL  
 SRINAGAR  
 JAMMU and KASHMIR  
 RAWALPINDI



PAKISTAN

JAMMU  
 SIALKOT  
 PATHANKOT  
 LAHORE  
 AMRITSAR

BARA LACHA PASS  
 ROHTANG PASS  
 MANALI

SHIPKI LA

DEBCHOK

# INDIA

CHANDIGARH

DELHI

## MAP I

SCALE : 64 MILES PER INCH

- ROAD
- .-.- INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
- xxxxx CHINESE CONTROL LINE
- xixixix INDIA - PAKISTAN CEASE-FIRE LINE

□ APPROXIMATE AREA, MAP II

TRACED FROM BARTHOLOMEW'S INDIA PAKISTAN SEVLON, 1961. BOUNDARIES and OTHER DETAILS MARKED BY BROWN

During the years from the early tenth century to the early fifteenth, Ladakh became culturally Tibetanized, although it always maintained strong commercial relations with Kashmir. First part of the domain of a king in Western Tibet, it became independent during the eleventh century and remained independent or more or less autonomous until the 1840's. From time to time it was briefly conquered or paid nominal tribute to a suzerain.

Conquerers came to Ladakh, and retreated, and caravaners led their horses and yaks over routes that are no less important today. A Khan of Kashgar led his army to Ladakh over the Karakorum Pass and ultimately fled over the Pamirs. Aurangzeb sent an army over the Zoji La to drive out the Tibetan army of the Fifth Dalai Lama that had invaded from Rudok down the Indus to beyond Leh. The Mogul army won the campaign, thus protecting the flank of Kashmir. Early in the 1700's a Mongol army from Turkestan conquered Western Tibet, its invasion route a harbinger of modern times: over the Qara Tagh Pass, through the Qara Qash basin, into the Chang Chenmo Valley, and across the Lanak La into Tibet--an area in which the Chinese since 1955 have built two roads across Indian territory to link Sinkiang with Tibet. (See Map 2.) Caravans of tea and other goods entered Ladakh from Srinagar over the Zoji La or from the Punjab via Manali and the Rohtang and Bara Lacha Passes. From the North and East, bearing salt and wool, caravans came over the Karakorum Pass, the Lanak La, and by Pangong Lake. They converged on Leh and Tankse, the major outfitting and trading centers, where they bartered for each other's goods, reloaded their animals and headed for home. British travellers of the late nineteenth century write of the hundreds of yak and pony skeletons and that of the occasional man that they saw when crossing the major passes, caravans caught in a sudden blizzard. And commerce produced a new group of people at Leh, Arguns, or children of marriages between Turki traders and Ladakhi women. Throughout this long period Ladakh maintained effective autonomy, "owing nominal political allegiance to Kashmir and enjoying commercial and religious relations with Tibet". (Fisher, Rose, and Huttenback, Himalayan Battleground - Sino-Indian Rivalry in Ladakh.)

