

# **REPORT OF THE FRONTIER AREAS COMMITTEE OF ENQUIRY, 1947**

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# **REPORT OF THE FRONTIER AREAS COMMITTEE OF ENQUIRY, 1947**

## **CHAPTER I. THE PROBLEM**

### **1. Origin of Committee**

The Committee originated from the conclusions reached in the conversations between His Majesty's Government and the Executive Council of the Governor of Burma in London in January, 1947.

Paragraph 8(d) of these Conclusions states:-

"A Committee of Enquiry shall be set up forthwith as to the best method of associating the Frontier peoples with the working out of the new constitution for Burma. Such Committee will consist of equal numbers of persons from the Frontier Areas, nominated by the Governor after consultation with the leaders of those areas, with a neutral Chairman from outside Burma selected by agreement. Such Committee shall be asked to report to the Government of Burma and His Majesty's Government before the summoning of the Constituent Assembly."

## 2. Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of the Committee were those quoted above. They have, of course, to be considered in the light of the statement of the agreed objective of His Majesty's Government and the Government of Burma with which paragraph 8 of the Conclusions opens:-

"To achieve the early unification of the Frontier Areas and Ministerial Burma with the free consent of the inhabitants of those areas."

## 3. Scope of Committee

For the purposes of this Enquiry, Frontier peoples have been taken as those inhabiting the areas listed in both parts of the Second Schedule to the Government of Burma Act, 1935. These areas fall into two divisions, Part I administered by the Governor in his discretion and Part II administered by the Governor in his individual judgment. It was also decided that, although the three States of Karenni were not part of the Scheduled Areas and did not therefore necessarily come within the purview of the Committee, they should be invited to send representatives to express their views, on account of their close economic and racial ties with both Scheduled Areas and Burma proper. All three Karenni States duly accepted this invitation.

## 4. Administrative Units in Scheduled Areas

The Scheduled Areas as defined in the 1935 Act cover 113,000 square miles or about 47% of the total area of Burma. The population, however, is only 2,400,000 or 16% of the total. The main administrative units are the following:-

### (i)

Federated Shan States. The Shan States, though British territory, are a quasi autonomous area ruled by hereditary Shan Chiefs known as Sawbwas, under the general supervision of the Governor of Burma. In 1922 the states were formed into a species of federation for purposes of common subjects and for administrative purposes were divided into southern and northern groups. Within the Federation are the notified areas of Taunggyi, Kalaw and Lashio and the civil stations of Loilem and Loimwe, which were originally carved off from the states and placed under the direct administration of the Government of Burma through the Federation officials.

The two groups are:-

(a) *Southern Shan States.*

Area 36,416 sq.mls.

**Total Population** \* 927,000 "

\* (Gross figures for population are taken from the 1941 Census. The 1941 figures for population by race were lost as a result of the Japanese invasion. Figures in this paragraph are based on the assumption that percentages given in the 1931 Census remained approximately the same in 1941 and that the increase in population should be distributed between races accordingly.

Population by Races:-

Shan and Lolo Moso	515,412	or	55.6%
Karen Group	192,108	or	20.4%
Burma Group	152,955	or	16.5%
Palaung-Wa	50,985	or	5.5%
Indian, Chinese and Others	18,540	or	2.0%

(b) *Northern Shan States.*

Area 21,400 sq.mls.

.Total Population

Federated States 690,000

Unfederated Wa States 82,614

Population by Races:-

Shan and Lolo Moso 333,960 or 44%

Palaung-Wa 220,000 or 28%

Indians, Chinese and Others 93,840 or 12%

Kachin 71,070 or 9%

Burma Group 53,130 or 7%

They are six states in the Northern group including the Wa State of Mong Lun. The other Wa States which are not in the Federation were brought under administration only in 1935 and the Was are still addicted to headhunting.

Kokang, a sub-state of North Hsenwi with a predominantly Chinese population and administered by a Chinese Myosa. claimed to be a separate state during the war.

**(ii)**

*(a) Bhamo District.*

Area 4,148 sq.mls.

