CHAPTER VIII

TOWARDS CONSOLIDATION

From the military point of view, the Kohima expedition was not a success. The Nagas only made a show of submission, but they did not admit defeat. They continued to imagine that they were at least temporarily successful in outing the British from Kohima, and still nourished in their hearts a burning desire to have another trial of strength, whenever an opportunity presented itself. In fact, the Khonoma men who were in the neighbourhood of their old homes and having lost everything were in a position to die fighting in the event of a fresh enterprise as they have nothing to stake. Major Johnstone, Political Agent of Manipur, reported the possibility of a combination of Khonoma, Kohima, Jotsoma and Mosoma in near future against the British. But Major Michell, Political Agent of Naga Hills, reported otherwise. He stated in the end of 1880, that the Nagas had gracefully submitted to the new changes and had been ungrudgingly fulfilling all the obligations imposed upon them by the terms of the peace. He went so far to say that "officers could go about shooting unattended and sepoys visit the villages as freely as in the Khasia hills". In spite of Michell's favourable opinion, the Chief Commissioner was not at all inclined to neglect the warning of Johnstone.

2. D.O. from Johnstone to Hayley, Aug. 11, 1880.
Although he saw little possibility of a combination of Naga under the leadership of Khonoma for the present, he was convinced of their ability in sending out small parties for a repetition of Baladhan raid.

The outward acquiescence to the new changes should not be construed to mean that there was all quiet on the Naga front. It was as Alexander Mackenzie had aptly said to be the expression of an attitude "partly of exhaustion and partly of expectancy." This willing submission was prompted by their eagerness to obtain certain relaxations in the rigidity of the terms of peace which had bled them white.

INITIAL DIFFICULTIES AFTER THE PEACE:

With the lapse of time, all rumours and talks of a possible showdown with the Naga passed into oblivion. Major Michell now came face to face with the realities of the situation. "There was Cholera on the line of communications and scurvy in the hills; great mortality and desertion in the transport train, bridges and roads washed away, with no local labours to fall back upon for repairs." There was indeed chaos and confusion, and everything seemed to have been upset by the revolt of the Naga. In the interest of security and the preservation of law and order, a strong

garrison must be maintained in the hills for sometime to come. But difficulty was felt even in maintaining the small garrison at Kohima; its men had been actually living from hand to mouth, not having more than two to three days supply in store. There was enough stock of provisions accumulated at Nichanguard and Dimapur, but the transport strength of ninety ponies and fifty-five coolies were not sufficient to bring in supplies from day to day. In consequence of the shortage of supplies the sepoys had been undergoing terrible hardship. There was naturally discontent in both the military and civil establishments. Michall worked hard to improve transport and supply arrangements by impressing a large number of coolies. The commissariat was relieved from the duty of rationing the police to ease the situation. But this was only a temporary solution; for securing sufficient food supply throughout the year a good cart-road was indispensable. The Chief Commissioner also agreed that till such a road was constructed the position of the British in the hills could never be secure, the expense of maintaining the troops would be enormous and the discontent in the two departments, both civil and military would continue. He, therefore, sanctioned the construction of a cart-road connecting Kohima with the plains, as such a road would not only facilitate trade, but serve as a civilising agency among the Nagas. 4

4. Ibid.
Major Michell found it extremely difficult to effectively carry out some of the terms of the peace entered into with the Nagas. The dispersion policy in particular proved a great hurdle as the Nagas were reluctant to settle elsewhere and take up other's land for fear of future retribution. Difficulties were also felt in the matter of the realisation of house-tax and forced labour. This difficulty was aggravated because large quantities of rice were destroyed during the last operations by the British troops and much land in the neighbourhood of Kohima remained uncultivated.

The Nagas found it difficult to pay the house-tax at the rate of one rupee and one maund of rice per house. The Chief Commissioner on Michell’s recommendation agreed to allow the Nagas to return to their confiscated lands subject to the condition that they were not to be occupied before the commencement of the next cultivation season. This concession was, however, denied to the men of Khonoma; they were ordered to build their houses on separate sites earmarked for them by the Political Officer. Similarly, Michell’s suggestion of revising the house-tax to rupees two in place of one rupee and one maund of rice per house was also accepted by the Chief Commissioner. The Political officer was allowed to exercise more discretion in the matter of assessing any particular village. So far forced-labour was concerned no such concession was made, but the payment of
the full rate of four annas a day instead of the subsistence allowance of two annas by the Political Officer was allowed.5

FUTURE POLICY EXAMINED:

The last uprising had convinced the Government of India that its policy of establishing direct control over the Angami Nagas was not only inexpedient, but commensurate with the trouble and the expense. Naturally, after the restoration of order in the hills, the question of future relation with the Nagas engaged the serious attention of the Government. Sir Stuart Bayley re-examined the present policy of the Government which aimed at (1) to secure the exposed villages and tea-gardens from the raids of the Nagas and (2) the gradual civilisation and pacification of the Angami Nagas themselves. He believed that the Angami raids on British territory and outlying tea-gardens could not be stopped unless they were pacified and brought under control. To subdue them by a cordon of troops would not only be expensive but also impracticable. He would not recommend a return to Samaguting as some suggested, or to hand over the Nagas to Manipur's control. On the other hand, he was in favour of effectively controlling them from a commanding position backed by a strong force and by vigorous repression of internal disorders and external raids.6

5. See Stuart Bayley's memorandum on Naga Affairs, Jan. 29, 1881 (Supplement to June 17, 1880 vide F.P.P.(A) 1881, Aug. No. 617).
KOHIMA TO BE RE-OCCUPIED:

For sometime after the Naga rebellion of 1879 there was doubt as to whether their country would be permanently held. But that question was finally decided; the Governor-General in-Council concurred in the opinion of the Chief Commissioner that there was no alternative to the policy lately adopted of a gradual extension of British authority over the Nagas from some central position. Such a proposal would commit the Government to unforeseen expenditure and increased responsibilities, but the Governor-General in-council thought it worthwhile to act upon. Accordingly orders were issued to the Chief Commissioner to make necessary arrangements for the occupation of a central position to implement the plan. In February 1881, the Chief Commissioner appointed a Committee consisting of the Political Officer, the Civil Surgeon, the Executive Engineer, and two military officers nominated by Brigadier General Nation, to investigate a site for the future civil and military station. The Committee unanimously selected Kohima, but accepted the suggestion of Major Michell, the Political Officer of the Naga Hills, that the headquarter of the regiment should be located at Wokha for the present. It was considered unwise to collect a population of 3000 at Kohima until a road linking it with Golaghat was completed.

Sir Charles Elliot, who succeeded Stuart Bayley as Chief Commissioner, after personally inspecting several sites agreed with the findings of the Committee. The Government of India approved that Kohima should be retained, that a regiment should be permanently stationed in the hills and that the district be administered as British territory.\(^8\)

ELLIOT'S PLAN OF NAGA ADMINISTRATION:

Sir Charles Elliot, after a personal inspection of the Naga Hills, drew up an exhaustive memorandum in March 1881, for the future administration and permanent pacification of the Nagas.\(^9\) He proposed that the boundaries and the sub-divisions of the district be properly laid down; the rate of assessment revised; the houses in the villages thoroughly counted; revenue registers kept; headmen in the villages appointed; contributed labour systematically enforced; village defence destroyed; arms licences introduced; medical treatment at the dispensary popularised and vaccination encouraged; village schools be established; forest lands to be conserved and jhumming restricted; and to establish personal intercourse between the rulers and the ruled, their languages, manners and customs were to be studied. He recommended that the District officer and his Assistants to maintain direct contact with the tribes should

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8. Account of the Province of Assam (1903), p. 77.
undertake tours as much as possible. He considered free personal contact to be very much desirable when "the people to be governed are new to our rule, savage in disposition, unable to understand our motives, and restrained by our presence from prosecuting blood feuds, which have been the principal excitement of their lives." Elliot insisted that the officers on their tours to the villages should sympathetically enquire into their revenue assessment, their supply of contributed labour, their cultivation and forest clearance, their troubles from wild animals and diseases and such other subjects on which the villagers were interested. While giving emphasis on the need of such contacts, he was happy to note:

That the brightest chapters of the history of our rule in India are those which record the civilising influences exercised over Bhils, Santhals, and other tribes as wild and as difficult to manage as the Nagas, by officers who have distinguished themselves by their justice, their sympathy, and their kindly interest in the people under them.  

FORMATION OF NAGA HILLS DISTRICT:

The careful and comprehensive manner in which the plan of administration of the proposed district was drawn up by the local authorities revealed their genuine desire to bring the Nagas gradually under a settled government. The absence of any disposition on the part of the Government of India to unnecessarily extend the limits of British jurisdiction.

10. Ibid.
dition on the eastern frontier beyond 94°25' earned the high approbation of the Home Government. In April 1882, the Chief Commissioner appointed Mr. Mo Cabe, the Assistant Commissioner as Deputy Commissioner of the new district superseeding the strong claims of several senior officers, as he was considered to be eminently qualified for shoulder­ing the responsibility of the new administration. Along with the appointment of Mo Cabe, the title of the Officer in­charge of the district was changed from Political Officer to Deputy Commissioner. Although such a change in nomenclature did not mean any real difference in the power exercised by that officer, it was done to remove the impression that the principle of administration was not different from those enforced in other districts of the province. In fact, Naga Hills had now ceased to be a district over which the district officer exercised only political control.