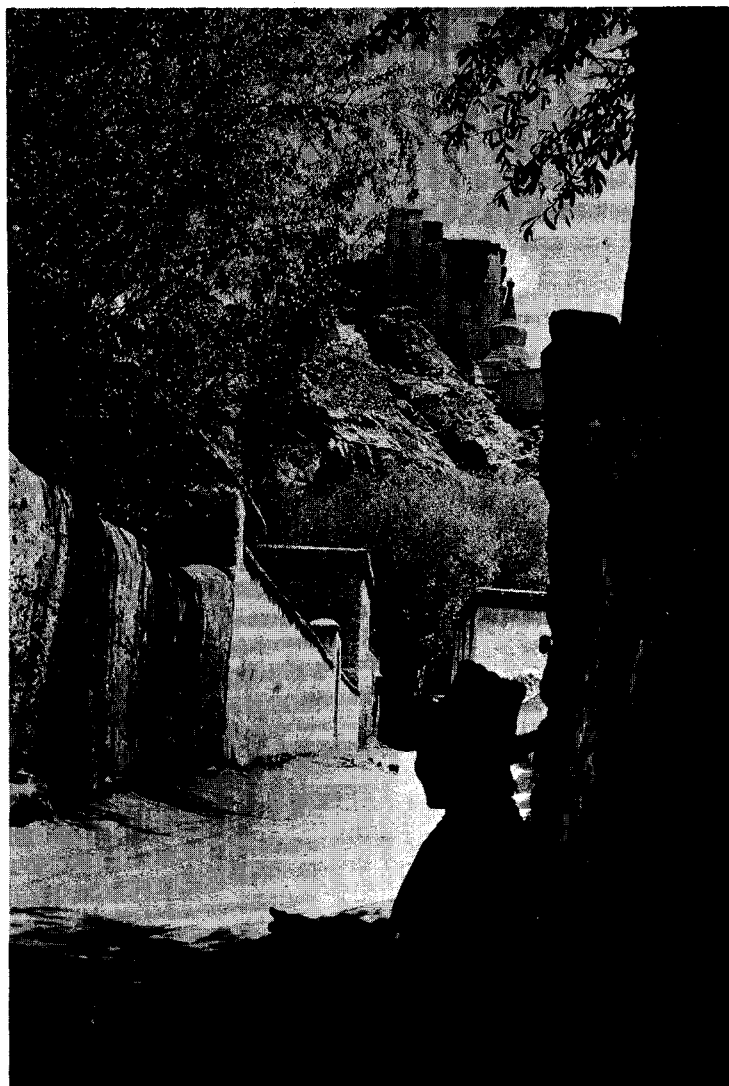
Ladakh's strategic position again became a prominent factor in politics in the mid-nineteenth century. The Dogra rulers of Jammu, feudatories of the Sikh Kingdom of Ranjit Singh, decided to conquer the area so that they could control the wool traffic into India and Srinagar and outflank Kashmir, which they also intended to take as soon as Sikh power weakened sufficiently. This it did, and by 1846 Gulab Singh, with British aid, became the ruler of Jammu and Kashmir. The family remained in power until the last Maharaja acceded to India in 1947, and the Maharaja's son, Karan Singh, is Governor of Kashmir today. But the British had interests of their own in Ladakh. Because they wanted the wool trade for themselves, they sent missions to negotiate the safe passage of caravans. Because they wanted friendly relations with China and Tibet, they sent a mission to define Ladakh's eastern frontiers--and the lines the mission drew from the Lanak La southwards were recognized as the international boundary until the present Chinese government challenged them. And as the territories of the British, Chinese, and Russian empires drew closer to each other in the late 1900's, British interest in Ladakh increased. These were the days of the 'Great Game', of local potentates leading insurrections against the Chinese in Turkestan, of British help to the Chinese (whom they

