CHAPTER III

SHILLONG ACCORD: GENESIS AND EFFECTS
The Shillong Accord constitutes an watershed in the Naga aspiration of a separate nationhood. The Accord expressed the acceptance of military defeat by a key section of the Naga nationalist leadership. Here it should be noted that the Shillong Accord is not an instantaneous sprout but parturition of a steady development since the breakdown of the 'peace talks' between the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland. Hence a brief analysis of the sequence of circumstances leading to the Shillong Accord is of paramount importance for proper understanding in the right perspective.

The scholar has identified the following as the factors responsible for the ultimate signing of the accord:

1. Waning of the Federal Government of Nagaland

For the first time in the history of the Naga struggle for 'self-determination', a crack developed in the hitherto intact Federal Government of Nagaland. This was the effect of the failed 'peace talks' and was notably interlard with sensitive politics of Naga tribalism.

Suspicion developed in the rank and file of the FGN set up. This was evident as when the talks reached a deadlock, the Tatar Hoho (National Parliament), had its heated session from 14th to 16th October, 1967 at Shapoumaram in Mao subdivision of Manipur.1 The members accused Kughato Sukhai of failure in achieving any political gains despite prolonged negotiation.2 To add to his discomfiture Kughato's younger brother 'General' Kaito Sema

staged a revolt against the Angami leadership. General Kaito who was then Keya Kilonser (Defence Minister) of the federal Army presumably was one not satisfied with the ongoings in the various fronts. Particularly, he was not happy with headquarter for letting the Angamis dominate the show in reference to the Chinese connection. Groups after groups were sent to China without his alleged approval and General' Kaito was furious that he was being 'bypassed deliberately'. Secondly, General' Kaito did not favour the long and dreary negotiations with New Delhi because in his views, 'inaction would make his fighters lethargic and cause them to lose sight of the objective.' The Keya Kilonser was correct in a way. Admittedly, Nirmal Nibedon wrote that "if the guerrillas were having their fair share of rest, the Indians were consolidating magnificently." The Naga nationalists were being subordinated strategically and tactically by the Indian security forces under the cover of cease-fire. Nibedon thus refers that the Indian Army was "well-entrenched now with a hundred times more manpower than them." It is in this context that Th. Muivah admitted that "one of the greatest failures (NNC) was the absence of correct tactics and strategy. The importance of a strategy in dealing with the opponent of superior power was never stressed. They simply waited impatiently for solution." Thirdly, General' Kaito had been sore with the ouster of Scato Swu, the

5. Idem.
6. Ibid., p. 168.
then President of the FGN and appointment of Rev. G. Mhiasiu instead it is believed was a brilliant move from London.\textsuperscript{9} Added to this grievous situation, 'General' Zuheto, another senior Sema officer was ignored and 'General' Mowu Angami was appointed chief of the Federal Army instead. Meanwhile, in view of heated criticism, Khughato Sukhai resigned from the Prime Ministership of the Federal Government on 23rd October\textsuperscript{10} just as his brother in-law Scato Swu was also pressurized to resign from President-ship of the FGN. Then, the new President Rev. G. Mhiasiu got the support of the Tatar Hoho to adopt a Presidential form of government in lieu of Parliamentary form. Soon after on October 26, 1967, Rev. G. Mhiasiu suspended Khughato's Parliamentary government and the Tatar Hoho, to assume the supreme executive powers and appointed a consultative committee\textsuperscript{11} of five persons including Khughato Sukhai, Z. Ramyo, Chumbemo Murry, Maken and Tselise. Ramyo Zimik was made the Ex-officio Secretary.\textsuperscript{12} Thus, the first round had been won temporarily by the Phizoites*. In a way, tribalism was getting intertwined with Federal Government set up. Thuingaleng Muivah, rightly remarked that "internal contradictions emanating from pettyism... often overtook most of the leaders."\textsuperscript{13} It is true that Nagas became the fatal enemy of themselves. This danger of self-defeat was imminent and according

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{8} Written interview with Th. Muivah General Secretary, NSCN (conducted by the scholar, 29th August, 1994), p. 10.
\item \textsuperscript{9} Nibedon, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 155. (Since 1967 till 1980, Th. Muivah served as the General Secretary of the NNC).
\item \textsuperscript{10} Yonuo, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 294.
\item \textsuperscript{11} \textit{Idem}.
\item \textsuperscript{12} Aram, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 138.
* Phizoites - a term usually used to mean Phizo's close associates particularly his ardent supporters.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Written interview of Th. Muivah, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 11.
\end{itemize}
to Th. Muivah's reading this 'internal contradiction' was an eventual outcome of wrong policy of the NNC. Thus he stated:

There was no tribalism as such before among the Nagas. Things were never conducted on tribal basis. Even fightings in olden days were between villages, not between tribes. But NNC's set-up of the administrative and the military systems was purely tribe-wise. The eventual outcome was that tribal loyalty outweighed at times national allegiance. Such orientation drove, particularly, the major tribes into unhealthy parochial competition which in turn generated contradictions of national magnitude. Things and issues were looked at more from tribal perspectives. There was no thirst in the leadership for higher values of a nation and the world. 14

Eventually, 'General' Kaito was all set to blaze his own trails. He overran the Federal Army head-quarter at Gaziphema and took away arms and ammunition, besides sizeable amount of money. 15 Soon on 3rd August, 1968 General Kaito Sema was assassinated in Kohima perceivably (though denied) at the instance of the Federal Army. Thus, the crack which developed in the mid 1960s was inevitably bringing into being the 'great divide' of the Federal Government set up. Rev. G. Mhiasiu and Ramyo Zimik were whisked away by General Zuheto Sema and placed under arrest. On 1st November 1968 to be precise, the Sema group announced the formation of a new political organisation christened Council of the Naga People (CNP) and issued a six point statement declaring the Federal Government and its army as

15. Dev, loc.cit.
closed in view of the alleged failure of the NNC to bring about a negotiated settlement of the Naga political problem.16

On 2nd November 1968, CNP met and a new government called "the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland was formed".17 The form of Government was to be a Parliamentary one. Scato Swu was unanimously elected the Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government. In fact, the whole set up and their declaration was in a way a reaction and an antithesis of the NNC and FGN. It was not a nuance but ultimate division of the Naga nationalists. Before long, in 1969 a powerful China-returned group of 565 soldiers under the command of 'general' Mowu was waylaid and captured by 'General' Zuheto men.18 Thus the second round had been won by the Revolutionary Government. They also reinforced their force by successfully persuading Hopong Yimchunger and Thungti Chang to join the Revolutionary Government.19

As per their declaration, the Revolutionary Government attempted for a political settlement of the Naga problem. According to Tajenyuba's account:

In 1972, Scato asked for a status of protectorate like Sikkim but the Government of India did not listen him (sic). In August 1973, the Revolutionary leaders had an interview with Mrs. Indira Gandhi in New Delhi. On their return they decided to surrender before the Governor which took place with surrender of about 1,500 men at Zunheboto on 16th August, 1973.20

The Revolutionary cadres were directly recruited in Border Security Force (BSF) with Zuheto as commander and Zekiyhe as Deputy Commander and Scato Swu was nominated as a member of the Rajya Sabha. Thus, a large fraction of the Naga nationalist force had surrendered weakening significantly the Federal Army set up. It was a great setback indeed for the Naga movement. M. Horam in his scholarly work rightly remarked: "Naga politics was ruined by the disposition of tribal politics."\(^{21}\)

2. The role of the church

Since majority of the Nagas are Christian by faith, a great number of the leaders as well as rank and file of the NNC, FGN and FA are Christians and obviously the church would play an important role in Naga politics. It was through the initiative of the Church that 'Peace Mission' was set up which arranged the 'ceasefire' between the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland. The Naga nationalists were all in favour of praise for the constructive role of the church in this regard. However, the nationalists became very critical of the church's role in relation to the signing of the Shillong Accord which according to them, overstepped their responsibility. Thus, from the Naga people's point of view, the church has been involved in all the undertaking, be it the ceasefire, move for peace or signing of the Shillong Accord.

In the process of the signing of the Shillong Accord in 1975, the church is believed to have played the most

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controversial role and an attempt will be made to analyse it through objective study. It is in this contact that the role of the Church can be assessed from the time when the nationalist Nagas under the leadership of Thuingaleng Muivah, made contact with the Chinese in 1967. The Church particularly became critical about it. Rev. Longri Ao who then was the Executive Secretary of the Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC) took the leading role in this campaign and sent a circular to all the field Directors in May, 1968 warning them of the danger posed by communism by highlighting communist hostility to the Church and the totalitarian nature of the state.

In fact, the Church was quite vocal against the Chinese connection. But it was the Government of India which also sounded the alarm and the Intelligence Bureau (IB) exploited meticulously the sentiment of the Nagas (particularly of the Church) without leaving any stone unturned. As Isak Chishi Swu stated: "the Church leaders and few traitors became the instruments of the enemy (India)." The I.B's success in setting up the Naga Peoples Convention was a pointer in this direction. S.C. Dev, the Nagaland Government Commissioner's admission is vital in this context. He writes: "No guerrilla insurgency can be suppressed without a good intelligence network.... All those who were concerned with "Intelligence" will gratefully remember the services rendered by the officers of the Subsidiary Intelligence

24. Written Interview of Isak Chishi Swu (conducted by the scholar, January, 1994), p. 5.
Bureau. They will have to remain in the background for obvious reasons. This statement is further corroborated by Maj. General Palit who stated: "Fortunately, Intelligence gathering was greatly facilitated by the fact that not only did the vast majority of the Naga people support the Government but for the first time, so did a significant section of the underground". M. Aram also admitted having utilised state machinery in order to contain and weaken (which he termed-strengthening the force of peace) Naga nationalism. Thus, he writes, "other programmes were also devised to promote a climate of peace in Nagaland. Increasing participation by the public peace activities was encouraged. Also the services of the communication media such as newspaper and radio were enlisted." Thus, there was an integrated network of the Government to win over the public and at the same isolating the Naga guerrillas. The aforesaid statement and writings amply highlight the significant role played by the intelligence network in Nagaland. Though there is no direct statement or official record concerning the church body having been utilised by the intelligence agency, there are evidences to this effect. Their alleged tacit understanding with the Government exposed them seriously damaging their locus standi.

26. Palit, Major General, Sentinels of the North-East, (Published by Palit and Palit, Shanti Niketan, Delhi, 1984), p. 301.
It was the Nagaland state Government, which equally sounded the alarm expressed through a resolution passed in the Assembly condemning A.Z. Phizo and the FGN. The resolution reads:

This desperate attempt on the part of Mr. Phizo and his friends to throw Nagaland and its people to the Satanic hands of communist China is an act of treachery. This is a serious threat to democracy, political freedom and liberty, the Naga way of life, and the church. 28

Thereafter, the Church took the leading role in condemning and mobilising people's opinion against the hard-core of the Naga Nationalists. For instance, Rev. L. Kijung Ao sent an official information to the Governor L.P. Singh wherein he wrote:

I warned the pastors of the border areas not to yield to such propaganda (China to aid the Nagas) and told them that China is a communist country...I called a meeting of all the field Directors in Mon and Tuensang Districts and discussed and warned them of the danger ...and decided that any Pastor found collaborating with such propaganda will be removed from the post. 29

But the substance of the information is mentioned in another para (given below) which obviously uncovered the tacit understanding between the Church and the Government during the decisive pre-Accord period.

Under the President's rule and with your wisdom and firm hand in dealing with the Naga political problem, I am sure major problem will be solved...and victory is not far away, I think, the team work between the army and

29. Imchen, Panger, L. Kijung Ao, the Longest Night (Biography), (Published by the Naga Scholars Society, Dimapur, Nagaland, 1992), pp. 77-78.
the civil authority continue as they are doing now. I think more people are coming with change of mind.30

No wonder, the ardent Naga nationalists are very critical of the role of the Church. Affirmingly, 'General' T. K. Keyho of the FGN wrote:

They (church leaders) were afraid to speak the truth. They fear men more than God. They want to please and obey men than to serve and obey God...This is the history of the church in the past, in Nagaland...And through the NBCC Nagaland Peace Council (NPC) was born. They said that this body of NPC was a neutral body, just a go between...etc...But later on they have fallen into the hands of the Government of India and her agent and become their tool.31

Later the NSCN leadership in a press hand out lucidly expressed their point of view in the matter of Nagas forging link with communist China:

Our national salvation lies in our heroic struggle supported by correct foreign policy. It may be red or white it doesn't matter, so long it serves our purposes. We need diplomatic relation with other countries, but the point is that we do not purchase friendship at the cost of national principle nor do we barter Christ for a few barrels of gun. Friendship based on the solid rock of mutual recognition of rights is the friendship we seek for.32

While repudiating the Church's role in opposing the Chinese linkage, Rh. Raising, the then Killo Kilonser (Home Minister) of

30. Idem.
the Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) stated:

You preacher, we would like to be reminded of David, the anointed king of Israel. Didn't he take political shelter in Philistine a country of the traditional enemy of the Israelites when he was being chased by Saul the then King of Israel? Were not the Philistines idolaters? Could you please help yourselves by recalling how a harlot Rahab was used as an indispensable instrument by the chosen race to help reach their promised land?33

The church would have been right had they strictly campaigned against the Naga nationalists for allegedly bringing communism to Nagaland without involving in politics. On the contrary, 'General' Mowu Gwizan in his testimony revealed the accommodative spirit of Chinese leadership towards the Naga nationalists.