Total Population 129,000

Part I Population 52,000

Part II Population 77,000

Population by Races:-

Kachin 49,794 or 38.6%

Shan 36,765 or 28.5%

Burma Group 33,540 or 26.0%

Indian, Chinese and Others 8,901 or 6.9%

The Bhamo Part II Area is a Constituency Area, represented in the Burma Legislature and the Constituent Assembly.

*(b) Myitkyina District.*

Area 19,762 sq.mls. (excluding the Triangle not measured).

Total Population 298,000

Part I Population 189,000

Part II Population 109,000

Population by Races:-

Kachin 157,642 or 53.2%

Shan, Lolo Moso 76,586 or 26.0%

Burma Group 40,230 or 13.7%

Indian, Chinese and Others 23,542 or 7.1%

Almost all the Burma Group of the population live in the Part II Area. Of this Area, Myitkyina is represented in the Burma Legislature and the Constituent Assembly, but Kamaing Township is Non-Constituency. The Shan States in the Hkamti Long Area are included in Part I.

Katha District. This district is in Ministerial Burma, but includes a small Part I Area inhabited by a few hundred Kachins.

**(iii)**

*(a) Chin Hills District.*

Area 10,337 sq.mls.

Total Population 186,000

Population by Races:-

Chins 183,768 or 98.8%

Others 2,232 or 1.2%

Kanpetlet Subdivision in the south of the district has close ties with the neighboring Chin population of Ministerial Burma.

*(b) Arakan Hill Tracts.*

Area 3,543 sq.mls.

Total Population 34,000

Population by Races:-

Chin 25,772 or 75.8%

Others 4,624 or 13.6%

Burma Group 3,570 or 10.6%

The Burma Group of the population who are Arakanese Buddhists nearly all live in the Southern part of the Tract bordering on the Arakan Division.

**(iv)**

*(a) Salween District.*

Area 2,582 sq.mls.

Total Population 57,000

Population by Races:-

Karen Group 49,020 or 86.0%

Tai(Shan) 4,389 or 7.7%

Burmese 2,223 or 3.9%

Others 1,311 or 2.4%

*(b) Karenni.*

Area 4,519 sq.mls.

Total Population 70,000

Population by Races:-

Karen 51,310 or 73.3%

Shan 13,580 or 19.4%

Burma Group 2,660 or 3.8%

Others 2,450 or 3.5%

(v) *Naga Hills District.*

Area 5,895 sq.mls. (excluding Homalin (Part II) Subdivision)

Total Population 84,000 + Homalin approx 48,000 = 132,000

Population by Races, Part I Area only:-

Naga 71,736 or 85.4%

Tai 12,264 or 14.6%

Homalin Subdivision is a Part II Non-Constituency Area more advanced than the rest of the district. In Part I, the Shan States of Thaungdut and Singkaling Hkamti, and the Somra Tract inhabited by Chins and Shans, are more advanced than the rest of the district which is inhabited by the Naga tribes. These are the most backward of all frontier peoples, still addicted to head-hunting and human sacrifice. They were brought under administration only in 1940, and little progress in civilizing them has so far been possible.

(vi)

*Other Part II Areas.*

(a) Tamu Township Population 5,870

Tamu Township is a small Part II Non-Constituency Area on the India-Burma frontier in the Upper Chindwin District. Details of the racial composition of the population are lacking, but it is known to be predominantly Shan.

(b) Thaton Part II Areas Population 218,008

(c) Eastern Toungoo 160,000

(d) Kyain 59,897

(e) Myawaddi 8,360

Details of the racial composition of the population in these areas (b) to (e) bordering on the Salween District, are lacking, but it is known to be predominantly Karen. All four areas are represented in the Burma Legislature and the Constituent Assembly.

**5. Geographical and Historical Background of Frontier Areas.**

Reference to the map of Burma shows that the great river valleys of Burma proper are surrounded from the North-West to the South-East by an unbroken chain of mountain and hill country covering all land approaches from India and China and all except the extreme South-Eastern approach from Siam. These hill areas contain more than 100 distinct tribes. The great majority, however, are too small to be of political importance and the four largest, Shans, Kachins, Chins, and Karens, dominate more than 95 percent of the Frontier Areas between them.