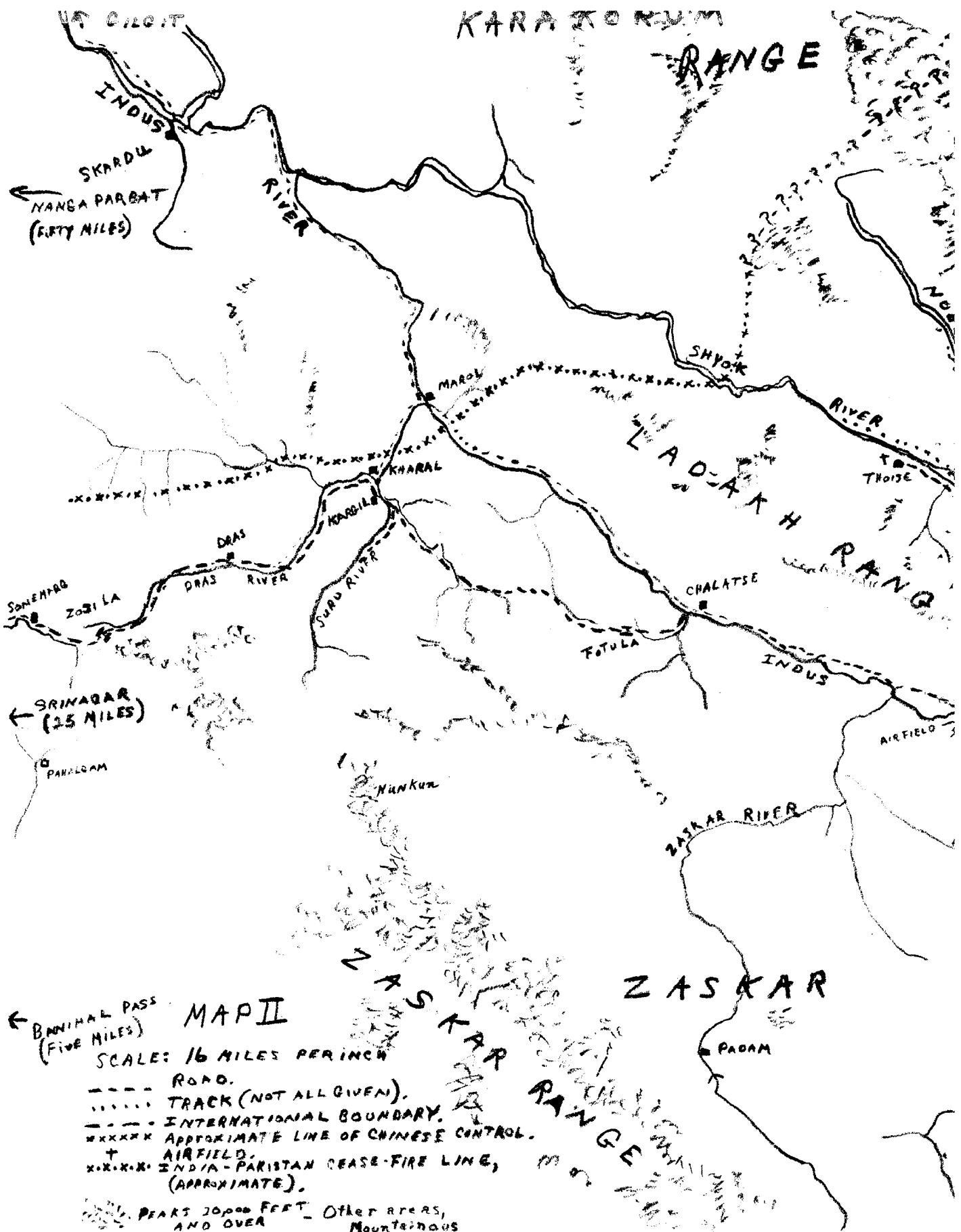
suspected) against the Russians (whose power they feared more), of Russian expeditions to the Karakorum and the Pamirs, and of British counter expeditions and territorial claims. But the alarms and excursions stopped with the signing of the Anglo-Russian Convention in 1907, and Ladakh passed out of the news, briefly to reappear during 1947 and 1948, and then in 1958 to surprise India and everyone but the Chinese with its existence.

During our stay, unfortunately of only a few days, we were briefed and escorted about by civil and military authorities with the greatest hospitality. Ladakh had moved, perforce, into modern times we found; it was no longer a distant land. But the immutable mountains and sands and height and cold had moulded Ladakhi life in a way that the mere twentieth century hadn't much changed.

#### A LANE IN LEH.

High in the background is a former palace of the Gialpos or former Rajas of Ladakh. In front of the right edge of the palace stands a chorten.





KARAKORAM RANGE

VA CILGIT  
INDUS RIVER  
SKARDU  
NANGA PARBAT (FIFTY MILES)

SRINAGAR (25 MILES)  
PANKRAM

BANIHAL PASS (FIVE MILES)