BOUNDARY LAID DOWN:

Sir Stuart Bayley agreed with his predecessor Colonel Keatinge that for the present the Political Officer of the Naga Hills should not attempt to extend his influence beyond the line 94°25' of longitude. This line was actually a line drawn from the Manipur frontier running through the

11. F.P.P.(A), 1882, Jan., No. 119.
12. F.P.P.(A), 1882, April, Nos. 216, 220.
Kopamedza hill and thence northward along a lofty spur to the point where the Si‰oo and the Zullo meet to form the Dayang after which the Dayang would form the practical boundary down to the plains. It included the country of the Lhota, but excluded the Sema and the Hatigoria Nagas. Stuart Bayley saw the imperative necessity of bringing under control the Kuki and Kuchcha Naga villages, who were until now distributed partly in the Naga Hills and partly in North Cachar. He, therefore, proposed the reconstitution of the Asalu Sub-Division moving its headquarters to the north-east placing the whole country from the Barail on the south to Nowsong on the north under the Naga Hills District. The boundaries of the district as laid down by the Government of India in 1882 ran thus:

On the south and north these are identical with those laid down in 1875, with the exception of the portion between the Doyang and the north-east corner of the district, which had been left unsettled; on the west they are also the same as were determined seven years ago with a slight modification, whereby a triangle inhabited by the Kukis and the Cacharis bounded on the south by the Longting and Longfeng rivers; on the north-east by the Doyang has been transferred from the Naga Hills to North Cachar; on the east the frontier is that proposed by Stuart Bayley in March 1880, and follows generally the course of the Doyang to that where that river abandons its northward direction and flows south-west; thence the line is drawn to the Sibsagar border in such wise as to include all the villages of the Lhota Nagas and exclude all those of the Hatigorias, who are here the neighbours of the former. 13

The primary task with which the new administration was mostly concerned at the very beginning was the restoration of law and order. Although no head-taking raid was reported since Michell had taken charge of the district, in the early part of 1882 a shop was looted at Langtingbra, where six men were killed. Mo Cabe's exertions led to the detection and punishment of most of the persons who shared the loot, but the actual murderers could not be traced. Some Naga of Kohima crossed the Dayang and collected tributes from several villages on the other side of the border, but they were fined and made to refund their collections. An inter-tribal feud of Kigwema resulting in the death of one person was brought to an end by the Deputy Commissioner by demolishing the defensive works of the clan and compelling the accused to pay fine in labour. A police-guard was also kept in the village till the offender was not surrendered. Khonoma seemed to have settled down in its new site. It had obeyed to all orders and demands of the administration. The powerful villages of Kekrima and Viswema not only paid their revenue, but had surrendered the guns in their possession. The smaller Angami villages had accepted the new assessment, because they felt that by paying it they would be entitled to British protection from the aggressions of their powerful neighbours.
Disarmament of the Angami Nagas was a necessity for the preservation of peace in the hills. To turn them from a martial to a peace-loving people, it was indispensable. There was already a prohibition in the hills in the matter of carrying of spears and secret possession of guns. Notwithstanding it, a large number of fire-arms had found its entry into the Angami villages. Now that the situation in the Angami country was fast improving, Mc Cabe did not view with alarm the possession of a few guns in a village under a system of regular licence. As the Nagas themselves were aware that the secret possession of a gun was an offence, he believed that the issue of a few licences to some dependable villagers would serve as an inducement to the secret possessor of guns to obtain licences. This policy was approved by the Government. Really, it resulted in the surrender of a large number of stolen and concealed guns. 14

REVENUE MEASURES:

Both Sir Stuart Bayley and Sir Charles Elliot attached great value to the realisation of revenue from the Naga villages. The former originally ordered that each Naga house should pay one rupee plus one maund of rice annually.

which was later commuted to a house-tax of two rupees a year. No assessment was as yet made on the Rengma and Lhota villages. When Mc Cabe took charge, there was an arrear of Rs. 6178, but due to his good management within three months after the close of the year, a sum of Rs. 28,383 had been collected and Rs. 5997 of the arrears were also realised. The Lhota and the Rengma Nagas were assessed for the first time bringing in Rs. 8054, the whole of which was paid at the rate of rupees three per maund. Eight villages which had been left out in 1880 were now brought under assessment. Mc Cabe discontinued Michell's arrangement of demanding revenue in two instalments and decided to realise it in one instalment from the coming year. He collected the revenue in person while on tour after counting the houses in each of the villages visited, but exempting those occupied by widows and extremely poor families. 18

TRANSPORT AND LABOUR:

The most unpleasant task, Mc Cabe admitted, that the Deputy Commissioner of Naga Hills had to perform was the impressment of coolies for the carriage of police and military escorts, transport of treasure and rice. Sir Stuart Bayley directed that fifteen days' labour at a low rate of wages should be demanded as a "disciplinary measure" from

each Naga house. This demand was considered too much by the Nagas. It really fell injuriously on the shoulders of the people of Kohima and nearby villages, but the distant villages altogether escaped from the demand of labour. To avoid these exactions, the inhabitants of Samaguting had left their villages and those of Kohima threatened to do so at the earliest opportunity. Sir Charles Elliot personally saw the great hardship caused by it. He suggested that a system should be introduced in such a way so that the demand for labour would be uniform and equitably distributed over a large number of villages. Accordingly, McCabe prepared a register wherein the name of the village and the requirement of coolies to be furnished by each village were recorded. As a result most of the difficulties in the matter of transport and labour were overcome. His inducements to obtain free labour resulted in the arrival of coolies from every part of the district, from Manipur and even from independent tribes.