As we were (sic) NAGALAND FOR CHRIST, the communist Chinese had to build a CHURCH for us. Perhaps this was the first CHURCH built in China after the Chinese Revolution and the first church planted by 'Nagaland for Christ' in foreign land. Many Chinese came forward secretly to know about god and we were glad to proclaim His name to them. 34

The NSCN leaders later lamented and repudiated the accusation that they are 'communists'. 35 In fact, to be precise, the Chinese had not indoctrinated the Nagas even (as alleged by church leaders) in the ideological sense. They had merely injected the Nagas with a dose of Maoism vis-a-vis guerrilla-type

33. Raising, loc. cit.
warfare to strengthen the will and determination of the fighters. However, for the Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC) and its sponsored body, the Nagaland Peace Council (NPC) seeking of military hardware from China was synonymous with flirting with Marxism and Maoism. M. Horam rightly pointed out the fact that, "the venerable church leaders had ... lost the confidence of the nationalists. The FGN in a pamphlet "Nagaland and Church" hit out at the church. It read:

It is impossible to believe, but we have just witnessed it. Why does the church which calls itself an organ of peace in the world help the aggressors as they deliberately open a wound that will make peace impossible or at very least put it off a very long way? With the anti-communist falsehood and propaganda that the Indian press and radio are pouring forth every now and then, Nagaland is turned to-day to witness another theatre of war.

Yet on the other hand, the church leaders never gave up their tenacious campaign against those seeking aid from China. Thus, if faith had been a factor in promoting Naga nationalism, it is equally true that the Government of India meticulously utilised the slogan of Christian faith in danger to neutralize the Naga rapport with the Chinese. Though there was no far reaching effect on their operational schemes the church antagonism created a situation by which the Federal Government of Nagaland became vulnerable and the public opinion grew in favour of immediate peace.

38. Ibid., p. 62.
The church in an attempt to bring peace in Nagaland war-torn region, initiated through the Nagaland Peace Council a Liaison Committee consisting of the following persons:

1. Rev. Longri Ao (President)
2. Kenneth Kerhuo (Secretary)
3. M. Aram (Sarvodaya leader)
4. L. Lungalang
5. Lungshim Shaiza

Some of the church leaders along with the newly formed Liaison Committee put bitterest pressure on the Naga nationalists in the midst of heavy army operation to hammer out a solution through dialogue with the Government of India. The meticulous campaign by the church along with the Liaison Committee gradually bore fruit when the representative of the Federal Government of Nagaland and the Naga National Council accepted to negotiate. However, the NNC and the FGN were quite annoyed and became skeptical of the Liaison Committee allegedly because of the former's dubious role and this is evident from the then Killo Kilonser of the FGN B.M. Keyho's letter to Rev. Longri Ao wherein he charged:

In one hand you have justified your mission as just a mission of go-between and on the other hand you have a firm stand to involve (sic) or bind us. Which I quote: 1. the integrity of India cannot be jeopardised. 2. NPC will oppose any secessionist move.42

Thus, the manner and nature of their approach to the problem raised serious doubt about the honesty of the Liaison Committee as a go-between. That is why, the Naga nationalists were quite skeptical of their role. But eventually, the talk was processed. The heart of the matter was that majority of the Nagas are Christians and therefore, the domination of the church was almost absolute a fact which the Naga nationalists could not ignore for long. Interestingly, B. Varma pointed out that "in an insurgency (or any other movement) the battle is for the heart and mind of the population." Rightly, so, the Government of India was apparently successful in winning over the heart and mind of the Nagas through the church and the Liaison Committee's support to the 'peace move'. Thus, the final outcome of the peace talk was the Shillong Accord which the church meticulously campaigned for.

3. Successful Policy of the Government of India

Effectually, the whole political scenario was quite favourable for the Government of India. Never before the Naga nationalists were a badly divided house. The formation of Revolutionary Council had the effect of weakening them. Secondly, the Naga resistance suffered a serious setback with the loss of the sanctuaries it had enjoyed in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). Thirdly, in 1972, the Government of India unitarily withdrew the 'cease-fire' and the Naga National council, Federal Government of Nagaland and the Federal Army were banned by invoking the UN.

Activities (Prevention) Act. A number of other stringent laws were also applied. Meanwhile, a historic event almost went unnoticed. According to an order from the Government of India, Nagaland affairs went to the Home Ministry from the Ministry of External Affairs. Last but not the least was that the general people were weary of the long drawn bitter struggle as it was always that the civilian suffered immensely. The church leaders being fully behind the 'peace movement' along with their unmitigated campaign against China connection there came an opportune moment for the Government of India to make a decisive move. It was a retrogression, on the other hand, for the Naga nationalists as a whole.

The Government of India, thus, finding the Nagaland situation so favourable (for the first time) took the crucial decision to launch 'mop-up' operations against the hard-core Naga nationalists. Effectually, the Indian army heavily reinforced the Naga areas to make that advantage decisive. In reality, the Indian Army was adopting 'scorched earth' measures as it tried in 1957-58: villages suspected of supporting the nationalists were burnt with their standing crops and granaries; and villagers beaten, tortured and raped. Describing the situation of that time, Ramyo Zimik who had important position in the NNC hierarchy remarked:

46. Maxwell, loc. cit.
47. Maxwell, op. cit., p. 9.
Red flag hoisted on the rooftop of the houses belonging to the unlawful associations and curfew clamped down for days together all over Nagaland to deny food and villagers from outside the village were to be shot at sight.48

Indeed, the Naga villagers suffered immensely. Even the man who took the lead in this campaign admitted that "Nagas had suffered considerably".49 One of the reasons being that the "para-military forces and the army cannot distinguished a black from the white. To them every tribal is an insurgent."50

One important factor which also helped the Government of India considerably was the ruling political party - Naga Nationalist Organisation (NNO)* in Nagaland State. This political party consistently worked for Nagas' integration into the mainstream of India. For instance, Hokishe Sema (NNO) the Chief Minister of Nagaland State warned in a broadcast, the villagers protecting and supporting the guerrillas (whom he called anti-social elements) and cautioned them against regrettable results.51 Thus, Neville Maxwell rightly concluded:

There could hardly be a plainer evidence that the Indian and Naga State authorities were making the villagers their main target, in lieu of the elusive Federal forces, in an attempt to cut the latter off from the 'sea' of popular support which alone can sustain armed nationalist movement.52

48. Written Interview of Ramyo Zimik, Foreign Minister, FGN, (conducted by the scholar, 14 August, 1993), p. 4.
49. Dev, op.cit., p. 137.
50. Ibid., p. 179.
* NNO - a Political Party within the Constitution of India which consistently worked for Nagas' integration into the mainstream of India.
51. Maxwell, loc.cit.
52. Idem.
The Indian security forces' 'all out' offensive was mooted immediately following the Bangladesh liberation war of 1971. For the first time, the whole 'counter-insurgency' operation was placed under a 'Unified Command'. This idea was first mooted by B.K. Nehru, the Governor of Nagaland after he returned from one of his tours abroad. It was learnt that the Governor sought the advice of General Templar (who fought the insurgents in Malaya) for effective tackling of the Naga issue. The general advised B.K. Nehru to have a 'United Command' of Army, Police and the Subsidiary Intelligence Bureau. Hence, under this strategy exhaustive scheme was evolved entitled 'Joint Director for Counter-Nationalist Operation in Nagaland'. As a result, there was a close co-operation between the Army, Civil Administration, the Police, and the Intelligence set up.

Meanwhile, in the early part of 1975, President's Rule was declared in Nagaland State and hence the army was given a free hand to tackle the Naga guerrillas. The Commissioner of Nagaland State S.C. Dev revealed that the large scale jungle operations were directed to bring the hostiles to the negotiating table for surrender.

Meanwhile, national emergency was also declared and that made things easier for the security forces. The Nagaland Government Commissioner emphatically acknowledged that "in the altered circumstances ... the possibilities afforded by the

54. Idem.
situation were excellent, and thereby, we could reap rich harvest out of it." 57 It was then the army adopted questionable measures allegedly against the Naga nationalists but in reality the innocent public and villagers bore the brunt of the operation. A journalist rightly reported that "the army used methods that were brutal and even uncivilised. But because Kohima (Nagaland) was so cut off from the rest of the world, New Delhi got away with it." 58 Even S.C. Dev, the man responsible for plan of action admitted having used ruthless measures. 59 Nevertheless, this 'scorched earth' measures brought about a sea-change in the situation compelling the Naga nationalists to go for peace. Thus, Adite Phadnis rightly put it that "finally, when an entire generation of Nagas had wearied of the battle, India was able to restore the political process with the new generation." 60

In fact, the military offensive along with other measures adopted by the Government was a great success. Eventually a number of hardcore Naga nationalists had to surrender one after another. Rightly so, the view in New Delhi was that the 'iron hand' approach was paying off, and that it should be continued until the nationalist surrendered or were wiped out. 61

Significantly, Ramyo Zimik testified saying:

Prior to the signing of the Shillong Accord, we would do well to remember the military might exerted by India for the purpose of physical suppression. Freedom fighters from the regions of Konyak, Phom, Ao, Sangtam,

57. Ibid., p. 122.
60. Phadnis, loc.cit.
61. Maxwell, loc.cit.
Yimchunger, Sema, Lotha and Rengma were forced to surrender en masse, leaving only the Angami, Chakhesang, Shepoumaranth, Wung (Tangkhul) and Zeliangrong regions in the field.\footnote{Written Interview of Ramyo Zimik, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 3-4.}

It is precisely against this background that Neville Maxwell considered the Shillong Accord as an expression of the acceptance of military defeat by a key group of the Naga leadership.\footnote{Maxwell, \textit{loc.cit.}}

Thus, the aforesaid factors are the causes that led to the signing of the Shillong Accord, 1975. However, it will be incomplete without a brief analysis of the inherent failures of the Naga nationalist organization and its leadership. As mentioned in Chapter II, the strategy of operation, the system of organization set up, wrong policy and lack of able leadership etc. brought together almost a total collapse of the movement.

First of all, the disadvantage of having a loose system of organization of the FGN and the Federal Army was well exhibited. M. Horam rightly pointed out "the lack of good guerrilla organization" and "a well-knit and unified movement acting in accordance with a mature plan of action."\footnote{Horam, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 209.} There was a complete breakdown of command, lack of coordination between the FGN and the Federal Army coupled with lack of control over the different army units. This is evident from the way several Federal Army units one after another surrendered on their own decision. This chain of surrender first emanated from Sema region, followed by Lotha, Ao, Konyak, Phom, Sangtam, Yimchunger, Rengma and Chakhesang (though not complete). Each regional army unit took

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\textbf{62. Written Interview of Ramyo Zimik, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 3-4.}  
\textbf{63. Maxwell, \textit{loc.cit.}}  
\textbf{64. Horam, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 209.}
\end{flushright}
its own decision and surrendered substantially. Thus, there was a complete breakdown of command.

Secondly, failure to evolve good strategy vis-a-vis the given situation and the absence of able leadership prompted the situation to deteriorate beyond repair. The NNC and its government (FGN) did not have a well defined policy or strategy and no clear directions were given to the fighting units. The cadres were simply directed to fight relentlessly which would not sustain them without a sound policy and a good strategy. In this context, Mao Tse Tung's words become so relevant. He said: "when conditions change, tactics must change accordingly. The making and changing of tactical campaign and strategic plans in accordance with scope and circumstances is a key factor in directing a war." Thuingaleng Muivah, of the NSCN, writing on the failures of the NNC stated: "The greatest failure was the absence of correct tactics and strategy. The importance of strategy in dealing with the opponent of superior power was never stressed. They simply waited impatiently for solution...The questions: What India could do and could not do? What Nagas could and could not? - were never assessed." Thus, the Nagas were found wanting on this crucial factor in the midst of their struggle.

Over and above, the NNC leadership is particularly responsible for the downfall of the nationalist movement. A.Z.

66. *Written Interview of Th. Muivah, General Secretary, NSCN* (conducted by the scholar, 1994), p. 11.
Phizo's prolonged absence was a setback for the movement. His lack of objective perception of the underlying 'trend' of the events and inability to change the course of action accordingly severely affected the Naga movement. In the assessment of M. Horam, "Phizo, in his continued absence has displayed an uncharacteristic lack of acumen and tenacity—the latter being perhaps the greatest quality." No doubt, the President's prolonged absence was the greatest handicap for the movement particularly in times of crisis such as during the late 60s and in the post Shillong Accord period. Over and above, the *Yehzabo* (Constitution) of the Federal Government of Nagaland empowers only the President to issue directions, planning and execution, pertaining to national crisis. As a matter of fact, Article 30 of the FGN *Yehzabo* reads:

The President shall be supreme Commander of armed forces of Nagaland, and in exercise of his powers as Supreme Commander, the President shall have power to issue directives for disposition of Armed forces, for planning and execution of military campaigns, to deal with emergencies like foreign invasion and any matter appertaining to the conduct of war.

Further, the NNC leadership failed to rise to the occasion when the situation so warranted. In fact, in any organization or movement like that of the Nagas, it is during the time of crisis, war and resistance that the leadership qualities can be decisive. In fact, the ability to evolve change of tactical campaign and strategic plans and successful manoeuvre out of the crisis constitute the hallmark of a good leadership. In the case

of the Nagas too, political requirement demanded of the Federal Government clear cut directions to the Federal Army along with appropriate initiatives. But as mentioned, the NNC leadership totally lacked the ability to discern and act upon the vital issues at the decisive moment.

Hence, the whole situation in the Naga hills was favourable for Government of India to strike any deal with the Naga. For the first time, in nearly three decades of 'Naga resistance', the Government of India was placed in an advantageous position when she could deliberately dictate terms to the Naga nationalists.

The Shillong Accord

It is against this background that the controversial Shillong Accord of 1975 was signed, which marked an important event in the history of the Naga people and specially of the Naga struggle for recognition of their right.

A facade of negotiation was carried out by the representatives of the NNC and the FGN and the Government of India. They were assisted by the Liaison Committee of the Nagaland Peace Council formed on February 5, 1975. The members were Rev. Longri Ao, Kenneth Kerhuo, Lungshim Shaiza, Dr. Aram, and L. Lungalang.69 At the initiative of the Liaison Committee, in May, 1975. Kevi Yally (younger brother of A.Z. Phizo) came out as a "contactman."70

70. Kouzakete, op.cit., p. 2
On the side of the Federal Government of Nagaland and Naga National Council, the first list of representatives as sent by Biseto Medom Keyho Killo Kilonser (Home Minister) included:

- B.N. Keyho Representing Federal Body
- Maj. Gen. J. Saney do
- N. Chunbemo Murry Representing the NNC
- Z. Ramyo do
- S. Darhu do
- Longom Phom do
- Veenyiyi Rakhu do
- Tangmei Konyak do
- I. Temjenba as Secretary
- Kevi Yalley as interpreter

On 15 September 1975, in a letter to Rev. Longri Ao, President, NPC, Zashie Huire, President of Federal Government of Nagaland sent a final list of NNC and FGN representatives:

2. Z. Ramyo
3. S. Dahru
4. Kevi Yalley
5. Veenyiyi Rakhu
6. I. Temjenba

They were allegedly delegated full power to talk with the Government of India.