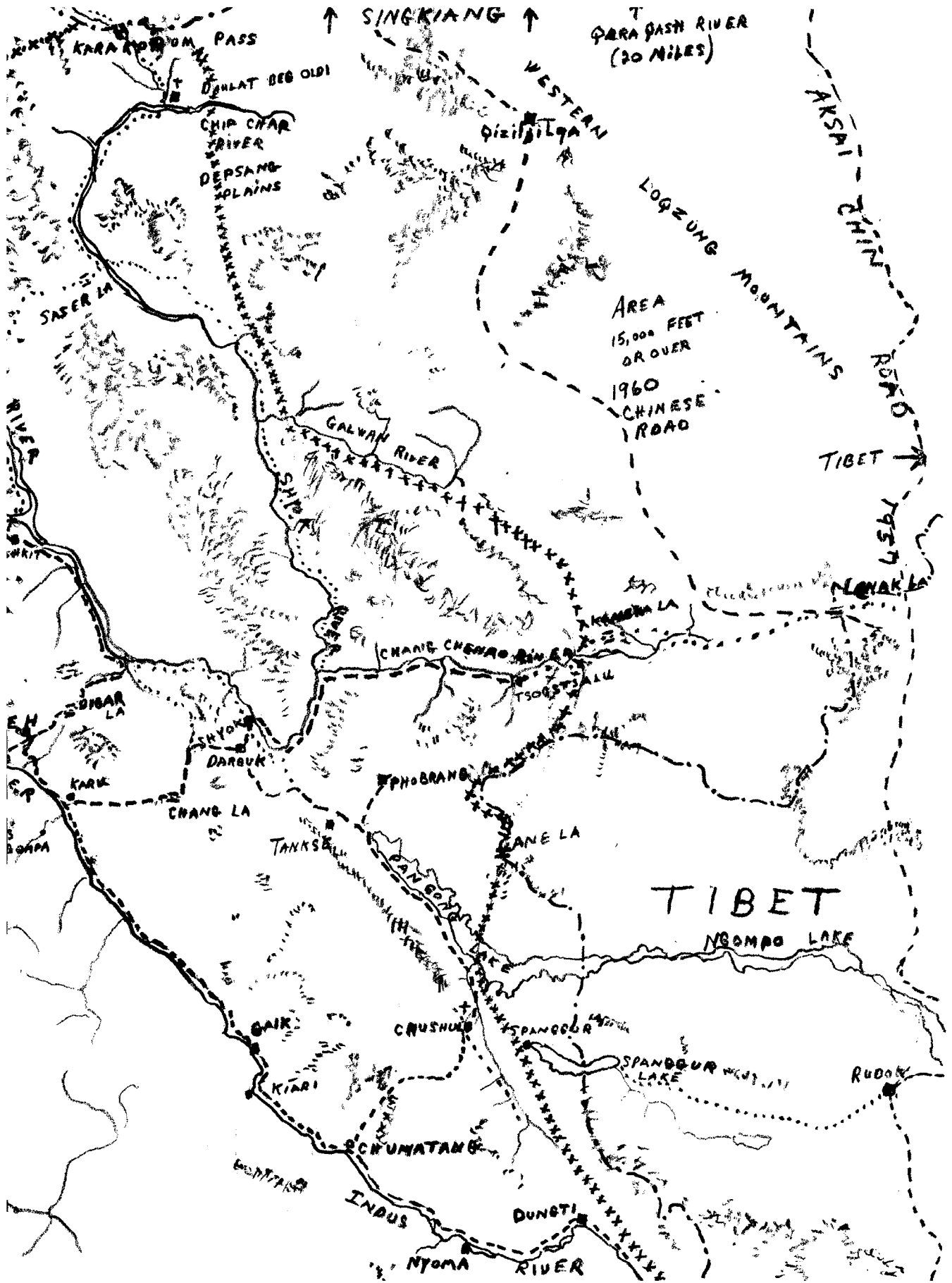
MAP II

SCALE: 16 MILES PER INCH

- ROAD.
- ..... TRACK (NOT ALL GIVEN).
- - - - INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY.
- XXXXXX APPROXIMATE LINE OF CHINESE CONTROL.
- + AIRFIELD.
- XX.XX.XX INDIA-PAKISTAN CEASE-FIRE LINE, (APPROXIMATE).
- PEAKS 20,000 FEET AND OVER - Other peaks, Mountainous

ZASKAR

PADAM





A Muslim Hat-maker in Leh. Distinguishable from the local people by his Aryan features.

Ladakh is today administered much in the manner of other parts of India. Its 32,500 square miles (actually 47,000, but the Chinese hold 14,500 square miles and the Pakistanis a few) and approximately 90,500 people are first the responsibility of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. In direct charge in Leh is a Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Abdiel Jeva Kundan, the first Ladakhi to hold the office since Indian independence in 1947. When we met Kundan and asked him to spell his name for us he said his 'Christian name' was Abdiel. This gave me a bit of a start until he explained that he was indeed a Christian, one of the 10 in Ladakh according to the 1961 census--the remainder of the population, according to the census being Buddhists, 47,700, and Muslims, 42,200. Under Kundan are five administrative districts and their officials. Kundan himself and a tehsildar manage the affairs of the Leh area. There are Assistant Commissioners in the Nubra district, with headquarters at Deshkit, in East Ladakh (or the Chang plains), with headquarters at Nyoma, in Kargil district, with headquarters at Kargil, and there is a tehsildar in charge of the Zaskar district, with headquarters at Padam. The Assistant Commissioner at Kargil is also a Ladakhi, according to Kundan, while the other officials are from outside Ladakh.