NAGA HILLS MILITARY POLICE BATTALION:

Sir Stuart Bayley suggested an increase of the present strength of the Naga Hills Police to take over all frontier outpost duty, thereby relieving the military, whose strength might then be reduced. His successor, Sir Charles Elliot after consultations with the highest Army Authorities

16, F.P.P., 1882, Jan., No. 136.
separated the armed police from the civil. Instead of being scattered over the several districts, they were organised into four "Military Police Battalions", drilled and disciplined on the regimental system, and commanded by junior officers of the army. In 1882, Captain Plowden, who was appointed Commandant of the new Naga Hills Military Police Battalion reorganised it. The total strength of the battalion, at first was 568 of all ranks, which was in course of a few years increased to 700. At the time of its formation, the Naga Hills Military Police Battalion, besides Kohima held the posts of Borpothar, Dimapur, Piphima, Mihu-guard, Wokha, Themakodima, Lozama and Henima.

EFFECTS OF SETTLED ADMINISTRATION:

Before McCabe's assumption of office as Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills, British influence practically extended round the posts of Kohima, Wokha, Khonoma and on the road to Golaghat. The outlying villages were completely out of British control. The establishment of two permanent posts,

** After the opening of the posts at Mokokchung, Mongsemd and Tamlu, the strength of the battalion was increased to about 671, but the posts of Borpothar, Dimapur and Piphima by that time were abolished.

Later the Military Police Battalions were christened as Assam Rifles, which in a great measure replaced the military garrison of the province.

(For details see, Shakespear, L.W.; History of the Assam Rifles, pp.158-170, and Gait E.A.; History of Assam, pp. 341-2).
One at Henima in the West half-way towards the Naga Hills border, and the other at Lozama, half-way to Wokha had brought the Nagas of the intervening territory for the first time under the influence of the British authority. McCabe had visited almost every village of the Angami, Kuchchh Naga and the Kukis within his jurisdiction. His Assistant had also visited most of them within his charge. Everywhere the officials were received in a most friendly manner by the Nagas. The absence of opposition, the friendly receptions, the ready payment of revenue, the surrender of fire-arms, the supply of labour and the eagerness to submit their internal disputes to the arbitration of the officials of the Government went to prove that the disposition of the Nagas towards the British had changed. Even the Secretary of State for India, being impressed by these changes observed:

The cheerful payment of revenue by the Naga villages which have been brought under assessment and the continued maintenance of tranquility are encouraging signs and induce a hope that the Chief Commissioner may not be too sanguine in anticipating that the Angamis, like other neighbouring tribes noted for similar characteristics, may not gradually acquire the habits of peaceful and quiet life.

APPRECIATION OF MCCABE'S WORK:

In December 1884, Sir Charles Elliot paid his third visit to the district. In places where on his previous visits,
it was not possible for the Chief Commissioner to travel without strong armed escort, he was now able to ride, or walk unaccompanied by any except that of the Deputy Commissioner. The situation seemed to be so much improved that the Chief Commissioner considered it safe to lift the embargo against the residence of women and children at Kohima and to permit the sepoys of the 44th Regiment to take their families with them on their transfer to that station. The country according to him was now to all outward appearance as peaceful as a district in Assam. These were in his opinion due to the influence of Mr. Cabe's character, his knowledge of the Angami language, his readiness of access, and his sympathy with the wants and feelings of the people of his district. Sir Charles had nothing but all praise for the Deputy Commissioner for his sincere and sustained efforts to serve the people of the Naga Hills. He had the pleasure to record:

The work which Mr. M. Cabe had done in civilising the Angami Nagas and in spreading among them a spirit of content and loyalty is almost unprecedented in the present generation, and may perhaps not unfitly be compared with the influence exerted by the greatest men in Anglo-Indian history over the Santhals, the Bhils and the tribes of the Derajot.