However, unlike, the "peace talks" held between the Government of India and the federal Government of Nagaland in 1966-67, the negotiation in 1975 was a one sided affair. Right from the beginning, the Government of India dominated the scene leaving no room for the NNC and FGN representatives to manoeuvre. The Government of India knew well that they were negotiating from a position of strength which was a great tool in any political

71. Ibid., pp. 19-20.
72. NSCN Polarisation, (Published by the GPRN, Oking, 7th February, 1985), p. 5.
bargaining. Murkot Ramunny had advised the Government that "talks could be successful only if they were held from a position of strength."\(^7^3\)

Remarkably, even the Liaison Committee was utilised for the interests of the Government of India. Though in principle, they were strictly supposed to be neutral and act as a 'go-between', in reality it was not so. Rightly so, Rev. Longri Ao's letter to the Federal Government of Nagaland is obviously a clear evidence of Liaison Committee's pro-India stand unlike that of a neutral third party as such. In his letter, Rev. Longri Ao had written "(1) the integrity of India cannot be jeopardised. (2) NPC will oppose any secessionist move."\(^7^4\) In fact, Rev. Longri Ao even stated that "Solution had to be within the Indian Constitution."\(^7^5\) The minutes of the meeting of the Governor with the members of the Liaison Committee at Raj Bhawan, Shillong on 5th September 1975 seriously exposed the controversy over the locus standi of the said Committee. Over and above, it unveiled the latter's tacit support to the Government of India. Even S.C. Dev (one of the men behind the Shillong Accord) in his book confessed that Lungshim Shaiza and L. Lungalang (both Liaison Committee member) were the moving spirits behind them. Both of them confided to him that the settlement had to be within the Constitution of India and this 'sincerity' was used to the "advantage' of the Government of India.\(^7^6\) Another close associate

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75. Ibid., p. 21.
76. Dev, op.cit., p. 117.
the Governor L.P. Singh with appreciation hoping that "victory is not far away." 77

It may however, be noted that in the changed environment brought about by the internal conflict within the Naga nationalist organization and specially by the Indian army's established dominance, the Liaison Committee's room for any bold stand was awfully limited. It was against this background that the Governor threatened the Liaison Committee a number of times that "delaying the talks between the Liaison Committee and the underground could not be allowed." 78 Further the NNC and the FGN had to convey their commitment to accept the Constitution of India also under a threat. 79 Ramyo Zimik, the main spokesman in the Shillong negotiation also admitted: "the members of the Nagaland Peace Council (liaison Committee) were threatened by L.P. Singh on a few occasions." 80

The Governor and his associates by then realised that the NNC and its Government i.e. FGN was a 'spent force' and hence, their attempt would be to put (in their words) "a political seal (a political finish to the whole problem) on the plan." 81

The representatives of the NNC and the FGN entered into discussions with both the Liaison Committee and the two advisers in Kohima and held five meetings beginning from 31 August, 1975. 82 These were the preliminary rounds working out the modalities for final settlement with the Governor. However, it

77. Supra Imchen, Panger.
78. Kouzakete, op.cit., p. 25.
80. Written Interview of Ramyo, Zimik, loc.cit.
82. Idem.
turned out to be insignificant because the groundwork was already laid by the Government of India team. Dev succinctly writes:

Both the Liaison Committee and the 'underground' leaders have fully realised that the game is over and they are willing to sign anything that the Governor might like them to. They however, wanted to make it appear that insurgency in Nagaland has been stopped and settlement arrived at only after prolonged discussion with the Government of India...the leaders would want to make it appear that negotiation preceded the settlement. Whatever it be, for their own face saving, they wanted to create an impression in the minds of the public that so called Federal Government are negotiating with the Government of India on equal footing.83

This confidential note of the Commissioner of Nagaland seems to reflect the events meticulously shaped by the government side. The Governor through his two advisors compelled the Liaison Committee to secure a clear mandate from Zashie Hurie, President of the FGN and from Veyallie Metha Chief of the Federal Army that they would support any settlement arrived at by both the parties.84

The Governor also secured the commitment from the representatives of the NNC and FGN that 'Independence' as a subject matter will not come up for discussion in the proposed talks along with the indication that their willingness to participate in the Indian Union was in keeping with the spirit of the Peace Mission's proposal of 1964.85

The Governor tactfully secured the confirmation from the NNC and FGN leaders that 'they were competent authority to take

83. Ibid.
84. Ibid., p. 115.
decisions' and whatever decisions taken will be honoured by the Federal Government. 86 This was done precisely to avoid possible backing out in the future by the representatives of the NNC and FGN. Thus, the circle of domination was complete. The Governor and his associates had successfully clinched at least in principle the fundamental issue before actually commencing the talk with the Governor. Notably in all conscience, Rev. Longri Ao made it known that they would accept everything and anything. 87

Having obtained all the necessary commitments and assurances from the representatives of the NNC and FGN, the Government of India subtly accepted the proposals of the Liaison Committee to continue the talks basing on the following principles: (which was never honoured in fact)

1. The solution should be acceptable to both sides.

2. It should be honourable to both sides and to which a basis was agreed upon, that there shall be no precondition for talks. 88

Though seemingly it was considered to be the real negotiation involving the Governor, it was more or less confirmed what the outcome would be. Thus, it turned out to be what S.C.Dev confided to the Governor that "their main predicament is that unless they show that they have negotiated with the Government on two or three occasions before they reached an agreement, their image before the public would suffer." 89

86. Ibid., p. 349.

87. Ibid., p. 353.

88. Ibid., p. 340.

89. Dev, op. cit., p. 118.
The Governor after his meeting with the NNC and FGN representatives responded and said "I found your assessment perfectly correct." Consequently, the Government of India carried out the operation so smoothly and proficiently and on the other hand exposing the helplessness of the NNC and FGN representatives.

Eventually, the representatives of the NNC and FGN along with the Liaison Committee met the Governor at the Raj Bhawan, Shillong on the appointed day. The talks continued for three days and there was a series of four discussions. Some of the discussions were held with the Governor alone; at others, the Governor was assisted by the two advisors M. Ramunny and H. Zopianga, and M.L. Kampani, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs. All the five members of the Liaison Committee participated in the discussions. The following points were brought up for discussion:

1. Integration of all contiguous Naga territories, retransfer of all reserved forests and other areas transferred out of erstwhile Naga Hills to other neighbouring States.

2. Administration and judicial pattern and structure.

3. Release of all political prisoners, collection of Federal weapons and stoppage of security operations, etc., etc.

4. Election system;

5. Structural arrangement of Governmental machineries;

6. Re-appraisal and re-orientation of customary practices and cultural institutions.

90. Idem.
91. Rao, op.cit., p. 98.
93. Ibid., p. 350.
However, the Governor and his close associates tactfully shelved most of the issues on the pretext that those issues could be raised through normal constitutional means, which implied that the Nagas could take up these issues through the Nagaland State Government. The other assumption is that these issues were deferred and supposed to have allusion to "other issues for discussion for final settlement" (as provided in the third clause of the Shillong Accord).

Having actually deliberated for two days, i.e., 10th, 11th November, 1975, they came up with the following agreement:

1. The representative of the underground organisations conveyed their decision, of their own volition to accept, without condition the Constitution of India;

2. It was agreed that the arms, now underground would be brought out and deposited at appointed places. Details for giving effect to this agreement will be worked out between them and representatives of the Government, the security forces, and members of the Liaison Committee;

3. It was agreed that the representatives of the underground organisations should have reasonable time to formulate other issues for discussion for final settlement.95

Follow up of the Agreement

After signing the Agreement, the NNC brought out its weapons and deposited them in a special armoury constructed at Chedema, guarded by volunteers under the auspices of the Nagaland Peace Council.96 The rank and file of the NNC and FGN were put up in special camps set up by the Committee. Altogether ten peace

94. Ibid., p. 347.
95. Idem.
Camps' were set up. Seven of them were in Nagaland state and three in Manipur.\(^{97}\)

On the other hand, the Government of India returned collective fines imposed and collected from the villages. The Government also released all political prisoners numbering about six hundred personnel.\(^{98}\) Many of the political prisoners from Shillong (Mawlai) special jail, Nowgong Central jail and from Nagaland Central and District Jails were rehabilitated\(^{99}\) as per the operational effect of the Shillong Accord.

Finally, the Government of India suspended the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act\(^{100}\) which resulted in halting of combing operations of villages and towns by the Indian security forces and curfew imposed on villages was lifted.\(^{101}\)

Thus, the Shillong Accord brought the bitter hostilities and fightings that had ravaged the Naga Hill for so long to another apparent end. The peace that was established did not last long enough because the very nature of the accord did not facilitate a permanent peace; it was rather an euphoria. It is a paradoxical truth that the Shillong Accord which brought about a temporary peace in the Naga Hills also contained the seed of another bitter conflict which is in operation till date. The Shillong Accord was no better than a 'dictated peace'. Right from the beginning till the signing of the Shillong Accord it was altogether an one sided

\(^{97}\) Ao, Rev. Longri's Speech at the Conference of Naga Public Leaders, (at Kohima, July 7, 1976).


\(^{99}\) Idem.

\(^{100}\) Horam, op.cit., p. 178.

\(^{101}\) Kerhuo, loc.cit.
affair. The representatives of the Government of India often threatened to call off the meeting and even the representatives of the NNC and FGN were 'informed from time to time' that the safe conduct issued to them would be withdrawn at the end of this or that month and that they would have to make up their minds to go back to the jungle if they failed to accept the Government of India's term. Hence, under such conditions lasting peace was not possible to be ensured.

Effects

The effects of the Shillong Accord were equally significant. The dramatic change brought about by this accord caused drastic changes in the Naga nationalist organization. Such changes were sudden, far-reaching and definitely for the worse as far as the Nagas were concerned. It is in this context that the Shillong Accord was a turning point in Naga political history. The accord left a powerful section of the Naga leadership disgruntled consistent with their commitment to espouse the cause of Naga nationalism.

Sharp Division Developed

A resolution was adopted by the Federal Government of Nagaland emergency meeting held at Dihoma (Kohima District) on 2nd December 1975 endorsing the Shillong Accord and forwarding the same to A.Z. Phizo, President of the Naga National Council.

102. Written Interview of Ramyo Zimik Foreign Secretary, FGN, op. cit., p. 6.
for his consent. The President unfortunately did not officially endorse and accept the Shillong Accord. However, there never was an explicit statement from his own condemning the accord either in spite of mounting pressure to do it. Eventually, the enigmatic silence of A.Z. Phizo brought much confusion among the Nagas.

Significantly, Th. Muivah, Isak Swu and Alee (foreign) Command* officials earnestly asked for A.Z. Phizo's guidance and directives, at least three times in that particular year alone. But nothing was forthcoming and on the other hand Muivah and other leaders were gasping for life because of the military pressures and intrigues from within. Since then many leaders became disillusioned with A.Z. Phizo's leadership.

The foremost condemnation against the Accord came from the 'Wung' (Tangkhul) Region of the Naga nationalists and a seven-men delegation went abroad only to urge A.Z. Phizo to condemn the Accord unreservedly and without delay. The leaders of the Alee Command reacted sharply (this was what the pro-accord leaders were afraid of) on November 21, 1975. The signatories to the condemnation paper were Alee Command leading lights-Thuingaleng Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu, Lorho, Venuh, Moire, and Pamrei. They

* The Alee (Foreign) Command of Federal Government under Th. Muivah took the leading initiative in mobilising Public Opinion against the Shillong Accord and its possible consequences on Naga aspirations.
105. Interview of Th. Muivah, General Secretary, NSCN, by Bertil Linter Far East Economic Review, (Published by GPRN, Oking, December, 1987), p. 15.
dubbed the representatives of Zashie Huire as 'traitors'. In a six point note to Zashie Huire and other leaders of NNC and FGN, they declared that in spite of "the bitterest pressure they have been subjected to, the Nagas will forever hold their own." It was a clear rejection of the Shillong Accord. It pointed out that "no one in whatever name or capacity has the authority to settle the Indo-Naga issue within the Indian Union." The signatories called upon the Nagas to resist "any covert or overt" act of subjugating them and pledged anew to fight against invasion of any kind through to the end. Hence, to them an outright official condemnation became indispensable as the sovereign rights of the Nagas were to be safeguarded and kept intact for all time to come. For reinforcing the condemnation the National Assembly of the NNC was held at Suphao (North West of Myanmar bordering India) on the 15th-17th August, 1976. The Assembly had two main objectives in mind—to condemn the Shillong Accord by treating the work of Zashie Hurie Ministry as high treason and to regroup the already disorganized NNC and FGN.

The National Assembly reaffirmed the Naga decision arrived at in a plebiscite conducted in 1951. The Naga nationalist leaders like Th. Muivah, Isak Chishi and others referred to the

108. *Idem*.
110. *Idem*.
Shillong Accord as 'the most ignominious sell-out made in the history of Naga people'.

The Assembly as expected condemned Zashie Huire Ministry for the high treason. Further, it cautioned A.Z. Phizo stating that they would take him to be a party to the capitulation accord if he would not condemn it. The Assembly significantly decided to reorganize the NNC and FGN and remove any doubt concerning their unflinching support to the NNC leadership. It reaffirmed the post of the NNC Presidentship to A.Z. Phizo and elected Isak Chishi Swu as Vice President of the NNC (a vacancy caused by the arrest and ill health of Imkong Meren). Over and above, the Assembly passed a resolution calling upon A.Z. Phizo in London either to come and provide leadership at home or give his advice and guideline to the 'Home Government' so that the problem confronting them would be tackled. Undoubtedly, this reorganization initiative was a 'significant step'. A leaflet of the NSCN later stated that "the revolutionary patriots had not only saved the nation from capitulation, but they had also strengthened the position of the President A.Z. Phizo."