Traditionally, the two principal functions of Deputy and Assistant Commissioners in Indian civil administration have been revenue collection and the maintenance of law and order. As part of the latter responsibility, commissioners have traditionally also had magisterial powers. Kundan presides over both a revenue and a criminal court, his assistant commissioners have the powers of first class magistrates, and even the tehsildars have some magisterial powers. A Sub-Judge has now been appointed, however, and Kundan says he will handle many criminal cases, particularly murder and other violence. This vesting of Executive and Judicial functions in the same official is gradually being done away with in India, as the Constitution enjoins that it should.

There is also a Development Commissioner for the area, Mr. Narboo, another Ladakhi. He was not in Leh and we did not meet him, but Mr. Kundan briefed us about the development program. There are two development 'blocks' in Ladakh, one composed of the Leh area, East Ladakh, and the Nubra area, and the other composed of the Zaskar and Kargil areas. Primary emphasis in the development program is placed on communications and roads in particular. Without good communications so we can move around easily, other improvements cannot come, said Kundan. Second on the list is hydroelectric power. Within two years, Kundan hopes, a canal from higher up the Indus will create enough water pressure to generate 4000 kilowatts of electricity for use in Leh town and the immediate area. Electricity for Ladakh is nearer a necessity than a luxury, for Ladakh has little fuel and in winter the people must get pretty



cold. There are a minimum of dead branches every year on the few trees, there are occasional scrub bushes that can be gathered, and there isn't much in the way of dung—cow or yak. Kerosene trucked in over the road in jerry cans costs about a dollar a gallon in Leh and more in the remote corners of the country. This is too much for the local people and expensive for the army, and, besides, the supply is limited. Leh, with its relatively concentrated population plus army headquarters is, it would seem to me, an ideal place for atomic power, and I'm told the idea is under consideration. A small research station near Leh is trying to get around the power shortage another way, by capturing solar energy. Using corrugated galvanized sheets fitted together to make tubes and painted black to absorb the sun's heat, the research station has produced a device that heats a gallon of cold water to about 150 degrees in one minute. The water then circulates through tanks (like thick radiators) fixed to the walls of a room. Two men lived comfortably last winter in a room so heated, I was told. The tanks, the researchers claimed, will hold heat through two sun-less days; then a kerosene stove has to be used. Yet because the sun usually shines in Leh and central Ladakh and the infrequent cloudy periods usually last only a few days, solar energy may be another way to overcome the lack of fuel.



Ladakhi girls (and their mink stoles) in Leh bazaar. The hats are typical and worn by both women and men.

Food supply is another problem Ladakhi officials hope to do something about. Of Ladakh's 33,000-odd square miles only 40,000 acres, or about two per cent, is cultivated. Most of the tilled land is in the major valleys within inches of the Indus and other rivers. Land still in the valleys but a few feet above the water is too dry for cultivation unless watered by the occasional side stream. Although there isn't much arable land in Ladakh, more land could be brought under cultivation, and Kundan hopes that within 15 years the area will be self-sufficient in grain. But the two major difficulties, infertile soil and especially the lack of water, will not be easily overcome. Although a map makes it appear that Ladakh abounds with rivers, this is not so. Only in mid- to late summer do the stream beds carry much water; when I was there in the final days of May most of the streams were a trickle, and in most places I could have, except for the swiftness of the current, waded across the Indus itself. Moreover, where there is water the land is already in use. Could-be fields are usually high up the slopes, making irrigation difficult and expensive. And last, there is no precipitation of consequence. The rains and snows of Asia are kept out of Ladakh by the mountain ranges that surround it. The Vale of Kashmir, only 150 miles away from Leh by air, receives 32 inches of precipitation a year, much of it snow. Yet in Leh there is less than four inches of precipitation annually, principally rain with only light dustings of snow. The oases that startle the eye, emerald toes on the feet of the barren mountains, produce about 75 per cent of the food Ladakh needs--excluding the army, of course, which feeds itself. The crops are barley, some wheat, maize, field peas, millet, and a few vegetables. Kargil is famous for its apricots and tiny apples, but the crop isn't large. The staple diet of Ladakhis is barley-flour cakes and barley gruel plus tea with rancid butter in it. The people also make a barley liquor called chang. There are no taboos against meat eating, but few persons can afford to kill and eat an animal.