Although there is a diversity of languages, dress and customs ethnological research discovers an intimate relationship not only between the races of the Frontier Areas but also between them and the Burmans and the Karens. Most of the races belong to the ethnological group known as Tibeto-Burmans, subdivided into Eastern Tibeto-Burmans and Western Tibeto-Burmans. To the former class belong the Chins, the Kachins and the Nagas of Upper Burma and to the latter the Burmese of the Irrawaddy Valley, the Marus and Lasis of the N'Maikha, the Lisaws of the Salween and the Lahus and Akhas of the Mekong. There are signs of a common ancestry in the languages of the Burmese, the

Chins and the Kachins. The Shans, Palaungs and the Was, however, belong to a separate though allied ethnological group known as the Tais.

The historical and cultural links between the Burmese and the Shans have been particularly close. In the middle of the 8th Century, the Shans formed a powerful state in Nanchao, the modern Yunnan, and could resist Chinese attempts at conquest until 1253. About 1254 the ruler of Nanchao subjugated certain tribes of the Upper Irrawaddy and had close relations with the Kingdom of Burma, composed of Pyus, a race which later merged with others to form the Burmese.

In 1253 the Shan Kingdom of Nanchao was broken up by the Tartar Emperor Kublai Khan and the Shans were forced to migrate mainly south and west. Some of them entered Siam and founded a kingdom at Chieng Rai in 1276, another at Chieng Mai, in 1296, and a third at Ayuthiya in 1351, after defeating older kingdoms established by the Mons. These kingdoms in later centuries were consolidated into the Kingdoms of Siam. An earlier migration of Shans which took place before the Chinese conquest of Nanchao was across northern Burma into Assam where they founded the once powerful Kingdom of Ahom. There is an obvious connection between the words Ahom, Assam, Shan and Siam.

In the period of the Kingdom of Pagan (1044-1287) the Shans had established in northern Burma a state known as Maw and comprising Mogaung and Mohnyin, but though it is recorded in Burmese chronicles that the Sawbwa of Maw sent tributes and a princess to wed King Anawrahta of Pagan, he was probably independent. After the fall of Pagan before the Tartars in 1287, three Shan princes dominated Upper Burma, one of them, Thihathu, becoming king in 1312 with his capital at Pinya. A younger son of his set up an independent kingdom at Sagaing in 1315. There was at this period a large penetration of Shans into Upper Burma, and even further south to Toungoo. The Shans of Maw, now gradually strengthened by fresh Shan migration, invaded both the kingdoms of Pinya and Sagaing in 1364. After their departure the two kingdoms were united under another Shan King, Thadomingya, who built his capital at Ava. By the time of his successor, Minkyiswasawke (1368-1401), the Shan dynasty had merged with the remnants of the older Burmese dynasty of Pagan and many of the Shans who had penetrated into Burma and had intermarried became indistinguishable from the Burmese.

There was a second invasion of Upper Burma by the Shans in 1507, this time by Sawlon, Chief of Mohnyin, who attacked over a long front and began a systematic destruction of the Burmese kingdom, until it fell in 1527 with the death of its king in battle. A great part of the Burmese population of Upper Burma migrated southwards to the new Burmese kingdom of Toungoo. After the conquest, Sawlon set up his son Thohanbwa (1527-43) as King of Ava who was afterwards assassinated and was succeeded by the Sawbwa of Hsipaw under the title of Khonmaing in 1543. The dynasty founded by him ruled Upper Burma until Bayinnaung, the Burmese King of Toungoo, reconquered it in 1555. The latter King, as part of the process of consolidating the whole of Upper Burma in three campaigns, invaded the Shan States, one after another, including Mohnyin and Mogaung and also two states, Chiengmai and Linzin, which are now in Siam. The suzerainty of the Kings of Burma over the Shan Chiefs dates from that period. Bayinnaung also established the Buddhist faith in the Shan States.