A Naga Delegation to London

A three member delegation comprising of Kevi Valley (brother of A.Z. Phizo), Ramyo Zimik and Pekrove accompanied by Kenneth

113. A Brief Political Account, loc.cit.
114. Statement of NSCN, op.cit., p. 4.
115. GPRN, Who Murdered NNC, loc.cit.
116. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, loc.cit.
117. A Brief Political Account, op.cit., p. 2.
Kerhuo, a member of the Nagaland Peace Council (as conditioned by the Government of India)\textsuperscript{118} went to London to persuade A.Z. Phizo to accept the Shillong Accord\textsuperscript{119} and as per provision of the third clause of the Shillong Accord it was expected that the representatives of the underground organisations should have reasonable time to formulate other issues for discussions for a final settlement. Apparently, the Federal Government of Nagaland had named A.Z. Phizo to lead the delegation for talks with the Government of India.\textsuperscript{120} This delegation had a series of meetings and discussions with the President of the NNC. The official meeting were chaired by Khodao Yanthan an executive member of the NNC then staying with A.Z. Phizo. However, it was learnt that the meeting was not go well and A.Z. Phizo was upset with them. Khodao Yanthan admittedly stated that "Mr. Phizo reprimanded all of them saying `they should know what they are doing', the NPC (Nagaland Peace Council) is a `killer Council' and so on."\textsuperscript{121}

Kenneth Kerhuo tried to convince Phizo claiming that the majority of the Nagas, including the church had accepted the Shillong Accord and from the time the Accord was signed, the violent conflict had ceased, Regulations and Acts relaxed and the political prisoners released.\textsuperscript{122} But it was evident that Phizo was not convinced. Ironically, Phizo did not officially or

\textsuperscript{118} Chief Secretary (Nagaland State) Letter to Rev. Longri Ao (Confidential), (16th October, 1976).
\textsuperscript{119} Idem.
\textsuperscript{120} Nibedon, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 349.
\textsuperscript{121} Written Interview of Mr. Khodao Yanthan, President NNC (K) (4th July, 1993, conducted by the scholar).
\textsuperscript{122} Kenneth Kerhuo's Letter to Mr. Phizo, 8th February, 1977, Waldert Hotel, London. Mr. Kevi Valley Stayed with his brother Phizo and others put up in a hotel arranged by the Indian High Commission.
publicly denounce the Accord. M. Vakha, of the NNC remarked: "Phizo miserably failed to denounce the Accord" and gave room for much misunderstanding among the nationalists at home with 'terrible' consequences. Khodao Yanthan disclosed that "Ramyo and Valley had private meetings with Phizo which I didn't know what they had secret understandings between. But it was obvious that they had." He further claimed: "I had a strong feeling that Mr. Valley had convinced somewhat Phizo privately, because he did not abrogate the Accord despite my strong pressure on him to do so." Secondly, Khodao also asserted saying that when Ramyo and Valley reached home they talked 'President Phizo did not object to the Accord .... and so on.' Against this the leaders of the NSCN later retorted: "Countrymen, how can total capitulation to the Indian Constitution be a process to safeguard the sovereignty of Nagaland? How could the burial of a man deep into the earth be a process to bring him back to life?"

At one time Phizo was inclined to treat the Shillong Accord of 1975 as another blunder committed by the Federal Government of Nagaland just as the Naga People's Convention had signed the 16 Point Agreement and secured an Indian State. But Phizo for reasons best known to him decided to be silent publicly as far as this issue was concerned. Tajenyuba Ao emphatically stated that

124. Written Interview of Mr. Khodao Yanthan, President NNC (K), loc. cit.
125. Idem.
126. NSCN Polarisation, (Published by GPRN, Oking, 7 February, 1985), pp. 6-7.
"had Phizo uttered a word of direction and guidelines, Naga unity and political movement would have taken a positive turn." But still the worst (according to Naga nationalists) was that Phizo took into confidence the Shillong Accord group only conspicuously ignoring the true national workers all these years. Thus, Phizo chose to remain a controversial leader till the end.

Meanwhile, the pro-Shillong Accord group (which by now was clearly visible) of the NNC and FGN had convened another National Assembly on their own somewhere in North-East of Myanmar obviously to counter the previous National Assembly held at Suphao and endorse the Shillong Accord. Thus a clear polarisation was developing between the pro-Accord and anti-Accord NNC. In fact, it was an attempt by the pro-accord group of the NNC to isolate Th. Muivah, Isak Swu and their close associates who made total rejection of the Shillong Accord.

The strategy of the Government of India was quite explicit concerning the Alee Command or the 'China returning group'. The manner in which the Shillong Accord was expeditiously negotiated and signed was essentially because of keeping the China group at bay. The Government of India wanted definitely to strike a deal particularly to disarm the Naga nationalists before the China group (Alee Command) returned. This approach was quite apparent in all the dealings of the Government of India vis-a-vis the representatives of the NNC and FGN, and of course, the Liaison Committee. Explicitly enough, the Governor L.P. Singh even warned

129. Vakha, loc.cit.
the Liaison Committee and said, "delaying the talk between the Liaison Committee and the underground could not be allowed. There was the risk of the China gang returning." Thus, the urgency in their approach was indiscreetly glaring for anyone to perceive.

Hence, when the Shillong Accord was signed with certain key members of the NNC and FGN, the Government of India categorically targetted on Th. Muivah and his Alee Command.

The strategy of isolating or liquidating the Alee Command became pertinent when the Shillong Accord was dubbed by this group as total sell-out to India and termed the signatories of the Accord as 'traitors'. As a result what the Government of India feared most was the revival of Naga nationalism under Th. Muivah's leadership and lingering of the Naga problem without arriving at a solution. To this end the new Chief Minister Vizol was obviously pressurised to produce definite result. This is evident from the way Murkot Ramunny made this statement : "It is this group that the new Chief Minister has to tackle first. reports indicate that he has already initiated action." The Governor of the State, L.P. Singh, while addressing the first Nagaland State Legislative Assembly after thirty two months of President's Rule in Nagaland State spoke this in reference to the group which repudiated the Shillong Accord:


129
It is my hope that misguided* underground Nagas across the Burma (Myanmar) border will see the reality of the situation and come to join the rest of the Naga people in building up the State of Nagaland. A strict vigilance in being maintained all along the Indo-Burma (Myanmar) border to intercept this group.133

Even the Prime Minister of India Morarji Desai's statement bluntly revealed the fact of India's concern to crush the radical section of the Naga nationalists. Thus, he said, "I will exterminate all the Naga rebels. There will be no mercy."134 As a matter of fact, there never was an abatement in the Indian security operations against the belligerent Nagas. With help from the Myanmarese Government, the Government intensified military operations in North-West of its border. Admittedly, Morarji Desai, stated in the Parliament on July 20, 1977 that: all possible precautions have been taken against any attempts by such persons to create any trouble." He further added saying, "we have every hope that the Government of Burma (Myanmar) will take effective measures to prevent such activities by Naga... hostiles

* Misguided Underground - This term first used by L.P. Singh was hotly debated in the Assembly. T.A. Ngullie (Cong.) stated: "The very name 'misguided' is not official word. It is humiliating to the underground Nagas who have been given a place as a group of the people fighting with certain ideology and spirit. Similarly, J.B. Jasokie (Cong) retorted, "this word 'misguided' should be deleted. If we called them misguided... then it is very wrong because one time or the other we all are involved in the issue (the Speaker was a prominent member of the NNC at one time). (Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, Ibid, p. 91).

on their territory. On our part we have extended full cooperation to Burma (Myanmar)."135

Later Atal Behari Vajpayee, the Foreign Minister of India paid a special visit to Myanmar to work out a detail plan to tackle the Naga tangle. Immediately, Myanmarese troops intensified operation in upland Myanmar.136 Thus, Th. Muivah and his men were facing the mountain troops of Yangoon. The NSCN while recalling their success wrote: "the battle they fought at Langnok village in the month of March 1979 in which two Majors and one Lieutenant with other 56 Myanmarese troops were wiped out by Naga nationalists with all the arms captured marked again the beginning of a new chapter of stout resistance in the East."137

Meanwhile, an attempt by the Nagas from the Indian side to contact Naga nationalists camping across the border was sabotaged by the Government for reasons best known to them. A 22 member team sent by the Nagaland Peace Council (with prior notice to the Government) to establish contact with Th, Muivah, Isak Swu and their men camping in upland Myanmar was attacked at Melon village in Meluri and one Captain Ashino was killed and the rest were arrested. This happened on March 18, 1978.138 Hence, the strategy of the Government glaringly revealed the urgency of isolating the radical Naga nationalists and creating a division among the Nagas.

137. A Brief Political Account, op. cit., p. 6.
In July, 1978 the Nagaland Legislative Assembly witnessed a great deal of commotion in which the ruling party had to face criticism from the opposition who found fault with the state government policy in dealing with the Naga nationalists. T.A. Ngullie (Congress) questioned the discriminatory policy of the government in allowing the NNC meeting at Khonoma while banning the proposed NNC meeting at Khensa in Mokokchung. The Chief Minister Vizol in his reply admitted that fact that such meeting would have gone contrary to the understanding between the Nagaland Peace Council and the Government of India. Further, he added that the Government being "so keen to preserve the hard won peace, cannot allow any attempts being made by any quarters for the revival of insurgency or to disturb the peace." Huska Sumi who was also an MLA belonging to the ruling party later made fantastic disclosure and stated:

the Accordists were lucky to have some overground political leaders in their support. These leaders were bent upon implementing the Accord, and considered leaders like Thuingaleng Muivah and Isak Swu as the stumbling block to the effective implementation of the Accord. With a view to eliminating Muivah and Isak from the political scene, a group of young educated Nagas were sent across the border.

Though he did not specify who sent these young educated Nagas, the reality of that conspiracy was self explanatory. This

140. Ibid., p. 123.
revelation was further corroborated by Tajenyuba Ao an ex. MLA who writes:

According to my information since Isak, Muivah and their followers...did not agree to Shillong Accord; a plan was hatched at Kohima to send more persons to penetrate into NNC-Federal headquarter and attempt to capture power ....In execution of the plan, Meyanger and some...boys were given Rs. two lakhs by some ministers and they were dropped by late Noklu, MLA in a Government vehicle in upper Konyak. 142

The ground reality was described by `Brig', V.S. Atem, Chief of the Army (COTA) Naga Army, GPRN, who then was a Lieutenant in the Federal Army and personally witnessed all the political developments. He narrated:

In order to deal with the people in the East they (pro-accordists) bought over some reckless youngsters like Mr. Meyanger Ao and friends. Mr. Veni Rakhu was also too glad to be their pawn in this game. These people tread their way into the East and joined with lakhs of money given by the traitors with the generous help of the state puppet politicians. With the help of their money they won over very quickly a substantial number of army officers and civil as well. Meyanger and Veni Rakhu started speaking very openly that Shillong Accord was never wrong. President Phizo had never condemned it nor would he ever do it and therefore condemning the Accord by Isak and Muivah amounts to denouncing the leadership of Phizo. They started claiming that they were loyalists of Phizo and those opponents of the Accord were anti-Phizoites. Phizo loyalists stated that they would abide by the decision of their leader whether right or wrong. 143

143. Written Interview of `Brig.' V.S. Atem, Chief of the Army, GHQ, Naga Army, Government of the Peoples' Republic of Nagaland by the Scholar, (11 October, 1994), p. 11.
Thus, the sharp division had reached a catastrophic state which could have been given a different turn with the active involvement and precise guideline by the NNC President but unfortunately his conspicuous silence was fully exploited by the pro-accord activists. In fact, the essence of the accordists' argument was that leaders like Muivah and Isak had no business to condemn the Shillong Accord which Phizo, the President of the NNC did not. In other words, they meant to imply that Phizo did not object to the Accord but were rather worried of the opposition from Muivah, Isak and their associates.