AGGRESSIONS ON THE LHOTAS:

Although peace and quietness seemed to prevail at long last in the Angami hills, the troubles were mostly from

the trans-frontier Nagas by their aggressions on the administered territories. The Lhota Nagas were the first to suffer from the outrages of the Somas who inhabited the tract outside the area of political control. In November 1881, Philemi, a Sema village had to be punished for raiding the Lhota village of Chingaki, where they had killed two of the latter tribe. The village had to be temporarily occupied by Mc Cabe, in order to coerce the guilty village to surrender the prime offender who was later sentenced to ten years imprisonment. 19

In 1883, the Hatigoria village of Ratami had also to be punished for murdering two Lhotas. As the accused persons were not surrendered on demand Mc Cabe took recourse to the most severe measure of burning the village to deter other villages from committing such atrocities in future. He hoped that the burning of Ratami which could be seen by all the villages within a radius of fifty miles would create such a horror in their minds that none of them "will dare attempt a raid against any of those under British occupation." While resorting to this extreme punishment he was under the impression that "unless immunity of this nature can be guaranteed the work of civilising the tribes under protection will be of very slow progress." 20

Whatever might have been the justifications offered by Mc Cabe in resorting to such measures, the burning of Ratami had no effect even on the neighbouring Hatisories. In May 1884, two Lhota Nagas of the village of Koio were attacked by the Nagas of Nungtang while travelling in the Hatisoria country. One of the Lhotas was killed and the other wounded. Mc Cabe was ordered to proceed against Nungtang as soon as the Dayang was fordable, but it remained unpunished till January 1885. In July 1884, the Raja of Lakhuti (a leading Lhota village) reported that his nephew while in company with another Lhota was murdered by the Hatisories of Nungtung. A punitive expedition led by the Commandant of the Naga Hills Police Force accompanied by Mc Cabe proceeded against the offending village of Nungtung. But the troops found the village completely deserted. On enquiry Mc Cabe learnt that the two Lhotas were the real aggressors in this case. Mc Cabe sentenced the surviving Lhota who was one of the chief accused to seven years' imprisonment. The village of Lakhuti was heavily fined and its chief kept a prisoner pending payment of the same. The village of Okotso was also fined for abetting Lakhuti in the offence.

The result of these punitive expeditions against the trans-frontier Nagas could not besaid to be successful except in reducing the frequency of their outrages on the

22. Ibid.
British border.

RELATIONS WITH THE EASTERN NAGAS:

Ever since the Geleki raid of 1867, the relations of the British with the Eastern Nagas continued to be peaceful, but among themselves their old feuds continued. The feud between the Namchang and Borduaria Nagas, which was composed through the mediation of the Bareghoria Gossain was renewed with greater ferocity. In fact, the attack of the latter upon the former became so much dreadful that the Namchangia chief appealed to the Chief Commissioner not to take into cognisance any attack or feuds among the Naga tribes, as long as they did not violate the frontier of the British territory or murder any British subject. 23

In 1881, Reverend E.W. Clark, an American Missionary who had established a mission centre among the Ao Nagas at Holongyimchen or Deka Haimong, brought to the notice of the Deputy Commissioner of several raids by the men of the Inner Line on the Christian village of Nowgaon. He also referred to a raid on the villages to the west of it by the Kamsing Nagas who had killed thirty Warman Nagas. He reported that the Christian Nagas who had given up violence under the influence of the new religion were in great apprehension of retaliation from the Western Nagas, as they allowed passage

23. F.P.P. (Extl., A) 1884, Dec., Nos. 4-10.
to their enemies. Clerk had sought the intervention of the Deputy Commissioner of Sibsagar to prevent the raiders from reprisal and to permit the Christian Nagas to provide themselves with a few hands of fire-arms. The latter expressed his inability to take any action against the raiders, but permitted the village to purchase few fire-arms with sufficient ammunition for their protection. They were further told to avoid giving all provocations to their enemies and to depend upon themselves for their own protection.

In 1883, two Nagas of Molong were murdered by the Nagas of Salachu, while trading in the plains. The murderers were abetted in the act by the villagers of Bura Haimon. The chief men of Salachu refused to come to the Deputy Commissioner to answer their charges; only when it was made known to them that arrangements were being made to punish them that they reported themselves. In the early part of 1884, a murder was committed by the Banpheras on a party of Joboka Nagas. A force of the Frontier Police was despatched to punish them, but before the actual fighting began, they submitted and agreed to pay a fine of rupees fifty. The Chief Commissioner considered the fine to be too lenient and desired that steps should be immediately taken to demand of them the surrender of the offenders. The Deputy Commissioner attempted to carry out his wishes, but he met with such opposition that he was compelled to abandon the same.

Besides the cases cited above, there were reports of more feuds and outrages and the Deputy Commissioner of Sibsagar mentioned in his report eleven such incidents which he described as "little wars". He was successful in mediating between the rival parties in some, but failed in majority of the cases.26

MILITARY PROMENADES TO THE FRONTIER;

The continued unrest among the different Naga tribes living on the southern boundary of the Sibsagar district and their never-ending outrages on the border of the British territory had affected the peace and security among the local population and imported labour in the tea-gardens at the foot of the hills. Indeed, the situation had become so much alarming that Sir Charles Elliot considered that effective measures to stop these outrages could no longer be delayed. After discussing with the Deputy Commissioners of Naga Hills, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur districts, the Chief Commissioner recommended in August 1884, that a strong force of the Naga Hills Frontier Police should march along the border of the Naga Hills, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur districts and agreements should be taken from the chiefs of the important Naga villages situated outside and adjacent to the British territory, demanding promise of good behaviour and subordination to

British authority. A list should also be prepared by each Deputy Commissioner, of the villages which were to be placed under his political charge according to their positions. Any violations of the agreements thus entered into or of the orders of the Deputy Commissioner would involve prohibitions from trade and sometimes a punitive expedition. A Deputy Commissioner should not interfere in offences committed beyond the Inner Line excepting murder and his protection would be limited to such villages which had entered his list.