The lack of water also has an effect on the use of fertilizers. At present Ladakhi fertilizers are home-made: the small amounts of animal dung that are not burned and night soil from the ingenious privy system. In the houses, so it was explained to me, the toilets are located in a room with shafts leading downward to another room which has an access door from the outside. The floor of this room is of loose soil and after using the toilet each individual shovels more loose soil down the shaft from a pile in the toilet room. In the spring the accumulated soil is taken and spread on the fields. This sounds sanitary to me, and even in the back alleys of Leh I didn't smell any bad odors. No doubt this technique is especially adapted to the prevailing low temperatures of Ladakh. In Leh the annual mean is 40 degrees. There never has been either cholera or typhoid in Ladakh, I was told. To increase the amount of fertilizer on existing fields or to bring more land under cultivation would mean importing chemical fertilizers. This would present a huge haulage problem and brings us again to the lack of water, for chemical fertilizers cannot be used without a regular water supply. Ladakh, although surrounded by snowy mountains, is, in fact, a desert.

The people of Ladakh, according to old accounts and gazetteers, are "truthful and honest" and "cheerful and good tempered". They certainly appeared so to me during brief conversations in broken Hindustani--our



A nomadic herdsman met up the Indus Valley. This group of people seemed much poorer than most we saw.

This old lady is carrying not her pet scottie, but a common Ladakhi dwarf goat from her flock. She has been spinning wool thread on the spindle tucked into her kerchief.

common medium, their language being much like Tibetan. And when we rolled by in our jeeps their smiles were bright and white in faces burned rich copper by the sun. Often they'd give a half raffish, half respectful salute, never knowing that at least one of those so honored never rose to Pfc. The various people can be divided into four categories: the Ladakhis of the Leh area, the nomadic herdsman, Champas, of the Eastern plains (human population, 5000, sheep and goat population, 350,000), the Baltis of Baltistan to the West down the Indus, and the Dards, also in the West around Dras and Kargil. The Ladakhis, Champas, and Baltis are Mongol in racial strain, and the Dards are Aryan in strain. (Baltistan, administratively part of Kashmir for many years, is now entirely in Pakistani hands, having been taken in the campaign of 1947-48. Although most of Baltistan was separate from Ladakh, some of the area east and south of Skardu in the Shyok and Indus Valleys was considered to be in Ladakh. This was the most heavily populated and agriculturally the richest section of Ladakh, and it, too, is now under



Pak control.) Excepting the Baltis and Dards, who are Shia Muslims, the peoples of Ladakh are, loosely, Buddhists and, more accurately, believers in Tibetan Lamaism. This religion began in the middle of the seventh century with the introduction into Tibet of Mahayana, or Greater Vehicle, Buddhism strongly infused with three schools of Hindu thought, Yoga, Mantrayana, and Tantrism. The indigenous religion of Tibet at this time was called Pon, a mixture of nature worship and demonolatry, and it had, or its priests had, such a strong hold on the people that the new, Mahayana-plus Buddhism gained little ground. In Ladakh today there are still traces of Pon. A senior army officer in Leh who is interested in these things told me that below Leh on the Indus he had visited a temple that displayed stuffed animals as objects of veneration. In the middle of the eighth century the Tibetan king brought from India a famous Hindu teacher named Padmasambhava, who incorporated with the new religion many of the rites and dieties of Pon. Thus arose Lamaism, which authorities say derives its name from the Tibetan word "Bla-ma" meaning Superior One, a title bestowed on learned men and on heads of institutions, monasteries, for example. Pahmasambhava is regarded as the founder of Lamaism, therefore, and is a saint to the Red Cap lama sect of Tibet. Somewhat later another sect, the Yellow Caps, grew up with a slightly altered theology and became the predominant sect in Tibet. The Red and Yellow sects are both found in Ladakh today, but the Red Cap sect is the largest and most powerful. Most of the monks that I saw didn't wear caps, but their robes were a burgundy color.



An old man and a fat priest--Leh.