Martial Law Declaration

A fierce controversy raged the rank and file of the NNC and the followers of the Government of India. According to 'Brig.' V.S. Atem,

Signatories without a slight hesitation convened NNC Hoho (Assembly) at Khonoma in April 1978. Its impact on the East (Eastern Nagaland) was immense. Two schools of thought were heading towards collision as to 'who is the NNC'? Chaos and confusion prevailed everywhere in the East. Rank and file naturally were demoralised.144

Meanwhile, the pro-accord group made frantic efforts to convince the people about the efficacy of the Shillong Accord but could not succeed.145 Soon after, the Nagaland Peace Council sponsored another major people's conference to express 'deep appreciation of the representatives of the NNC and the FGN and the Government of India for ushering in an era of peace through

144. Ibid., p. 12.
145. Sumi, loc.cit.
the Shillong Accord (but it was alleged that only 30 hands out of 600 delegates did raise in support of the resolution).\textsuperscript{146} However, that did not alter the fact that a significant section of Naga opinion had begun to look on the Alee Command as the standard bearer.\textsuperscript{147} Thus, while the Shillong Accord signalled that the Naga nationalist forces fighting inside Nagaland state had conceded the operational victory to the Indian security forces and that the political wing had made fundamental concessions in order to survive, the group under Th. Muivah's leadership remained intact, if displaced, and committed to continuing the armed struggle.\textsuperscript{148} Undoubtedly the Alee Command was becoming a new centre of gravity for the Naga movement. Nevertheless, the Naga political struggle was taking a different dimension. Significantly, at this stage, "Lt. Col. Visacho, Captain Vilato and 'Lt.' Japo deserted the Headquarters of the Naga Army with a huge caches of arms and ammunitions and in collusion with the pro-Accord group they made a declaration stating that "all the men of A.Z. Phizo should come to us, but all who support Isak-Muivah may go to them."\textsuperscript{149} Thus, as anticipated, by and by, the Shillong Accordists were consolidating their forces for two reasons: Firstly, in order to pressurise the Alee Command to accept the Shillong Accord, and secondly to isolate Th. Muivah, Isak and their men. But things

\textsuperscript{146} Naga Public Conference ends in a Fiasco, Nagaland Times, (Dimapur) May 24, 1978.
\textsuperscript{147} Maxwell, loc.cit.
\textsuperscript{148} Idem.
\textsuperscript{149} Written Interview of Rh. Raising, Killo and Chaplee Kilonser (Home and Finance Minister), GPRN Conducted by the Scholar, (4th December, 1992), p. 1.
did not happen as anticipated and they then resorted to extreme methods to achieve their scheme. 'Brig.' V.S. Atem explained the background of this development and said:

Yes, they had well premeditated to take over the Government because that was the only sure way to materialize their dreams of handing over Nagaland to India on a platter. All power mongers and all opportunists entered into marriage of convenience. 150

Eventually, the worst thing occurred, when all the Naga leaders had gathered at Sector 2 HQ camp for holding Central Executive Council meeting, 'Lt. Col.' Subong Ao, the Commanding Officer, and the pro-Accord cadres staged a military takeover* and declared 'martial law' as part of their strategy to contain opposition to the Accord on 30th August 1978. 151 As per the Martial Law declaration all offices of the NNC (no exception of Phizo and others in London) and that of the Federal Government of Nagaland were seized by the Naga Army and this was to remain in force till further orders. It was duly signed by 'Lt. Col.' Subong Ao. Another notification followed suit which made it known that anyone who criticised Phizo and the Shillong Accord would be condemned by firing squad. 152 The NSCN publication, 'Polarisation' reveals that the 'Martial Law' declaration was followed by the 'supreme' proclamation which reads as "all powers Shillong Accord and Angami Zapu Phizo shall be totally of both

150. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, loc.cit.
151. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, loc.cit.
152. GPRN Polarisation, loc.cit.
NNC and Federal are in our hand...whoever will oppose crushed."\(^{153}\) Th. Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and all their subordinate officers and Cabinet Ministers were arrested on the same day when the 'Martial Law' was declared at 5:30 P.M. They were kept under the army custody at Hasik village.\(^{154}\)

To Muivah and his close associates, 'Martial Law' declaration was conspired pure and simple by the 'traitors' (Shillong Accord signatories and state politicians) and the Indian intelligence.\(^{155}\) Another important functionary of the NSCN also emphatically stated: "These agents ('Lt. col.' Subong and others) of the traitors were being guided by their masters from the West (Indian side). In the name of the NNC, traitors were freely working in the interest of the enemy."\(^{156}\) Thus, the NSCN leaders strongly believed that all the malicious campaign against them including their military upper hand were actually directed from across the border in India by the Shillong Accord signatories, along with some state politicians and the Indian intelligence. In fact, the overall observation of the whole scenario apparently seems to support this claim. Besides, the all out offensive against those who opposed the Shillong Accord by the Government of India is well indicative of its policy to isolate the hardcore section of Naga nationalists. Thus, certainly one can not rule out the involvement of even the Indian intelligence in an attempt to flush out the uncompromising

\(^{154}\) Written Interview of Th. Muivah, *op.cit.*, p. 5.
\(^{155}\) Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, *loc.cit.*
\(^{156}\) Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, *loc.cit.*
section of the Nagas and pave way for smooth settlement of the Naga issue within the Constitution of India.

Meanwhile, an emergency meeting of the Naga national workers were convened in September at sector 2 HQ by the Military Council extending 'martial law' administration in 'Eastern Nagaland' and the same order (which was declared when the Martial Law was first declared) was read out again. This emergency meeting made another declaration which clearly revealed their compromising attitude. It stated:

Phizo had been elected* NNC President for life'. What ever Phizo says or does Nagas will accept' said the Martial Law administrator. If Phizo would agree to accept even District council his words were to be final.157

The NSCN Polarisation also writes vividly the whole account and recalled:

Stealthily they started creating waves of anti-national propaganda saying,' do not criticise Shillong Accord; we should cooperate with them, Phizo did not condemn it; why you people condemn it ?!... they also began to utter openly... the people of Nagaland will go wherever Phizo goes, even to India.'158

Such propaganda and political stand of the pro-accordists was too much to digest for leaders like Th. Muivah, Isak Swu and others. To these leaders, it was nothing but a mockery of what they stood for. In their estimate every action was sought to be justified in Phizo's name. As NSCN stated:

* The word 'elected' was a misnomer as it was only a strategical decision of the 'Military Council'.
158. Ibid., p. 10.
The precious national principles were thus thrown aside; prudent reasoning insulted; every high treason of their commitment justified all in Phizo's name. 'Phizo, Phizo and... Phizo, is their political ideology.'

They also succinctly challenged the pro-accordists and stated:

"We are constrained to tell you to understand along with us the truth that reality is never weighed in terms of personality; It is measured but only in terms of its abiding value. Nagaland will exist but only for the eternal meaning that life has."

Against this background, one could clearly perceive that the NSCN leaders are seriously against personality cult and could comprehend the danger in it at the signing of the Shillong Accord. Their view in this regard had been written in great detail.

Meanwhile, a conspicuous plot to execute the leaders who led the denunciation of the Shillong Accord ran aground. It is evidently clear beyond any shadow of doubt that the accordists actually planned to eliminate Th. Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and some others, particularly the former two leaders who according to them were the stumbling block to the effective implementation of the Accord. However, "the group" (accordists) in the opinion of Huska Sumi, who then was a Minister in Nagaland State Assembly writes, "did not have the courage to execute the two leaders and other officers for some obvious reasons. Hence, they asked for 'shoot order' two times (so that they could not be held

159. Ibid., p. 11.
160. Sumi, loc.cit.
161. Idem.
162. Ramkathing, loc.cit.
directly responsible for it) from the then Chief Administrator "Col". Kholi, (it was alleged that the Military Council "forcibly made "Col". Kholi the chief Administrator of 'Martial Law' who in fact was not an ardent supporter of it but was appointed as a part of the policy of the accordists that if any killing was done and mistake committed, they could escape any charges) but he flatly refused saying that "our enemies are India and Burma (Myanmar) and not among ourselves. Any differences among us could be solved amicably." he further added saying:

Though I may not deserve to be the Chief Administrator, yet you have made me as the Chief Administrator of 'Martial Law'. You had assured me your fullest co-operation and as such during my tenure no bloodshed would be done.¹⁶³

Thus, the plot to eliminate the leaders was disapproved by "Col". Kholi. S.S. Khaplang's statement further corroborate the above incident when he made it known that "the lives of Isak and Muivah were almost eliminated by some reactionaries at Hasik village in Eastern Nagaland."¹⁶⁴ In an interview, Thuingaleng Muivah said: "Truth is that Martial Law-people dug three times our-graves and those of our fellow patriots at three different places. But a sharp rift arose among themselves over power-wielding and that led them to a state of virtual split. So much weakened as they were then that they could not go straight-away with their intention of dumping us into the graves."¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, op.cit., p. 5.
¹⁶⁵. Idem.
when these attempts failed miserably, the next step the pro-Accord group intended to hand over Th. Muivah and their associates to the Indian Army brigade Headquarters at Mokokchung for which a blue-print arrangement was made. According to Th. Muivah, "there also a sharp difference of opinion cropped up. The Ao group insisted on our safe handing over to the Indian officers, whereas the Tenimia party (Angami-Chakhesang tribes) held uncompromisingly to the idea of despatching us on the way on the pretext that we attempted to run away. Who can deny all these fact?"

Hence, 'Brig.' V. S. Atem of the NSCN writes: "Finally, out of desperation and frustration the two leaders were put on mock trial and expelled from the national workers for the rest of their life." However, by then, a number of anti-accordists had been reportedly killed by the pro-accord group. The NSCN leaders alleged that about two dozen of their men were murdered by them--among them 'Maj.' Nihokhu Chishi Swu, 'Lt. Col.' Khutovi, 'Maj.' Satnam etc. were the prominent ones. Thirteen of their men who were sent in two batches to Khiumniungan area for discussion and understanding were all murdered. Moreover, troops who were stationed in that region and others who came from the West altogether about fifteen of them were all killed.

166. Idem.
167. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, loc.cit.
168. Passim Isak and Muivah's interviews conducted by the Scholar
169. Idem.
Martial Law declaration was followed by another important course of development i.e. Pangsha Peace Talk. This was organised by the Nagaland Peace Council and the Shillong Accord signatories. The objective of this talk was precisely to persuade the Naga leaders across the border (who condemned the Shillong Accord as a total sell-out to India) to accept it and bring peace in Nagaland. However, NSCN sources totally negate the aforesaid account and related:

Right after the national leaders had been arrested and Martial Law declared, the Military junta wrote to the traitors in the West (in India) inviting them for a meeting. Traitors like Kevi Yalley and Ramyo Zimik were overjoyed to learn the news of the coup and therefore rushed to the East (upper Chindwin).

Just as the NSCN leaders considered the 'martial law' as an extension of the Shillong Accord, the Pangsha peace talk is also nothing less than that. It is another counter-plot, a stratagem of the signatories, the Nagaland peace Council, the Indian intelligence and the pro-accordists. Th.Muivah and others who condemned the Shillong Accord were obviously kept out of these talks which were held at two different places at different timings. The first meeting was held at Sulow village (inside Myanmar) from 21st to 22nd October 1978 and the second meeting at Khiangphu (a village on the Indo-Myanmar border) in the month of

* Pangsha - A village in Tuensang District near the International Border. Talks were held around this village where one peace camp was set up. Meetings were held in two separate villages. First at Sulow and second at Kiangphu respectively.

171. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, loc.cit.
172. Written Interview of RH. Raising, loc.cit.
173. Passim Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem.
January 1979.\textsuperscript{174} From the Indian border side, the NNC and FGN delegation was led by Zashie Huire, President of the FGN along with members of the Nagaland Peace council like Kenneth Kerhuo, Rev. V.K. Nuh, Rev. Imtiluen Ao, Angnal Anal, Kave Valley and Ramyo Zimik accompanied FGN President. From the Myanmar side, \textquoteleft Lt. Col.' Yamstong of the Military Council led the delegation. Significantly, the delegation from the west was accompanied by an Indian officer as an observer.\textsuperscript{175} What transpired between the two groups was obviously not made known to the public and if one is to believe the account given from the NSCN sources, the tacit understanding arrived at subtly under the cover of \textquoteleft peace talk' will never be known. But according to \textquoteleft brig.' V.S. Atem, who was then the medical Officer and Adjutant Commander of the Sector 11 HQ in the Eastern side testified saying:

\begin{quote}
In the course of the meeting the national arch traitors mesmerized their lackeys in the East that Phizo had no objection to the Shillong Accord to be the basis for further negotiation except that he was worried for opposition from the East under the leadership of Isak and Muivah. At this instigation some of the so-called Phizoites started scheming to finish off Isak and Muivah. Many attempts were made to eliminate them physically. But thanks to the good God who had saved them from such criminals.\textsuperscript{176}
\end{quote}

On the other hand, the Government of India meticulously took steps to neutralize any element of anti-national during the Pangsha peace talks. For instance, the Government of India imposed a number of conditions before the team trekked to the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{174} Written Interview of Zashi Huire, President of FGN (Adino faction) by the Scholar, (September 11, 1994).
\item \textsuperscript{175} Written Interview of \textquoteleft Brig.' V.S. Atem, \textit{loc.cit.}
\item \textsuperscript{176} The Pangsha Rendezvous (Editorial), \textit{Ura Mail}, August 2, 1978
\end{itemize}
border. The conditions were not made public for obvious reasons. Sarcastically, the Ura Mail Editor writes: "What is known is that all discussions should be held in Hindi in the presence of intelligence officer is not one of the conditions." 

Against this background one could get definite clues to some of the vital questions concerning this imbroglio. Some of the vital questions are: first, who was behind the idea of staging a military take over and declaration of martial law which resulted in the ouster of Th.Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and their comrades from the NNC and Federal hierarchy? Secondly, what was the motive behind it? Thirdly, was it because of tacit understanding between the "accordists" and the Government of India? Fourthly, did the "Military Council" achieve its goal?

To the Nagas in general, the military take over within the NNC and the Martial Law declaration are till date strange episodes and perhaps, the people who masterminded such operations will never admit facts but rather attempt to distort it or leave it to the unknown fate. The reason is that the Nagas in general have been critical of the Accord ever since the political failure became apparent. In fact, the "Military Council" could not prolong the Martial Law because of severe Naga public pressure against them to hand over the power within the organisation immediately to a civilian authority.  