It was traditional Burmese policy not to interfere with the internal administration of their feudatory states and Shan chieftains were left to rule their own states. Many young Shan princes and princesses were, however, brought up at the Burmese court, many Shan princesses became Burmese queens and Shan levies were from that period constantly present in the Burmese armies, being particularly noted for their spearmanship and for their skill in fighting on elephants. Though the Shans preserve their own language, many Shans have learnt Burmese and in fact the two races share a common culture, and almost a common literature. The last King of Burma, Thibaw, was half Shan. After the annexation of Upper Burma in 1886 the British had succeeded to the rights of the Burmese kings. Many of the Shan chieftains, however, looked askance at the claim and rallied round a Burmese prince, the Limbin Mintha, in an attempt to resist the British, an attempt which they gave up when it proved hopeless.

The relationship between the Burmese and the Kachins was less close. As a race the Kachins originate from the eastern portion of the Tibetan plateau and, as compared to the Burmese, the Chins and the Shan, they are latecomers into Burma, though they have now reached as far south as the Shan State of Kengtung and the concentration of hills in the Myitkyina, Bhamo and Katha districts. They are scarcely mentioned in Burmese chronicles and inscriptions before the 15th century, but the Burmese King Bayinnaung of Toungoo (1551-81) used Kachin levies for his army. It was their custom to obtain permission from the ruler of the country or state before practising shifting cultivation in the hills and it may be assumed that, though they governed themselves according to tribal customs, they acknowledged the suzerainty of the Burmese or Shan ruler concerned. The armies of King Alaungpaya (1752-60) contained Kachin levies.

The Burmese were not interested in the internal administration of the Kachins and the suzerainty exercised did not mean much more than occasional presents or tribute from the Kachins and their occasional service in Burmese armies. In some cases Kachin Duwas of importance received appointment orders from the Burmese King. Thus the Kansai Duwa, a powerful chieftain, received his appointment order and his badge of office from King Mindon (1853-1878) U Khaung in the same period was appointed military commander in Hkamti Long by King Mindon and placed under the orders of the Sawbwa of Wuntho.

The Kachins did not take easily to the idea of submitting to the British on the annexation of Upper Burma in 1886 and several British expeditions had to be sent to the Kachin Hills, the Kachins resisting with considerable success. It was not until 1895 that the Kachins opposition could be broken and British administration introduced in the Kachin Hills by the Kachin Hill Tribes Regulation of that year. As the Kachins are not self-sufficient in their hills they have always been obliged to maintain contact with the plains population through Shan-Burmese villages in the foothills. Some Kachins know Burmese.

Sections of the Chins who have migrated into Burma from the Tibetan plateau almost in a straight line down south are to be found from the Somra Hill Tracts down to Cape Negrais. The Chins, then mostly in north-western Burma, are known to have had social intercourse with the Burmese at the time of the Kingdom of Pagan (1044-1287). There were Chin levies in the armies of King Bayinnaung of Toungoo (1551-81) and of King Alaungpaya of Ava (1752-60).

Local tradition has it that the ancestors of some of the people forming the principal tribes ascended the Chin lands from the Kale-Kabaw and the Myittha river valleys. One group went there by the foothill Burmese village, Yazagyo, and are the clans now inhabiting the north-east region of Tiddim. Another group went up Mount Kennedy from the Kale Valley. They then descended the western slope of Mount Kennedy and settled in Zangpitam above Thuklai village, Siyin Valley. Later they continued their move to Cimnuai near Saizang village, Sokte area. Their descendants spread along various routes from Cimnuai and are believed to be the ancestors of the present tribes of SiYin, Dokte, Kamhau, Zo and Thado. The remainder moved from the Myittha river valley into the central Chin country and were the ancestors of the Zanniats, Zahaus, Tashons of Falam and various tribes of Haka.

It is not within tribal memory that any full-scale organised war was ever waged between the Burmese kings and the Chins, but minor hostilities used to occur at times in the foothill valleys, resulting in raids and skirmishes on the border.

British troops were in action against the Northern Chins after the annexation of Upper Burma for a continued period of seven months or thereabouts among the foothills now passed by the Kalemio-Fort White-Tiddim road, at a place called Leisan (now known as the Basha hill). The Chins resisted the advance of British troops fearlessly till they were subdued. It was not until 1892 that the northern people now inhabiting the Tiddim subdivision were totally disarmed. The central Chins did not offer

any full-scale resistance. Further down in the south, the various tribes of the Haka subdivision resisted sternly the advance of the forces from the Gangaw Valley.