I had a few moments at the Red Cap monastery, Hemis Gompa, outside Leh--the principal monastery of Ladakh and, I was told, one of the top five monasteries of the religion. A place more like Shangri La never existed. The road to it descended from the main valley road to the Indus and crossed a wood and stone bridge. Then it looped up through sand and boulders high to the south edge of the valley. A screen of bushes hid the route, but behind it the road continued up a narrow canyon bending first to the right and then to the left. Groups of chortens stood near the road and huge mané walls slanted upwards for a hundred yards beside it. Chortens, derived in form from Buddhist stupas, are usually a tapered pillar in a square-block base. They may contain the ashes or a relic of a holy man. Mané walls vary from a few stones laid end to end to long, broad walls, each edge square and true like a perfect stack of cordwood, capped with grey stones carved with prayers. To the

left, below the road, there were a few bushes turning green and freshly tilled garden plots, most of them smaller than a blanket, neatly outlined with small stones.

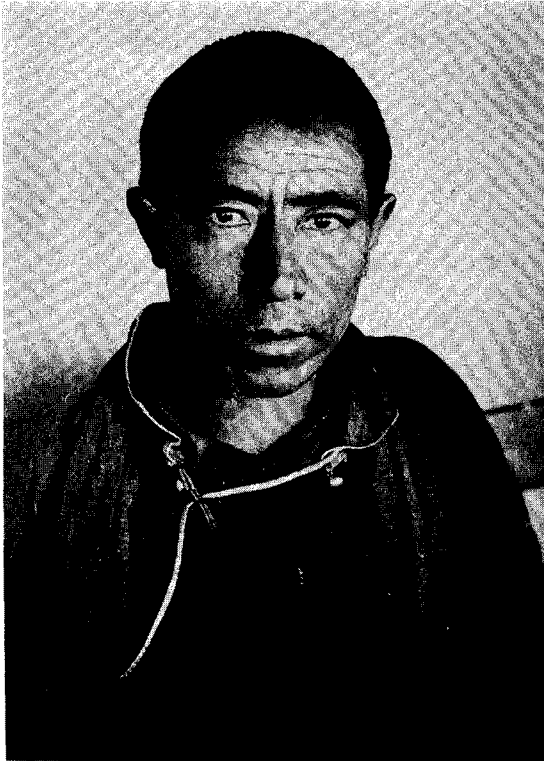
We passed through a large masonry gate, bumped across two irrigation ditches, and parked the jeep. Now there were houses to the right of the stony path. The lintels of their doors and windows had been painted bright blue and red, almost the only color in a stone-grey world. Across from us gravelly terraces curved gracefully around the shoulder of the ravine. I passed smaller chortens and a shorter mané wall and walked softly on an earthy path through a grove of lombardy poplars with young leaves. ("Nature's first green is gold,/Her hardest hue to hold.") People went quietly by me up and down the path--a woman carrying a basket on her back and a man driving a small brown cow carrying a sack of grain.

Gradually through the poplar leaves I could see the monastery buildings built high against the wall of the canyon near its upper end. At the upper edge of the grove a lane ran under a tall stone wall. Down the lane toward me, framed by green and grey, came a line of burgundy-robed monks, stepping on their silent way. I climbed a series of zig-zag stone steps and went through the twenty-foot high double doors into the temple yard--whose walls were lined with red and blue paintings of Bodhisattvas and fantastic devils--and climbed more stone stairs to the hall of the temple. In the dusk, a monk, by the light of a wavering oil flame, chanted from a manuscript three feet wide but only three inches high. The sounds of gongs and cymbals shivered the air. Leaving, I stood above the courtyard and looked by the tall pole fluttering with slender prayer flags over the soft green poplars to the tops of the Ladakh Range. The lower slopes and the valley were in shadow, the high snow shone. I went away quickly, almost in fear that I might never go, and as I went I spun a couple of prayer wheels in the hope that someday I'd go back.