ELLIOIT'S PLAN DISAPPROVED:

Elliot's recommendations were analogous to those which were adopted by Brodie during 1840-1846. The proposed plan of the Chief Commissioner was essentially based on a "forward policy" to be preceded by a military promenade along the Naga frontier. Such a policy meant "indefinite extension of responsibilities, endless expeditions and an increased area of administration" covering large tract between the Inner Line on the north and Manipur and Burma on the south. The Government of India which was not prepared to any very marked alteration in the existing policy towards the tribes in question, preferred the more vigorous prosecution of old methods limited to those cases where they involved (1) outrages on British subjects, (2) violation of the Inner Line,  

27. Ibid.
and (3) danger to the interests of the people dwelling inside the British boundaries by reason of the proximity of disturbances outside, such as, disturbances as would likely to intimidate coolies employed in the tea-estates or cultivators.

On the receipt of the Supreme Government's order, the Chief Commissioner abandoned his proposed scheme of military promenade along the Naga frontier. He, however, directed the Deputy Commissioners of the three districts adjacent to the Naga Hills to undertake expeditions through a definite tract lying outside their respective districts to extend their political influence over the tribes. But they were cautioned not to intrude into any village which was not willing to receive them except in the case of Nungtang which had been guilty of murder of British subjects.28

PROMENADES OF MC CABE AND CLARKE:

Accordingly, for Mc Cabe two expeditions were planned, the first through the East Angami country, and the other through the Angami villages east of Wokha; and Captain Clarke's (D.C. of Sibsagar) expedition was to cover the villages on the Sibsagar frontier. In the beginning of 1885, Mc Cabe with an escort of the Naga Hills Military Police commanded by Captain Howden made a thorough tour through the country lying between the Kopamedza range, the Lanier and the

Tizu rivers. And again another force of 100 rifles with Mr. Cabe, Hlowden, Dr. Bora, the Civil Surgeon, and Mr. Borderick, the Sub-Divisional Officer at Wokha, crossed the Dayang to punish Nungtang to extend political control over the Trans-Dayang people and to determine the limits of the Naga Hills political control towards Sibsagar. At Nungtang some resistance was met, a few Somas were killed and the place was destroyed. The party then passed through Nunkum (Ao), Lophami (Sema), Uagma, Longsa (Ao) and Salachu.

Captain Clarke, Deputy Commissioner of Sibsagar who had undertaken a similar expedition through the eastern frontier of his district arrived at Bura Haimong, where he met Mr. Cabe and his party. The two Deputy Commissioners on their meeting discussed about the limits of their respective jurisdictions and agreed upon the desirability of locating a strong post in the hills to check raids and inter-village fighting. The most noteworthy feature of these expeditions was that none of the officials met with any opposition and coolies and supplies were obtained without any difficulty.

SUBJUGATION OF THE TRANS-FRONTIER TRIBES: MC Cabe'S PLAN:

Mr. Cabe did not consider annual military promenades to be the only effective method of controlling the trans-frontier tribes. He believed that an outpost in the heart of

30. Ibid.
the Ao country would be able to effectively control these tribes. Accordingly, he suggested that the Frontier police of the district numbering about 120 men be incorporated with the Naga Hills Police and posted in the Ao country. A detailed scheme to this effect was drawn up with Captain Plowden.31 According to this plan, it was proposed to bring under political control all that portion of the hills lying west of the Dikhow, from its entry into the plains above the Bihubar police frontier outpost up to the Sema village of Chesami, when the boundary of the new tract would follow a well-marked ridge until its junction with the existing frontier of the Naga Hills District at Chajubama. In order to enable the Deputy Commissioner and the Sub-Divisional Officer to control the new tract effectively, it was proposed to have an outpost of 50 men at some place near Chichani, a village in the Sema area; another outpost of 50 men at Nowganor or Merangkong, in the northern portion; of 190 men under a Sub-Commandant at Ungma, which was situated in the centre of the tract and would be his headquarter. The three outposts proposed would be garrisoned by 120 men who now constituted the Frontier Police Force of Sibsagar supplemented by a transfer of a portion of the Naga Hills Force now located at Kohima.