There is a great deal of social intercourse between the Chins and the Burmese and a considerable number of Chins speak Burmese. Many Chins living in the Pakokku, Thayetmyo, Prome and Henzada districts have become Burmanised, being mostly Buddhists. Even in respect of the Chins in the Chin Hills District, those who inhabit the southern portion and those areas adjacent to the Kale-Kabaw valley are in close touch with the Burmese. The Chins have frequently expressed a desire to have Burmese as the medium of instruction in their schools.

The Karens of the Frontier Areas, apart from Karenni, are mostly found in the Salween District, in certain portions of the Southern Shan States and in the hill areas of the Toungoo District. The Karens in the Shan States naturally have close relations with the Shans, while the Karens of the Salween District live intermingled with the Shans and other races, which form the minority population of this district. They were the earliest settlers in Burma and, after migrating southwards through the hill areas, some penetrated into the plains of the Irrawaddy Delta and the Tenasserim Division and lived peacefully with other races. Peace loving, shy and aloof by nature, many preferred to remain in the seclusion of the hills. The Salween District was ruled by a Chief Sgaw Saw Ku at the time of the British annexation of Tenasserim, who surrendered the district to the British authorities.

Karenni, the home of the Red Karens, is made up of the State of Kantarawaddi, forming Eastern Karenni, and the States of Bawlake and Kyeboyyi forming Western Karenni. At some periods in the history of Burma the Chiefs of Karenni were feudatories of the Burmese King. Thus King Minkyinyo (1486-1531) received propitiatory tribute from the rulers of Karenni. Nevertheless no attempt was ever made by Burmese kings to interfere with the States till 1845, when the Red Karens became aggressive and raided the neighbouring Shan States in pursuit of slaves. The Burmese raised an expeditionary force in the Shan States, raided Karenni and did not withdraw until the Red Karens submitted. After this trouble the Chief of Kyeboyyi, formerly an official of the Chief of Bawlake, received from the Burmese King recognition as the ruler of a separate state in Karenni and the title of Myosa. In 1886 the Chief of Kantarawadi in Eastern Karenni assisted the Burmese King in suppressing a rebellion led by the latter's son, the Prince of Mingun and in recognition of these services the Chief was granted by King Mindon a letter of appointment under the title of Myosa of Kantarawadi. In 1881 the Chief sent his son Sawlawi with presents to King Thibaw at Mandalay and Sawlawi received royal recognition as Kyem-mong, or heir apparent, of the State.

A Burmese outpost was established at Loikaw in 1872 and another at Nammakon in 1873, but the latter was withdrawn in 1876 on the representation of the British Government.

In 1875 the independence of Western Karenni was guaranteed as follows, by an agreement between the British and the Burmese Governments:-

"It is hereby agreed between the British and Burmese Governments that the State of Western Karenni shall remain separate and independent, and that no sovereignty or governing authority of any description shall be claimed or exercised over that State."

After the annexation of Upper Burma in 1886 the British, in view of the Agreement of 1875, left Western Karenni alone for some time. An attempt made in 1887 by the British to secure the peaceful submission of the Myosa of Kantarawaddi in Eastern Karenni was unsuccessful and in 1888 the Myosa even raided the Shan State of Mawkaing which had accepted British suzerainty. A British force despatched to Karenni in December of the same year subjugated the State. The Myosa was deposed and his son Sawlawi, the Kyem-mong was elected by the people Chief of Kantarawadi and subsequently confirmed by the British authorities as Myosa under a sanad or patent of appointment in the same terms as Chiefs of Shan States. The status of the Myosa was later raised to that of Sawbwa.

In 1892 the Chiefs of Western Karenni, of whom there were four at the time, nominally independent, were formally recognised as feudatories by the Government of India and were presented with sanads appointing them Myosas on terms similar to the Myosa of Kantarawadi. These four states were later reduced to the present two by amalgamations.

The three Karenni States have never been annexed to the British Crown and have the status of feudatory states. The Chiefs, under the sanads recognising their appointment, are required, among other conditions, to pay an annual tribute and accept and act upon any advice given to them by the British political officer concerned.