177. Idem.
178. Ramkathing, loc.cit.
179. Written Interview of RH. Raising, loc.cit.
A close scrutiny of the happenings reveal that the military take over and the subsequent 'martial law' declaration which usurped the office of the NNC and the Federal Government of Nagaland were the outcome of the Shillong Accord. It is in this context that Rh. Raising, an important functionary of the NSCN remarked: "It (Martial Law) was an extension of the Shillong Accord."\textsuperscript{180}

Further, the involvement of the Shillong Accord signatories, and other elements from the West (Indian border side) in the military take over, the Martial Law declaration and the attempted killing of Muivah, Isak and their close associates cannot be ruled out easily.\textsuperscript{181} To corroborate it from the NSCN sources one can for instance quote the Chief of the Naga Army, 'Brig.' V.S. Atem who emphatically stated: "The traitors were being guided by their masters from the West."\textsuperscript{182} Another important leader of the NSCN also affirmingly said: "The declaration of Martial Law was the brainchild of Kave Yalley and Z. Ramyo, the architects of the Shillong Accord."\textsuperscript{183} Besides, the over-all campaign and rhetoric of the pro-Shillong Accordists based on the Eastern side conspicuously indicate the underlying tacit understanding between them and the signatories. Th. Muivah, in an interview, while pointing out the mistakes of A.Z. Phizo and the follow up of Shillong Accordists, stated that right after their return from London Kave Yalley and Ramyo Zimik sent agents to do away all those who were opposing the Shillong

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180. Sumi, \textit{loc.cit.}
181. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, \textit{loc.cit.}
182. Written Interview of Rh. Raising, \textit{loc.cit.}
183. Interview of Bertil Lintner with Th. Muivah, \textit{loc.cit.}
\end{flushright}
Accord and consequently military 'coup' and the Martial Law were declared.\textsuperscript{184} Thus, Thuingaleng Muivah declared: "We became the chief target of NNC and the Indian Government on grounds of the unsparing condemnation of it.\textsuperscript{185} Most probably the military takeover and the subsequent martial law declaration were done as a last resort by the Shillong Accord signatories and the pro-Accord members (in the eastern side) to flush out the extremists \textit{en masse} from the NNC and FGN set up as a whole to pave the way for a speedy end to the problem.\textsuperscript{186} Thus, the \textit{Pangsha} peace talks could also be understood in the light of this campaign. For instance, 'Brig.' V.S. Atem's statement in reference to the \textit{Pangsha} peace talk explicitly indicate that under the cover of peace talks, the Shillong Accord signatories were misrepresenting the facts in order to convince them that Muivah, Issak and their supporters were the stumbling blocks to the peace process. Thus, apparently, \textit{Pangsha} peace talks were organised to arrive at an understanding with Th. Muivah and the Alee Command cadres but in reality it was found to be a move to purge all those who opposed the Shillong Accord from the NNC and FGN set up and in defending the fragile peace process. Evidently, the pro-accordists succinctly declared:

\begin{quote}
Naga people would go with President Phizo wherever he goes, whether he joins the Indian Union or elsewhere and that the Nagas have to take a short-cut we should no more fight but settle the problem by peaceful means.\textsuperscript{187}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{184} Written Interview of Th. Muivah, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{185} Federal Politics take Strange Turn : Military Council wound up, \textit{Ura Mail}, (Dimapur), March 21, 1979.
\textsuperscript{186} Declaration of the Federal President SS. Khaplang (later published) \textit{The Nagaland Journal}, June 23, 1994.
\textsuperscript{187} \textit{Supra}, Economic and Political Weekly, April 1, 1978.
This perception along with the statement that "if Phizo would agree to accept even District Council his words were to be final." All this glaringly exposed their total submission to expediency and shortsightedness. Thus, it is quite clear that the Government of India pressed for total isolation of the Naga forces who denounced the Accord. Evidently, any effort for understanding between the Shillong Accord signatories and pro-Accord group on the one hand and those who did not accept it on the other were outrightly thwarted by the Government machinery. In the first instance, a member of the 'high power' peace delegation to contact Isak Swu, Th. Muivah and their comrades was killed and the rest of the team were arrested at Melon.188 In the second instance, three of Muivah's men were nabbed by security forces near Pangsha on September 1978 while coming with a message for Kave Valley and Ramyo Zimik.189 Further, the Pangsha peace talks were closely monitored by the Intelligence Bureau.190 However, by then, the Government of India was fortunate to have a group supporting the Shillong Accord from across the border.

It is to be noted that a full scale military offensive was already on (under an 'integrated command'). It was, as Nirmal Nibedon wrote, "the offensive known as the four 'cuts' principle-isolating insurgent line, isolating guerrillas from common people, shutting off food and ration supplies, and of course, assassination of rebel chiefs."191 Thus, the attempts of the lives of Th. Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and their close associates

188. Nibedon, op.cit., p. 376.
189. Ura Mail, loc.cit.
by the pro-Accord elements can be seen in the light of the afore-
said policies.

Military Council wound up

The Martial Law proclaimed by the Military Council lasted
for six months and finally on 9th March 1979, \(^{192}\) it was lifted
and civil authority of the NNC/FGN was reinstated. One of the
main reasons for switching over to the civilian government was
because of severe criticism and pressure from the Naga public.
Consequently, the Military Council convened a national assembly
at Lao in Lainong Region on the 9th March 1979 which wound up the
martial law and made an attempt to re-constitute a new government
by subtly superseding the critics. The Lao national assembly
arrived at the following decisions:

1. Phizo would continue to be the life time President of the
   NNC.

2. The National Assembly held at Suphao village under the
   leadership of Th. Muivah should be condemned.

3. The Constitution of 1972 should be accepted.

4. Isak and Muivah would never be a member of 'national' work-
   ers; they should remain (lifetime) as a mere Naga
citizens. \(^{193}\)

Th. Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and some others were still under
house arrest and there was no sign of their release. Instead the
conspiracy to decimate them had worsened. Th. Muivah
acknowledging this fact lamented:

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191. Heimi, W. Sbapwon, Report of Naga Political Affairs from
       1978 to 1981, (published by Federal Government of
       Nagaland, New Delhi), p. 6.
192. Ramkathing, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 3.
All our desperate efforts to thrash out misunderstanding were brushed aside. Everything was driven beyond forbearance. The impossibility for unity became the hard fact of the day. Surely no identity exists between the reactionary traitors and the revolutionary patriots. Yes, any truth other than Phizo's whim was suppressed at gun point.194

Unfortunately, for Th. Muivah, Isak Swu and their men, the so called 'reactionary traitors' were looking for instructions from across the border from India. Huska Sumi ex. MLA testified this stating, "the accordists did not have the courage to execute the two leaders and sent message across asking for instructions."195 Thus, the allegation that the pro-accordists based in 'Eastern Nagaland' (upper Chindwin) were mesmerized and guided by their masters from across the border in India is well established by a few vital evidences.

It is ironic but not surprising that the Lao national assembly was held right after one month of the 2nd Pangsha peace talk196 where the two main signatories of the Shillong Accord - Kave Valley and Ramyo Zimik represented. Over and above, the statement of Kenneth Kerhuo (who by then was working very closely with the Shillong Accord signatories) conspicuously throws light on the alleged tacit understanding between them and the pro-Accord elements across the border. Referring to the reorganisation of the NNC and FGN he stated: "the new move might lead to a more appreciative reappraisal of the current peace talks in its true perspective...something good is expected only

after their reconstruction is over."\textsuperscript{197} This explicitly suggests the good rapport they maintained with the pro-Accord group across the border in Myanmar. No wonder, the first news about the new move was announced in Kohima by Kave Yalley and Ramyo Zimik after their return from Pangsha talk.\textsuperscript{198}

Meanwhile, the Lao national assembly elected S.S. Khaplang as the President, Thepuse Venuh Chakhesang as the Vice President of the FGN. 'Brig.' Thungbo became the chief of the Naga Army and a few others were elected as Kilongers (Ministers) and Tatars (Members of the Parliament).\textsuperscript{199} Thus, the reconstitution of the NNC and FGN was a calculated attempt by the pro-Accordists to flush out en masse all opposition to the Shillong Accord. But that never happened. Instead, as soon as S.S. Khaplang assumed the office of the President of the FGN, he came to meet Th. Muivah and Isak Swu and the former gave a detailed explanation of the possible peril from the Accord and the conspiracy of the martial law viewing it as an attempt to eliminate the true nationalists and surrender to India. When S.S. Khaplang was thoroughly convinced of the whole issue, he accused the national assembly of the NNC/FGN of dictating terms and considered the Government formed as altogether illegal and unconstitutional as it did not carry the mandate of the people.\textsuperscript{200} Then later, after the formation of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland

\textsuperscript{197} Idem.
\textsuperscript{198} Heimi, o.cit., p. 6. 
\textsuperscript{199} Vide 'Maj.' Ramkathing, p. 2.
(NSCN), S. S. Khaplang clarified why he accepted the Presidentship saying:

If you (people), however, ask me why I participated in the meeting and accepted the office of the President, I must say that before me there is always the freedom of my Nagaland and the cause of my people. I must save them from the unscrupulously dangerous state of affairs. Therefore to save the situation, I ventured and participated in the proceedings of the meeting and accepted the position they offered me.201

Counter measures

When S.S. Khaplang realised that he had been deceived, he parted company with the Accord group. Then as a President of the FGN, he issued an order to eliminate all those responsible for imposition of martial law and the Shillong Accordists for their rapacity to impose the Shillong Accord on the Nagas.202 Eventually, the counter move was mounted under S. S. Khaplang's order and 'Brig.' Thungbo was authorized to execute the plan. As per the directive, several persons including civil officers, army officers and JCOs were executed. Some of them were given forced discharge.203 When all this happened, Th. Muivah and Isak Swu were still under arrest. Hence, the much publicised allegation that it was Th.Muivah who gave the order to eliminate the NNC/FGN leaders (Accord group) is proved wrong. Admittedly, Th. Muivah said: "the counter-crop was mounted by Khaplang and in the process all the execution of the ring leaders were carried out, 201. Ramkathing, loc.cit. 202. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, loc.cit. Vide 'Maj.' Ramkathing, A Brief Account of Martial Law. 203. Idem.
that is, before we were released from the custody."204 However, the counter measures were later endorsed by Isak Swu and Th. Muivah under NNC office. To the anti-Accord group, the accordists were nothing less than 'reactionary traitors' and hence "all of them have committed national apostasy and have come short of the glory of Nagaland."205

When the anti-Accord group learnt concretely that the Accord group had actually decided to physically liquidate them and surrender to the Government of India for which a blue-print arrangement was made,206 the counter move became inevitable since the question was one of 'do-or-die. Thus, the People' Council of Nagaland (Tatar Hoho) stated: "In spite of long forbearance and forgiveness of them by the national leaders, whose lives they took for mere stuff, this clique relentlessly attempted to force a total capitulation on the nation. Patriots could not wait to be slaughtered; they had to strike first and do so to the finish.207

The in-fighting which commenced with the staging of the military takeover developed into a full-scale conflict. It was a fiery situation where Nagas were hunting for Nagas and both sides suffered immensely. Though militarily, the hard-core section was successful in checkmating the pro-Accord group, it was done through immense sacrifice. On the other hand, the Accord group was doing better in propaganda and winning people's support (initially) because of its tacit understanding and support of the

204. Polarisation, op.cit., p. 20.
205. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, loc.cit.
Government of India, the Nagaland state government, and the Nagaland Peace Council. As a matter of fact, they collectively became one consolidated force within the framework of the Constitution of India as against the determined lots of the Naga nationalists who were committed to continue the struggle inspite of bitterest pressures. Evidently, the press reportings were in most cases biased, tilting in favour of the Accord group. The NSCN statement alleged that "all local propaganda machineries like the Ura Mail, Nagaland Times, Oking Times have also been set in motion to carry the unrestrained malicious view against (them)". Likewise, "all the Christian leaders were also employed in collusion with the NNC, to whip up the public into a frenzy against us." 

It is in this context that the hard-core section of the Naga nationalists who denounced the Shillong Accord were branded 'Communists' (a term considered as an anti-dote to Christianity particularly in Nagaland), with the ostensible purpose of fanning emotion among the Nagas, majority of whom were Christians by faith and in fact it was found to be so effective in mesmerizing Naga public. For instance, the Ura Mail used terms such as 'terror troops of Muivah-Isak group', 'communist militiamen' etc. To this the NSCN leaders retorted: "they called us criminals' and branded as, 'Communists' and organized 'Christ soldiers' to eliminate the patriots who were indeed for Christ." The worst was in Khiumniungan area where the public

208. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, op.cit., p. 6.
211. Written Interview of Isak Chishi Swu, loc.cit.

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were allegedly misinformed by the propaganda of the Shillong Accord group that Isak-Muivah group had become 'Communist.' It was here that a number of about two dozen Isak-Muivah supporters were massacred by the accordists along with the public. They were shouted down with the slogan 'Communists are coming'. The Church leaders in this area too worked hard in spreading this false rumour. 212

The Shillong Accord group also brought out (in a booklet form) a list of atrocities allegedly committed by anti-Accord group (as part of the campaign against them) including killing of pastor and burning down of churches. The document reported that later group carried out 'an operation of man slaughter, pillage and plunder...in the Khiumniungan country.' 213 Isak Chishi Swu totally negate the allegations and gave a detailed explanation and reiterated that the killing was started by the Accord group.

He writes:

Major Nihokhu Chishi Swu, who was serving at Thenungan village with his wife as teacher and Pastor was murdered in cold blood. Lt. Col. Khutovi Swu and his boys who were coming from the West were also murdered by Thenungan village. They also killed Major Satnam and his boys and Sergeant Tokhai and his boys in the month of December 1979. But these incidents were not known to us. So in the month of January, 1980, Lt. Colonel Ihoshe Tuccu was sent to Khiangan (sic) region to call their regional authorities to come to attend the National Assembly. At that time the Accordists along with the Khiamniungan public attacked Lt. Colonel Ihoshe Tuccu's command party at Choke village shouting 'communists are coming' branding us communists and spreading much rumours through the Church leaders at Noklak Khiamniungan Mission field. On hearing the

213. Written Interview of Isak Chishi Swu, loc. cit.
killings of so many of our people, action party was sent to punish the culprit under the command of Brigadier Thumbo and action was taken upon few villages like Thenungan, Chouke and Heikum. When the whole village was burnt, three churches caught fire and burnt. Action was also taken upon the killers. But no Pastor was killed. Action was taken upon one assistant Pastor of Than village who became the enemy agent. One travelling pastor Mr. Khumung by name was killed by Burmese troops at Chinkiu village while he was on preaching tour but the Accord markers put the blame on us.214

Similarly, Mr. Th. Muivah's statement concerning this matter endorsed the aforesaid statement of Mr. Isak Chishi Swu. Th. Muivah stated:

The Naga army and the people living by then in Khiamniungan area at once identified themselves openly with the accordists in spite of their steadfast claim to the national principles. In this connection, it is good to know the Khiumniungans of the time. They were good natured but raw. Most of them were simpleton. They were easily deceived with lie for truth. They simply didn't consider the probable consequences of their irresponsibility. Thirteen of our men were sent in two batches to call those Khiumniungans and other national workers who were there in the Khiamniungan region for discussion and understanding. But all of them were butchered which we did not know until a month after. Moreover, all our men without exception who were stationed with them and those who came from the West, were slaughtered, about fifteen of them. After that it was also discovered that Maj. Yamsuthung was already won over by Yalley and Ramyo on the promise that he would be favoured with the position of a battalion commander in "Naga Regiment" if he could manage to come out with substantial amount of boys and arms. To that treacherous end Yamsuthung was busy collecting arms and boys which Khiumniungans in the service did not know at all. He was done away with in time. That was taken for an act of hatred. They reacted with a vengeance against anyone.

214. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, loc. cit.
belonging to our fold. Driven beyond forebearance an operation party was despatched. Our men were shouted at as traitors and communists. They were completely brainwashed with false concoction about us.215

The NSCN document in a strongly worded statement later accused the Accord group for starting the killing of their cadres in collaboration with the Government of India and the Myanmarese troops. Thus they stated:

"Phizo's ... troops taking protection from both the Indian and Burmese (Myanmarese) troops at once started killing loyal Nagas, chopping off heads. Surely, Phizo and his fellow-traitors have sown already the seed of hatred and massacre."216

As a result, there was to be no meeting point between the two and the impossibility for unity became the hard fact for the Naga nationalists.

Solemn declaration of the merger of the ENNC and NNC

Shortly, the inevitable did happen. Till then, there were two Naga nationalist organizations functioning parallel to each other i.e. the Eastern Naga National Council headed by SS. Khaplang and the Naga National Council headed by A.Z. Phizo. Thus, significantly, a solemn declaration of merger was made on 29th January, 1980 between the ENNC under SS Khaplang and NNC under the leadership of Isak and Muivah. The declaration reads:

Whereas, the inseparable oneness and the single-whole entity solemnly declared on this historic day, the 29th day of January 1980

anno domini, that the Eastern Naga National Council, is merged with the Naga National Council, the only authentic political council of the people of the whole Nagaland. 217

This development was of great significance indeed for the nationalists and of course for the Nagas in general. It is significant for two reasons. Firstly, it fulfilled the long awaited historic merger of the two premier organisations of Naga homeland on either side of the international border. Secondly, the effort of Thuingaleng Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and their close associates for reorganizing and strengthening the NNC and FGN was realised. It is worth noting that hitherto, though Muivah and Isak and their supporters did criticize the wrong policies of A.Z. Phizo and his enigmatic silence, they did not move to depose him from the Presidentship. This fact is evident from the document of the merger declaration and other allied documents.

This merger was however a prelude to the formation of a separate organisation to channelise public opinion against the Shillong Accord to fight against the inertia and defeatist mentality of the NNC leadership and to promote the cause of Naga nationalism. Tajenyuba Ao writes, "Since 1975, Isak and Muivah waited patiently for five long years, inspite of grave situation and being subjected to all kinds of dangers and when every sensible approach made for reconciliation was rejected" 218, they formed 'National Socialist Council of Nagaland' (NSCN) on 31st January, 1980. 219 This was followed by the declaration of the


157
interim Government of the Peoples' Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) in
February 2, 1980. The leaders of the combined Naga forces
across India's frontiers cryptically declared: "The Naga National
Council has failed." 221

Following the formation of the National Socialist Council of
Nagaland in 1980, the NNC (Accord group) launched the biggest
assault against the former on 27th September 1980. 222 According
to the NSCN sources the NNC in collaboration with the Indian-
Myanmarese forces launched a join attack on the Naga Army
operation Headquarters at Langnok killing many Naga national
workers. 223 Throwing more light on this attack, Th. Muivah
detailed:

They attacked our post at Langnok in which we
suffered heavy casualties. NNC of all shades
gloated over it including those who were slain
just before the operation and those who felt
victim to the Langnok incident. We lost 72
with almost the same casualties on their side. We
could have crushed them a great deal had it
not been by the Indian and Burmese operations
during the time against us. 224

Meanwhile in the early eighties the Accord group made
another attempt to decimate the newly established NSCN by forming
a local militia called ‘People's Militia of Nagaland (PMN) in
tacit understanding with the Government of India. This time, the
nature of their understanding and collaboration with the Indian

221. Who Murder NNC? (Pamphlet) (Published by GPRN, Oking, 27th
222. Idem.
223. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, loc.cit.
224. NSCN Activities and Counter Activities (In) Naga National
Rights and its Movement, (Published by the Publicity
and Information Department, Naga National Council
(Khodao), 1993), p. 20.
security forces was more overt and glaring without any attempt to conceal it. Thus for the first time, the Accord group were openly identifying with the security forces at least in its offensive against the hard-core section of the Naga nationalists. It was strongly alleged that Ramyo Zimik, Phanitphang Mung and P. T. Kavichusa were the main persons who organised this militia. Even the involvement of Vamuzo former Chief Minister of Nagaland state was also alleged. 225

This outfit for quite some years, spread terror among the villagers in Ukhrul region under the watchful eye of the Government of India. Heavy taxes were levied specially in the area which had pronounced pro-NSCN stand. Thus it was aimed at discouraging the villagers from close identification with the NSCN. 226 The HQ of the militia was Leimakhong and Jakhama which was also Brigade HQ of the Mountain Division of the Indian Army.

A Critical Analysis of Shillong Accord

The signing of the Shillong Accord did bring about normalcy for a brief period. The political prisoners were released unconditionally and most of them were rehabilitated. The Nagas in general enjoyed peace after a series of fierce fighting and suffering. The Government of India suspended some of the Unlawful Activities Act and many Naga leaders were allowed to move freely to convince the Naga public and the Naga army and civilian cadres who were still in the jungle hide-outs. Later the Federal

Government of Nagaland convened an emergency meeting at Dihoma, where other members, the President of the FGN, Zashi Huire, Home Minister Biseto Medom and the Chief of the Army Staff "Lt. General" Vijalie Metha, were present. Meetings were held in camera and they endorsed the agreement reached in Shillong.227 Unfortunately, in spite of the frantic effort, the Accord group could not convince many Nagas about the efficacy of the Shillong Accord. Eventually, criticism and condemnation poured in against the Shillong Accord making it a controversial agreement.

As a matter of fact, right from the beginning, the fate of the Shillong Accord was uncertain and was destined to be controversial. When the NNC and FGN representatives signed the Shillong Accord, Veniyi Rakhu (a representative) refused to sign in spite of the attempt to persuade him. He walked out stating that he would have nothing to do with this agreement until Phizo gave the clearance from London or Muivah from across the border.228

In a way that reaction from one of the representatives was not a good start. Hence as a precautionary step, the details of the Shillong Accord were withheld from the public for about twenty days. Thus, the secrecy with which the entire accord was

However, when the NNC were distinctively separated into two groups, i.e., anti accord and pro accord group, he (Phizo) openly identified with the latter group. Perhaps, the silence of Phizo which was propagated by the accord group as Phizo not objecting it deceived him too. (Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, p. 11).
228. Ibid., p: 240.
effected left many doubts in Naga minds. Many in the underground ranks were unhappy at the swift nature of the accord.\textsuperscript{229}

Before taking up the general critical analysis of the Shillong Accord, it will be worth studying first of all the NSCN appraisal of the Accord which will indeed help one to understand and study the matter objectively.

\textbf{NSCN Appraisal of the Shillong Accord}

The NSCN leadership considered Shillong Accord as a 'total capitulation'. They did not agree with the other NNC leaders that 'it was a kind of process'\textsuperscript{230} and retorted: "How could total capitulation to the Indian Government be a process to safeguard the sovereignty of Nagaland? How could the burial of a man deep into the earth be a process to bring him back to life?"\textsuperscript{231}

The NSCN leaders did not agree with the NNC and FGN leaders that it was impossible to resist 'the colossal invading might of India and Burma (Myanmar), and that some sort of settlement by peaceful means should be arrived at. To them the issue was not a contest of strength but was that of upholding our historical right against the aggressive forces."\textsuperscript{232} At the same time, referring to the NNC leaders and particularly the signatories of the Accord, they stated:

\begin{quote}
They always over estimated the enemy in spite of his (India) practical inability to crush us in the past twenty five years and made fear-ridden overtures here and there which
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{229} NSCN Polarisation, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{230} Idem.
\textsuperscript{231} Free Nagaland Manifesto, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 8-9.
\textsuperscript{232} Idem.
\end{flushright}
they considered expedient at the time when Nagas were worst situated. This nature of unrealistic and ill-timed approaches exposed our helplessness to the adversary. He had got what he wanted.

The NSCN leadership is particularly critical of the perception of the NNC leaders and those who signed the Shillong Accord. They strongly believed that the signatories of the Accord had ill intentions. As Th.Muivah said: "high handedness and self-inflation carried them away." The Free Nagaland Manifesto vehemently stated: "your philosophy is that-let it be, even though everything of the nation is lost, I am saved." Referring to the short sightedness of their action the NSCN raised the question that "if they were concerned about national fate...they should have waited for us before the commitment, for they knew that we were returning by the same winter(1975)."

Th.Muivah also writes that the Shillong Accord could have been averted had the signatories exercised slight restraint. Thus, he writes, "It would have been far more prudent if they closed down themselves without jumping into that kind of commitment. In that case history won't have blamed them and the nation would have been spared from the shame of the Accord."

To the NSCN the Accord was in a sense a blessing in disguise in that 'imposters, casuists, demagogues, opportunists, the destroyer of the integrity of Nagaland and unity of the people are sidelined from the national trust.' This has given them

237. Idem.
238. Ibid., p. 2.
strength and confidence and made them firm in their belief that "the graves and the Accord are not end of the world of Nagas." The NSCN leaders thus, considered the Shillong Accord as nothing less than "total capitulation", from "Kuknalim"* to "Jaihind". However, as a matter of fact, the NSCN has successfully outmanoeuvered their opponents so far and managed to keep the Naga issue alive for a right settlement.

Dictated Peace

The manner in which the accord was negotiated, seriously limited the degree of good faith and capacity to negotiate the terms honourably. Right from the commencement of the talk, it was an one sided affair. As already stated, many a time, the NNC and FGN representatives were threatened that the "safe conduct" issued by the Government would be withdrawn on this or that account. M. Aram a member of the Liaison Committee even felt that the period of safe conduct given, renewing every one week was not adequate.

Secondly, the negotiation was carried out hastily without giving any time for the Naga representatives to consult their rank and file. Later Ramyo Zimik one of the signatories to the Accord lamentedly admitted that "they were not even allowed to

239. Idem.
* Kuknalim - means "long live the land". This is Naga nationalist mode of greeting each other and is used by all camps as epigraph in any official communication.
240. Free Nagaland Manifesto, loc.cit.
(Zopianga, Advisor to the Governor, warned the NNC/FGN representatives at one time that 20th October, 1975 would be the last date for "safe conduct").
communicate with their colleagues,"\textsuperscript{242} The reason was quite apparent. The Government of India wanted to handle the problem before the return of the Alee Command. There was also the apprehension that the Nagas flirting with China could exacerbate the already strained relationship between the Chinese and the Indian Government,\textsuperscript{243} a fact echoed in the Governor's assessment which ruled out delaying the talks between the Liaison Committee and the NNC/FGN representatives stating that "There was a risk of China gang returning.... It was not a matter of weeks, it was a matter of days for them to decide."\textsuperscript{244} And of course, there was the fear that the Naga struggle could spread discontentment in sensitive areas of entire North-East region.

Lastly, even after having the Accord signed between the two parties, the tendency to dictate the terms continued. At the first instance, when arrangement was made by the Liaison Committee along with the NNC/FGN officers to send a delegation comprising of the Naga leaders Ramyo Zimik and Kave Valley and a representative of the Nagaland Peace Council Kenneth Kerhuo to visit London to appraise A.Z. Phizo of the Shillong Accord and to persuade him to accept the same, the Government of India laid down five specific conditions. They are:

(1) The ex-underground leaders confirm in writing that the Delegation would be going with the purpose of persuading Phizo to accept the Shillong Agreement.

(2) The Phizo can be permitted to return to India only after he explicitly accepts the Shillong Agreement, and wishes to return as an Indian citizen.

\textsuperscript{242} Written Interview of Ramyo Zimik, \textit{loc.cit.}
\textsuperscript{243} Horam, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 180.
\textsuperscript{244} Kouzakete, \textit{loc.cit.}
Vide Ramunny, The World of Nagas, pp. 343-344.
(3) That if Phizo does not accept the Shillong Agreement explicitly, in writing, the ex-underground leaders would proceed to formulate the issues under Clause 111.

(4) That if the delegation failed in its mission, it would be given wide publicity.

(5) The Delegation's stay in London should not exceed two weeks.

Herein the element of dictation was explicitly apparent. In the second instance, the same nature of dictation was repeated. The 'Pangsha Peace talks' was arranged by the signatories of the Shillong Accord in collaboration with the Nagaland Peace Council to appraise the Naga forces across the border of the changed political situation and persuade them to accept the Shillong Accord. Here the Government of India laid down some specific conditions which were not made known to the public. 246

Over and above, the worse was still the incidents where even a peace emissary was killed by the Indian Security forces. In the first incident, a 22 member group sent by the Nagaland Peace Council (with prior information to the Authorities) to establish contact with the Naga nationalists camping across the border was ambushed and one of its member was killed by the Indian security force and the rest were arrested. 247

The second incident involved Th. Muivah's men. Nirmal Nibedon reported that three of Muivah's men were nabbed by the Indian security forces near Pangsha on September 26, 1979 while coming with messages for Kave Yalley and Ramyo Zimik. 248

Government of India's policy was to divide and weaken the Naga nationalists and the Accord did achieve this and sharpened the differences in the NNC/FGN. Even the Naga political leaders openly admitted the success of the Government of India, while analysing the failure of the Naga movement during the NNC time. For Government of India, it was "a splendid catch hauled ashore."\(^{249}\)

Against this background, the Shillong Accord certainly was a dictated agreement. Thus, two human rights activists write: "The Accord was signed by those Naga leaders who were virtually prisoners of the Government"\(^{250}\) of India. In the same line, a prominent ex.MLA, Huska Sumi also affirmingly said: "The representative of the underground organisations were virtually made to sign on the dotted lines."\(^{251}\)

A Short Term Solution

Another visible loophole of the Shillong Accord was that it was not meant for ensuring any permanent (long term) solution of the problem. This is evident from the following points:

First of all, the representatives of the Government of India were more worried about the immediate disarming of the federal Army rather than rightly settling the problem. The Governor, L.P. Singh cautioned the Liaison Committee and representatives of the Government of India that "the bringing over of arms should be

\(^{249}\) Free Nagaland Manifesto, loc. cit.
\(^{251}\) Sumi, loc. cit.
handled with great speed."252 This was further corroborated by S.C. Dev, who wrote: "We continued...with our strategy to get the maximum possible surrender of men with arms and ammunitions."253

Thus, the subject of disarming or laying down of arms by the Nagas was topmost in the mindset agenda of the representatives of the Government of India. In fact, the Government wanted to work out this 'surrendering' of arms even if the talk failed. This was well indicated in his instruction to both the advisers.254

Secondly, the Shillong Accord obviously was signed keeping in view the Alee Command under Th. Muivah, though it may not be the sole factor, yet certainly it was a moving factor. The Governor's own words admitted this fact. Later systematic public campaign against the Alee Command was carried out for its connection with Communist China and Th. Muivah and Isak Chishi Swu were suspected of trying to inject communism to the Nagas. The Government of India subtly and meticulously utilized the services of the Nagaland Peace Council in this endeavour. Even M. Aram informed Government that "they (NPC) had mobilised public opinion"255 against the China group. Longri Ao president of the NPC as well as the Executive Secretary of Nagaland Baptist Church Council (CBCC) came quite handy specially in their campaign

252. Minutes of the Meeting of the Governor with the members of the Liaison Committee at Raj Bhawan, Shillong on 5th September, 1975. (In) Whither the Nagaland Peace Council? by Kouzakete.
255. Ibid., p. 23.
against the Chinese connection. Thus, even after the Accord the church became quite vocal against Nagas seeking Chinese aid.