Lamaism is very much a part of Ladakhi life, at least so far as I could discover. Chortens and mané walls were frequent in the Leh area and on a fifty mile drive we took to see military installations up the Indus. Some chortens were simple cairns capped with carved stones like those on mané walls. Prayer flags fluttered everywhere, from chortens, from sticks stuck in piles of rock on boulders in the river, from houses, from ropes across the road in a gorge, and on minor and major summits. There is a gompa (monastery-cum-temple) in nearly every village, and although the tradition is breaking down, many families still contribute at least one son to the priesthood. About one-third of the land in Ladakh is still owned by the monasteries, a retired Deputy Commissioner from Ladakh now in Delhi told me. Mostly, the monks work the land themselves. There is little sharecropping and some tenancy. According to this ex-official, two-thirds of the land in Ladakh is worked by owner cultivators.

The donning of 'the cloth' by so many men and other customs like polyandry and primogeniture have their origin in Ladakh's lack of land. Primogeniture, or handing down property rights solely to the

eldest son prevents the fragmentation of land-holdings and their ultimate division into uneconomic units. The giving by families of one or more sons to the priesthood lessens the number of mouths that have to live off the family holding. And polyandry, the having of several husbands by one woman, serves, if you'll permit the word, two functions. It limits



Head Priest of a Temple in Leh.

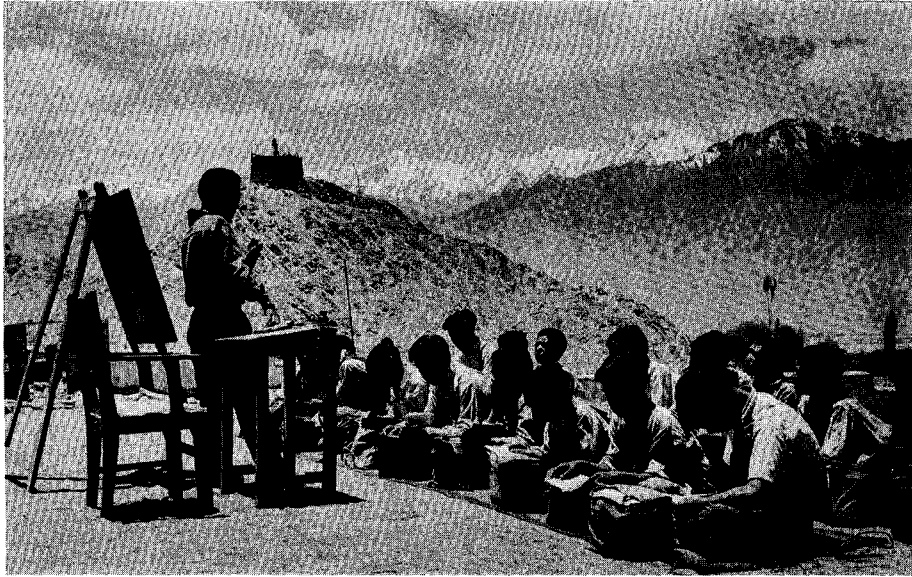
the birthrate and thus diminishes the pressure on land, and because it lessens the number of family units, it lessens the demand for 'family' property. The eldest son inherits the family land and takes a wife. Those brothers who stay at home to live off the property share this wife and work the family land without having title to it. Thus new family units, which would generally speaking want land for themselves, are not created. Polyandry was outlawed by the Maharaja of Kashmir in 1938, and Deputy Commissioner Kundan claims it has largely disappeared. Whether this will, at least in the near future, mean materially increased pressure on the land seems doubtful in view of the new economic situation created by the massive influx of the Indian army. Now there are many ways for a Ladakhi to earn a living away from the land. He can work on the roads, or as a laborer for the army unloading aircraft, or building installations, or as a skilled workman such as a mason, or as a driver.

There is certain to be a labor shortage in Ladakh for a long time to come. And for those who want to go to school, opportunity seems unlimited. The area is short on doctors, nurses, teachers, village-level workers, and all manner of low-level and high-level administrative and technical personnel. To meet the need, Ladakh now has five high schools and two teachers' training colleges and what Kundan calls a "good" scholarship program for high school graduates who want to go out to the university in Srinagar or elsewhere for university or technical education. Fifty or sixty Ladakhis are now receiving such education, he said. Kundan is himself a product of Ladakh's new age. He graduated from the University of Srinagar with a degree in engineering. Then he joined the Indian Air Force and rose to the rank of Flight Lieutenant. In 1960 he left the Air Force and joined the Indian Frontier Administrative Service, which ultimately posted him to Leh.

Yours sincerely,

*Red Austin*

Granville S. Austin



School at Leh.