The above plan proposed by M. Cabe for the effectual control of the tribes residing beyond the frontier of the

British settled districts including the District of Ngga Hills was supported by Captain Clarke. The cost of carrying out this scheme as Plowden estimated would be about Rs. 14,500/-. To meet this expenditure, he suggested the levying of a house tax at the rate of Rs. 2/- per house on all the houses of the proposed area, which would bring an annual revenue between twenty to twenty five thousand rupees. Mr. Ward, the officiating Chief Commissioner, did not support this proposal on the ground that it seemed to go beyond the policy sanctioned by the Government of India. In his opinion, the measures if carried out would virtually mean the annexation and administration of the whole of the new area, the cost of which would be much more than the case would warrant. At the same time, he could not support the withdrawal of the Frontier Police from the Sibsagar district and the abolition of its frontier outposts, because such measures would increase the feeling of insecurity in the minds of the people of Sibsagar and tea-garden labour nearer to the Inner Line.  

WARD'S ALTERNATIVE PLAN:

Ward on the other hand recommended the extension of the area of political control of the whole of the Eastern Angami country and the entire tract inhabited by the Ao Nagas. He desired that the Deputy Commissioner to whom the tract
would hereafter be assigned should march annually with a force of the Frontier Police through the tract and would voluntarily enquire into all cases of murder committed within the past year and punish the villages to which the offenders belonged. Punishments should be fine in the first instance, but if it was not paid immediately, then its equivalent in grain or cattle be demanded. Failing to secure them, the village should be debarred from all communications with the plains, but in no case destruction of the village should be resorted to. The Deputy Commissioner should not interfere in disputes between the tribes residing within and those outside the area of political control, but he should use his good offices in settling their dispute amicably.

The Government of India agreed to the establishment of the "political control" area in the Naga Hills beyond the administered territories in 1884. Notwithstanding it, the Government was always cautious in dealing with unadministered areas. But the rapid extension of the tea industry and other European interests in Assam, and above all the success in the Third Anglo-Burma War (1884) resulting in the annexation of Upper Burma had enabled the Government to follow a bold policy in relation to the hill tribes in the Assam-Burma border. In 1886, the Government of India approved the proposed area of political control and the policy to be pursued for its administration. The proposal of the Chief Commissioner to
assign the entire tract from the west of the Dikhow to the Sibsagar border on the plains to come under the jurisdiction of the Deputy Commissioner of Naga Hills was also sanctioned. This area was, however, not added to the Naga Hills till 1890.

**EXPEDITION AGAINST TRANS-DAYANG NAGAS:**

Towards the close of 1886, reports of aggressions committed by the Trans-Dayang Nagas on the Eastern Angami villages reached the Government. The Mesamis attacked the villages of Phuima and Zulhami. Similar complaints were also received of Mesami attack on the villages of Chipokitani and Tirephima, situated outside the area of political control. The Chief of Sakhai was responsible for a large number of these raids. In March 1887, a force under Lieutenant Macintyre and Robins of the Naga Hills Police, accompanied by Mr. Porteous, the Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills proceeded against the village of Sakhai. Fines were imposed on Sakhai and another village. The chief of Sakhai was kept a prisoner pending the payment of the fine. The force, thereafter, successfully marched through the different Sema villages within the tract.

After this successful expedition Porteous urged the Government to include within the ordinary boundary the tract

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34. Shakepear, L.W.; History of Assam Rifles, p.165.
containing the four Lhota villages of Are', Are' Yanthamo, Okotso and Pangti, the Ao villages of Hangrung, Nunstang and phising; also the establishment of an outpost at Nunkam. He realised that without these measures the aggressions of the inner tribes and lawlessness prevailing therefrom in the borders of British territory could not be prevented by punitive expeditions alone. A similar proposal was made by Mc Cabe in 1885, but the matter did not receive any consideration at that time. Porteous pointed out the present difficulties of exercising political control over the Aos and the Semas from either Kohima or Wokha. But he hoped that the inclusion of Nunkum within British territory would result in increasing British influence over the Ao and the Semas besides a substantial revenue. 35

EXPEDITION AGAINST THE TRANS-DIKHOW NAGAS:

A similar expedition was called for to control the Trans-Dikhow Nagas who were also guilty of raids into the settled territories. In March 1886, an expedition with a force of 100 rifles under Macintyre accompanied by Porteous and Muspratt (S.D.O.) was sent to Waromong through the north-east of the Ao country. The force after punishing Tamlu and Kanching, proceeded against Kongan, which was totally destroyed by the troops. After visiting Jakhtoonp, the column

returned to Tamlu and recrossing the Dikhov punished the independent Nagas who were guilty of raids. Another village Yasim was attacked by Macintyre, but his troops suffered from serious injuries caused by enemy spears and arrows. A village called Chihu was also attacked and burnt; the party then went on punishing the guilty villages of Noksem and Litem for several raids on the western side of the Dikhov. The Mozung or Masung tribe of Nagas to which these villages belonged was, however, not fully subdued.