Thirdly, it was quite obvious that the Shillong Accord could never be the final solution because it did not satisfy the Nagas except providing a temporary relief. The essence of the Shillong Accord is a climb-down from the 'Peace Mission' proposals where the Nagas could decide to be a participant in the Union of India and mutually settle the terms and conditions for that purpose. But quite contrary to that, the Shillong Accord explicitly preconditioned the Naga acceptance of the Constitution of India and settlement within it. Over and above, the representatives of the NNC and FGN were not permitted to consult the people and the main leaders of the movement.

Thus, within no time after the signing of the Accord reaction against it poured in. Th. Muivah and the Alee Command repudiated the Accord in a strong term.\footnote{Maxwell, \textit{loc.cit.}}\footnote{Interview of Bertil Lintner with Th. Muivah, \textit{loc.cit.}} they were particularly bitter because the signatories knew that the Alee Command was returning that very winter and could have waited for them. Then Wung (Tangkhul) region of the FGN also condemned it\footnote{Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 6.}\footnote{Written Interview of Khodao Yanthan, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 2.} followed by Konyak and Khiamniungan regions, respectively.\footnote{\textit{op.cit.}}\footnote{\textit{op.cit.}} Over and above, the President of the NNC A.Z. Phizo avoided direct comment on the Accord and termed the NPC as a 'Killer Council'.\footnote{\textit{op.cit.}}\footnote{\textit{op.cit.}} Within a short span of time there were several attempts to infiltrate and join the Naga forces across the border under Th. Muivah's command. For instance, a good number of Tangkhul Naga graduates
crossed the border to fortify Th. Muivah's group. Another group of educated Nagas from Nagaland secretly made a trip to Lhasa to seek foreign aid. Since then the fate of the Shillong Accord was hanging in the balance and hence future settlement of the Naga issue also could not take place as per the provisions of the Accord.

A Controversial Accord

The Shillong Accord can also be rightly characterized as the most controversial Accord ever signed between the Government of India and the Nagas. In fact, the Accord is so controversial that till date some of its mysteries are not solved. Therefore, a brief highlight of certain points will amply help one to conclude that the Shillong Accord could hardly be free from controversy.

Firstly, the locus standi of the Liaison Committee as a neutral body or as a third party comes under heavy criticism. The Liaison Committee was formed by the churches in Nagaland with a view to bringing the two warring parties i.e. the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland to a peaceful and meaningful dialogue for settlement of the Naga problem. However, the political stand taken by them raised some doubts about their bonafide. The Liaison Committee even issued white paper underlying:

1. The integrity of India cannot be jeopardized;
2. The NPC shall oppose any secessionist move; and

3. Whatever the demand of the Nagas, they should not be upto that stand.262

The Liaison Committee's eagerness to cooperate with the Governor was clear from the fact that on September 5, 1975 they expressed a desire to go to the border and fight the returning Chinese trained Naga armies so that 'Federal' officials at home were 'cowed down' and did not speak 'Independence' anymore.263 Over and above, in a special meeting with the Governor, L. Lungalang, a member of the Liaison Committee suggested a number of times that "if the talks did not proceed properly it should be called off."264

Hence, such evidences unfortunately undermined their credibility as a neutral or impartial body which is a general rule everywhere concerning the mediator or the third party.

Secondly, the manner in which the Accord was negotiated and implemented did create an impression among many of the Nagas that it was not an agreement as such but a 'surrender document'. For any critic of the Accord, the representatives of the NNC and FGN 'were virtually prisoners of the Government'. It is true that the Government of India did carry out the negotiation in a stealth and hush-hush manner. The provisions of the Accord were not made public until the surrender of arms by the Federal Armymen was well secured.

263. Vakha, loc.cit.
Thirdly, another controversy of the Accord is connected with the wording of the Accord itself. Though the Government of India deliberately used the term 'representatives of the underground organisations' (meaning to imply that the Government of India does not recognise the NNC, FGN or Federal Army)\(^{265}\), it turned out to be a matter of debate and gave room to the NNC to make an attempt to back out of the Accord (having realised people's antipathy only) campaigning that NNC, FGN or FA are not underground organisations and hence they are not committed legally to the Accord. Thus, the NNC General Secretary P. T. Kevichusa declared at the funeral service of late A.Z. Phizo: "Besides the cease-fire agreement of 1964, there is no other Agreement, Treaty or Accord entered into between the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland."\(^{266}\) Then the pertinent question arises: Was the NNC really not involved in the Accord as pointed out by the NNC and FGN leaders? Absolutely not. The representatives of the NNC and FGN signed the Accord as they were duly authorised by the President of the FGN\(^{267}\) Zashi Huire. As a matter of fact, the representatives of the NNC-FGN had given a commitment in writing prior to the signing of the Accord that "they have the authority and their decision will be

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266. Phizo Souvenir Published by the Funeral Organising Committee of A.Z. Phizo, April, 1991, p. 17. However, it must be noted here that NNC's stand on the Accord and its subtle shift of policy was made known only in the later part of the 80s. Earlier NNC and FGN totally stood by the Accord which led to a lot of bloodshed and the emergence of the NSCN.
accepted by their organisation."268 Over and above, Zashi Huire, the President of the FGN and Viyalli Metha, Chief of the Naga Army gave in writing that they would support any settlement arrived at by both the parties. Further, Rev. L. Souhie Mahsi writes, "But all of the NNC and Federal leaders were involved in its implementation." Even Khodao Yanthan, an important Executive Council Member of the NNC and a long time associate of A.Z. Phizo in London, divulged hard facts about the Accord and stated that NNC was involved through Zashie Huire, President of the FGN. On the other hand, Zashi Huire, President of the FGN (now Adino faction) in an interview explicitly maintained that "the Accord did not include the NNC. It is holding (sic) by the Federal Naga Army only."271 Phizo was somewhat inclined, though not officially, to shift the blame of the Accord from the NNC. This is evident from his private letter to some national workers. He wrote: "Shillong Accord is the word of Federal."272 It must be noted that when the NNC and FGN signed the Accord accepting the Constitution of India and when its armed wing completely laid down arms and were rehabilitated by the Government of India, it is absurd to say that the NNC or the FGN was not involved. One cannot separate the NNC and the FGN. They are parts of the same national organisation. In fact, the President, the Vice-President, the Ministers, other Federal representatives, Regional

269. Dev, loc.cit.
270. Written Interview of Khodao Yanthan, loc.cit.
271. Written Interview of Zashi Huire, President FGN (Adino Faction), (conducted by the Scholar, August 11, 1983).
authorities etc. of the FGN constitute the NNC. There could be no NNC without FGN. Hence, the question of NNC not being involved in the Accord is baseless.

Finally, perhaps, the controversy relating to the Shillong Accord has to do with the quiescence repose of A.Z. Phizo. His silence over the whole issue sparked off a major controversy among the rank and file of the Naga nationalist and did cause terrible bloodshed. F.G. Bailey rightly pointed out that "He (leader) must decide about the consequences of action or no-action upon his political credit. The price of no-action might be an escalating dispute within his own team, which will eventually destroy it, or it might be destruction by an enemy or by some natural force, if steps are not taken to avoid this fate."273

A.Z. Phizo's precise reason for his refusal to either confirm or to condemn the Accord perhaps will never be known. Until his last, he evaded the main issue. However, much later (more than a decade after the signing of the Accord) in view of the mounting public pressure Phizo who still then was the President of the NNC issued a statement in a casual manner which did not imply holding any definite stand. He stated that "I have nothing to do with the Accord"274 and "It is a useless thing" and in the same breath he also said: "If they (people) understand it they will not talk about Shillong Accord. Why are people so worried about the Shillong Accord? The Shillong Accord should not have taken place. But what happened, happened. I don't need to

know further."275 Thus, one could clearly see inconsistency and lack of leadership in A.Z. Phizo's manner of handling the controversial issue. No wonder, the Accord group of the NNC took full advantage of this. Whatever they did against Muivah, Isak and their men like military takeover, martial law declaration, arresting prominent leaders, harassment or even live attempts on them were all done in the name of A.Z. Phizo. Thus, Th. Muivah stated: "The challenge was dangerous since there was a clear attempt to justify in the name of Phizo and NNC."276 To the anti-Accord group it was the most painful state of affairs where they were caught in between Phizo's lack of leadership and the Accord group (at home) justifying everything they did in Phizo's name. Over and above, A.Z. Phizo failure to give direction (despite repeated request) during the critical period aggravated the situation.

Criticism also poured in even from the NNC activists. For instance M. Vakha vehemently stated:

Phizo miserably failed to denounce the Accord. His telling "I have nothing to do with the Accord" is not enough while the world is watching us closely. Besides, his meeting with the Shillong Accord signatories without the slightest hesitation appears to be very ugly before the world.277

275. Phizo's tape recorded message, Nagaland Observer Weekly, (Kohima), February 12, 1987 (An editorial write-up remarked: Unfortunately it amounts to a case of having a lot of limbs without being able to recognise the body).
276. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, loc.cit.
277. The Naga National Right and Movement, loc.cit.
Another strong critic of Phizo, Wheha Kesen, former Ato Kilonser (Prime Minister) of Federal Government of Nagaland in a strongly worded letter to Phizo wrote:

We have taken the lives of so many people who proposed to accept the Indian Yehzabo (Constitution). but this time you did not condemn the Shillong Accord of 1975 which accepted the Indian Constitution. The world did not hear from you even a single word denouncing the Accord...Besides, you have been cooperating with the Shillong Accord group, understandably and refused the true national workers...Have you changed to another Phizo when the Shillong Accord was signed?278

According to Khodao Yanthan who stayed in London with Phizo till his death, the refusal to condemn the Shillong Accord was because of Phizo's tacit understanding with Ramyo Zimik and Kave Valley (Phizo's younger brother).279 On the other hand, according to Ramyo Zimik, a close associate of Phizo and a signatory to the Accord, the reason of the latter's refusal to condemn the Accord was "I (Phizo) have been lying in a low profile for so long in order not to embarrass the Indian Government, the gesture of which should be understood by the Indian politicians that I am the best friend of India."280 This lack of any clear perspective was also questioned by the Chief of the Naga Army, GPRN, 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, thus writes:

In the past (Phizo) used to shout down or denounce in the strongest term whenever anyone deviated from the official stand of the NNC. For instance, Theyu Sakhrie and clique, Ms. Gaindini lu and gang, General Kaito and the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland and even R. Suisa for his proposal.281

278. Ibid., p. 245.
279. Written Interview of Khodao Yanthan, loc.cit.
280. Written Interview of Zimik Ramyo, of.cit., p. 5.
281. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, loc.cit.
The chief concluded saying, "This schizophrenic behaviour of Phizo had caused a lot of confusion" among the rank and file of NNC/FGN.

Thus, it will not be far fetched to conclude that the Shillong Accord was indeed a controversial one. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, even the so-called ardent believers in the Accord slowly attempted to back out of it by explaining away. For instance, a prominent signatory to the Accord Ramyo Zimik who later escaped to US and campaigned against the Government of India in one of his campaign tour reiterated the stand of the Nagas and stated: "Nagaland is not a part of India. It has never been part of India-it will never be a part of India. Nagas will continue to defend their country to the last man." When the NNC was divided into two groups following the death of A.Z. Phizo, one NNC group led by Khodao Yanthan immediately announced their abrogation of the Shillong Accord at Wokha meeting. On the other hand, the other NNC (Adino faction) group also claimed that they had nothing to do with the Accord. Thus, at present no group is left supporting or identifying with the controversial Accord. Even the Nagaland Peace Council which maintained stiff pro-Accord and pro-establishement throughout those periods now attempted to back out. This is evicent from the statement made by the President of the NPC:

282. Idem.

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*Khodao Yanthan - He joined the SNCN on 23rd January, 1995, and now serve as the Vice-Chairman of the organisation.
As Shillong Accord is only between the Government of India and Underground organisations, it does not act as an impediment for future dialogues between the Government of India or any other Naga political bodies desiring to have peace with the Government of India.\textsuperscript{285}

Therefore, the only possible explanation as to why all the different Naga nationalist camps had denounced the Accord or in some way disassociated with it is that the Shillong Accord had come short of the desire and political aspiration of the Nagas. It is a fact that the Naga nationalist sentiment continued to influence the people (even after the signing of the Accord) and the void in this front caused by the Accord was quickly filled by the formation of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland.

\textsuperscript{285} The Weekly Journal, (Kohima), November 7, 1990.