### **6. British Administration of Frontier Areas up to 1942.**

The strategic importance of the Frontier Areas as a buffer between an inland invader and the valleys of Burma proper prompted the British to extend their administration over these areas piecemeal, as necessity or opportunity arose, in the years following 1886. Local advances continued in the far north as late as 1940, when the head-hunting Naga tribes were first brought under some sort of administration.

From the late 19th century until the 1935 Government of Burma Act came into force in 1937 the form of administration in the Frontier Areas, other than the Shan States, did not materially change. They were ruled as part of Burma in the traditional manner by local chieftains under the general supervision and control of the Governor of Burma.

British administration of the Shan States up to 1942 may be divided into four periods. First, in 1888, leading Sawbwas were persuaded to accept the simple form of Sanad, one of the clauses in which required a Sawbwa to accept the guidance of the "Superintendent." The actual administration during the period 1886-1897 however was left in the hands of the Sawbwas. British advisers were attached to the Sawbwas of Hsipaw and Yaunghwe. This was the origin of the system of "Assistant Superintendents" in the Shan States.

The years 1897-1922 were marked by the introduction of local self-government in Burma and in the Lieutenant Governor's Council a Shan Sawbwa was a member throughout this period.

The third period, 1922-1935, was an experimental one in federation. The federation of Northern and southern Shan States came into effect on 1st October, 1922, which was a year before the introduction of the dyarchical form of government in Burma. The Federal Council of Shan Chiefs, with a Commissioner as President, was introduced. Through this Council the Sawbwas expressed their views on federal and general matters, including the federal budget. The Burma Frontier Service came into being with the introduction of federation. Towards the end of this period suggestions were made for the creation of a Peoples' Council.

The fourth period, from 1935 to 1942, was marked by a series of reforms as a result of representations by Sawbwas to His Majesty's Government. A significant feature was the creation of a small Standing Committee of Council Chiefs composed of six representatives elected by the main Council. This Standing Committee had direct dealings with the Governor periodically. Thus federal subjects came under the general direction of the Council.

Although, however, the system of administration was different, the course of events forged a number of new links between the Frontier peoples and Burma during this period. Many trading centres sprang up in the valleys where Burmese, Indian and Chinese merchants settled and built up a considerable trade with the people of the nearby hills. By 1935 the population of these centres and the surrounding country had become rather more advanced than their neighbours in the hills.

The 1935 Act made allowances for the different stages of development in the different part of the Scheduled Areas by dividing them into less politically advanced regions, known as Part I areas, still to

be administered by the Governor in his discretion, and the more politically advanced Part II areas, the administration of which was within the ministerial sphere, though the Governor had a special responsibility over these and could over-rule the decision of ministers in respect of these areas. A further division was made in Part II between the Constituency areas, which returned members to the Burma Legislature in Rangoon, and the Non-Constituency areas.

It was contemplated that, as Part II Areas continued to develop, they should in time be completely merged in Burma proper. The same course of development was open to Part I Areas. The Act allowed Part I Areas to become Part II Areas, as they matured, and Part II Areas to be merged in Ministerial Burma, but did not permit the reverse process in either case.

The 1935 Act remained in active operation until the Japanese invasion in 1942 and the process of closer association between Burma and the frontier Areas continued. The links between the two were not only commercial but also financial. For instance, Health, Education, and various other services were financed in part by the revenues of Burma, since all the Frontier Areas with the possible exception of the Federated Shan State were deficit.\* Moreover, Kachins, Chins and Karens had all come to regard service in the Burma Army and Police, both financed by Burma, as an important source of income.

By the time of the Japanese occupation in 1942, the situation was that the frontier peoples had begun to be accustomed to many amenities of which they had known nothing before 1886, and which they could not afford to maintain out of their own resources. Thus, both political and economic links had been strengthened between them and Burma since the British annexation of 1886.