AO COUNTRY INCORPORATED:

Both Mo Cabe and Porteous urged the incorporation of the Ao territory in the interest of security of the British subjects of the settled territories. There was another reason also; the Ao country had the worst form of slavery. Here slaves were considered as private property by their masters. The slaves were not allowed to possess property, nor to marry and children born of female slaves were usually killed. Notwithstanding the strong reasons adduced by the two Deputy Commissioners, the question of its annexation did not receive any consideration until the middle of 1888, when the Ao village of Mongsembi and Lungkung were attacked by the Trans-Dikhov Nagas. The vast number of

persons killed in their outrages compelled the Government of India to decide once for all that the Ao Naras should be brought under British administration.

Accordingly, a force consisting of 130 rifles of the Naga Hill Police Force under Lieutenant Maxwell and a detachment under Porteous assembled at Mongsendi in December 1888. The force then divided into two detachments - one with Macintyre and Porteous and the other with Maxwell and Davies (Assistant Commissioner) crossed the Dikhow to attack Noksen and Litam from two different directions. The troops marched down the Yagnu valley to Masungjami under volleys of enemies arrows and long spears; they found the village completely deserted and devoid of properties. But the armed Masungs were seen lining up in the high ridge in a state of preparation. They killed several Sepoys while fetching water. Maxwell dispersed the armed Masungs with a force of thirty sepoys. Though their upper khal was burnt and destroyed, they continued to harass the British troops by their intermittent firings. On January 14, both the detachments went into action against the Masungs and their village with all their properties and granaries were destroyed. At the end of the expedition in March 1889, formal sanction was given to establish posts in the Ao country at Mokokohang, Mongsendi and Tamlu.

OPENING OF MOKOKCHANG SUB-DIVISION:

The result of the several expeditions and the consequence of the establishment of the several posts in the Ao country were the immunity from raids and lawlessness to which the people were subjected to from earlier times. In February 1890, the Chief Commissioner formally sanctioned the addition of the new Sub-Division to the district with Mokokchang as its headquarters. Since the opening of this new Sub-Division, political control was exercised by the Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills District over the Eastern Angamis and Semas beyond the boundaries of his district, with an area defined by the Dikhow, Tsela or Nanga river from the limit of the Mokokchang Sub-Division up to the northern source of the river in the range west of the village of Yehim, thence by the Patkai range, and the southern spur of that range as far as its junction with the Laniar, and from that point to the Manipur frontier by the Laniar river.

POLICY TOWARDS TRANS-FRONTIER NAGAS LAID DOWN:

The Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills was authorised to exercise political control over the Eastern Angamis and Semas beyond the south-eastern boundary of his district by means of annual tours, in course of which he was

to enquire into and settle their inter-tribal disputes. Though the tendency of the local officials was to extend their control beyond the Dikhow, the general policy of the Government was to discourage it except when aggressions were committed on the people on the British side of the border. The Chief Commissioner did not lay down any hard and fast rules, which he felt, would be difficult in adhering into practice. But he wanted the officers to refrain from undertaking tours beyond the political control area which might involve risk of collision or gradual extension of the area under direct administration. The Chief Commissioner was subsequently ordered by the Government of India not even to sanction any tours beyond the area of political control without its previous approval.

FRONTIER MARCHES ON:

Since the occupation of Kohima, the policy of the Government of India was one of consolidation and not of annexation. The necessity of protecting the borders of Nowgong and Sibsagar from the raids of the trans-frontier Nagas, which compelled the British to penetrate into their hills in the early thirties of the last century ceased with the formation of the Naga Hills District. But Sir Robert Reid observed

"the process of penetration went on inexorably, if irregularly." While, therefore, in 1881-82, the British administered area covered Kohima and Wokha and their immediate neighbourhood, by the end of our period it extended from Henga outpost in the North Cachar Hills to the Tamlu outpost in the north at the corner where the Dikhow turned towards the plains, a length of 250 miles. "It was impossible", Sir Robert stated "to draw a line as boundary of our area of control and to say that we should be blind and deaf to all that went across the border and under the very nose of our officers. In such condition the local officers inevitably, and with reason, clamour for a forward policy. The Chief Commissioner sometimes supports them, sometimes not. The Government of India is nearly always reluctant. But the frontier moves forward." 

Although the local officials were told repeatedly by the Government not to embarrass it by unnecessarily extending the line of the British frontier to the interior of the Naga Hills, it was practically difficult to check the natural tendency of the frontier officers. "Our officers could hardly ignore atrocities that were perpetrated just outside their jurisdiction; they could not stand unmoved on their frontier

41. Shakespeare, L.W.; History of Upper Assam, etc., p.224.
42. See Reid, R.; History of the Frontier Areas of Assam; and his Years of Change in Bengal and Assam, p.108.
watching villages go up in flames, when by crossing a boundary stream they could stop this cruelty." The extension of the area of political influence, therefore, was the inevitable consequence of the prevailing lawlessness and insecurity in the borders of the area of actual political control.

43. See foreword by Bemfylde Fuller, History of Assam Rifles, p. VII.