\* (The Shan States were self-supporting before the War, if the Shan States Federal Fund is taken into account. This Fund was created in 1922 and maintained by contributions from the States and from the funds of Burma and by receipts from minerals and forests. From 1937 the contribution from the central revenues of Burma was not a gift to finance a deficit, but a carefully calculated allotment of what was due to the States in consideration of revenue accruing to the Central Government from taxation of commercial activity in their territories (e.g. the entire Petrol Tax accrued in the first place to central revenues, although much petrol was consumed by transport operating in the Shan States). The Fund has been in abeyance since 1941, but Articles 8 and 9 of the Panglong Agreement foreshadow its renewal.)

## **7. British Re-occupation in 1945.**

After the British re-occupation in 1945, it soon became apparent that administration under the 1935 Act would not for long satisfy the political aspirations of Burma. Burmese nationalism had greatly increased both in strength and in the urgency of its demands, and a similar, though less marked, development had taken place among the frontier peoples, who were anxious to take into their own hands as soon as possible many of the powers formerly exercised by the British. It was realised that the time had come when the traditional methods of personal rule must be modified by the development of representative institutions, where they were in existence, and their creation where they were not. A start was made by enhancing the importance of the Village Councils that had, according to customary law, formerly advised the Chiefs in the exercise of their powers, and by fostering the growth of larger District and Domain Councils to which the villages could send representatives. A hierarchy of Councils with powers at first advisory and later executive was in fact envisaged. The process, however, was bound by its very nature to take time, and was, by early 1947, still at a comparatively rudimentary stage. As far as the Shan States were concerned the absorption in 1945 of the duties of the Commissioner, Federated Shan States, in those of the Director, Frontier Areas Administration, with headquarters in Rangoon, and the placing of the Federated Shan States under the charge of two Residents, constituted a reversion to the system of administration before 1925, when there was no separate Commissioner for the Shan States. This did away with the central executive within the

Federated Shan States and the control over federal departments. The Sawbwas therefore formed their own Executive Council including the representatives of the people.

At the same time, the more enlightened leaders of the frontier peoples realized that they were economically as well as politically less advanced than Burma proper. They depended on Burma to supplement the inadequate local production even of their staple foodstuff, rice, and, outside the Shan States, the sparsity of population and difficulty of communications were serious obstacles to development. They appreciated the fact that, in order to achieve a higher standard of living, they needed a measure of outside assistance which would have to come from either Britain or Burma, and that, in the conditions of the modern world, they had certain common interests with Burma which precluded a continuance of the pre-war arrangements for entirely separate administrations.

Nonetheless, the historical fact that the frontier peoples had never been interfered with in their internal affairs was not forgotten, and the desire for a large measure of autonomy was almost universal.

Various contacts between Burmese and frontier political leaders took place during 1945 and 1946, and progress towards mutual understanding was made. In January, 1947, when the London Agreement cleared the way for the speedy creation of a new constitution for Burma, the problem of relations between the Frontier Areas and Burma acquired a new urgency. The Agreement, moreover, gave a clear indication of the most desirable solution to the problem, by proclaiming that it was the agreed objective of both H.M.G. and the Government of Burma "to achieve the early unification of the Frontier Areas and Ministerial Burma with the free consent of the inhabitants of those areas."

In February, 1947, leaders and representatives of the majority of the frontier peoples met members of the Burma Executive Council at Panglong, in pursuance of the terms of paragraph 8(b) of the London Agreement, and agreed on a form of association during the interim period until the new constitution came into force.

### **8. The Panglong Agreement**

The terms of the Panglong Agreement, which regulated relations between Burma and the major portion of the Frontier Areas when the Committee of Enquiry began its work, were as follows:-

#### **THE PANGLONG AGREEMENT, 1947.**

A conference having been held at Panglong, attended by certain Members of the Executive Council of the Governor of Burma, all Saohpas and representatives of the Shan States, the Kachin Hills and the Chin Hills:

The Members of the Conference, believing that freedom will be more speedily achieved by the Shans, the Kachins and Chins by their immediate co-operation with the Interim Burmese Government:

The Members of the Conference have accordingly, and without dissentients, agreed as follows:-

1. A representative of the Hill Peoples, selected by the Governor on the recommendation of representatives of the Supreme Council of the United Hill Peoples (SCOUHP), shall be appointed a Counsellor to the Governor to deal with the Frontier Areas.
2. The said Counsellor shall also be appointed a Member of the Governor's Executive Council, without portfolio, and the subject of Frontier Areas brought within the purview of the Executive Council by Constitutional Convention as in the case of Defence and External Affairs. The Counsellor for Frontier Areas shall be given executive authority by similar means.
3. The said Counsellor shall be assisted by two Deputy Counsellors representing races of which he is not a member. While the two Deputy Counsellors should deal in the first instance with the

affairs of their respective areas and the Counsellor with all the remaining parts of the Frontier Areas, they should by Constitutional Convention act on the principle of joint responsibility.

4. While the Counsellor, in his capacity of Member of the Executive Council, will be the only representative of the Frontier Areas on the Council, the Deputy Counsellors shall be entitled to attend meeting of the Council when subjects pertaining to the Frontier Areas are discussed.
5. Though the Governor's Executive Council will be augmented as agreed above, it will not operate in respect of the Frontier Areas in any manner which would deprive any portion of these Areas of the autonomy which it now enjoys in internal administration. Full autonomy in internal administration for the Frontier Areas is accepted in principle.
6. Though the question of demarcating and establishing a separate Kachin State within a Unified Burma is one which must be relegated for decision by the Constituent Assembly, it is agreed that such a State is desirable. As a first step towards this end, the Counsellor for Frontier Areas and the Deputy Counsellor shall be consulted in the administration of such areas in the Myitkyina and the Bhamo Districts as are Part II Scheduled Areas under the Government of Burma Act of 1935.
7. Citizens of the Frontier Areas shall enjoy rights and privileges which are regarded as fundamental in democratic countries.
8. The arrangements accepted in this Agreement are without prejudice to the financial autonomy now vested in the Federated Shan States.
9. The arrangements accepted in this Agreement are without prejudice to the financial assistance which the Kachin Hills and the Chin Hills are entitled to receive from the revenues of Burma, and the Executive Council will examine with the Frontier Areas Counsellor and Deputy Counsellors the feasibility of adopting for the Kachin Hills and the Chin Hill financial arrangements similar to those between Burma and the Federated Shan States.

The importance of the Agreement lies not only in the fact that it settles the form of association during the interim period, but also in its enunciation of certain principles, notably that the frontier peoples should be entitled to fundamental democratic rights, that they should have the right to full autonomy in the internal sphere, and that they should be entitled to receive a measure of assistance from the revenues of Ministerial Burma, which are relevant to decision of the ultimate form of association. The formation of the Supreme Council of the United Hill Peoples was also a noteworthy step forward in the establishment of representative institutions among the frontier peoples.

### **9. Limitations of Panglong Agreement.**

When the Committee began its investigation, the Panglong Agreement had not been accepted by all the frontier peoples. The Shans, Kachins and Chins had ratified it, and their actions may be assumed to cover the small racial units within their areas. The Karens, however, of the Salween District and the Karenni States, who were not represented by delegates at Panglong, were not parties to the Agreement. Others who were not present and whose adherence could not be taken for granted were the Chins of the Arakan Hill Tracts, the Nagas and the Was.

Such was the situation when the Frontier Areas Committee of Enquiry began its work.

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## CHAPTER II. THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE.

### 1. Composition of the Committee.

The Members of the Committee were:-

*Chairman:*

Mr. D. R. Rees-Williams, M.P.

*Burma Members:*

The Hon. U Tin Tut, C.B.E.  
Member without portfolio  
of Executive Council.

Thakin Nu, Vice-President  
A.F.P.F.L.

U Khin Maung Gale,  
A.F.P.F.L

Saw Myint Thein,  
Karen Youth's Organization.

*Secretariat:*

Mr. W.B.J. Ledwidge,  
Burma Office,  
Secretariat.

U Tun Pe, B.Fr.S.,  
Joint Secretary.  
Major Shan Lone, O.B.E., M.C., B.Fr.S.,  
Assistant Secretary.

*Frontier Areas Members:*

The Hon. Sawbwa of  
Mongpaw (Shan),  
Counsellor to H.E. the  
Governor for  
the Frontier Areas, and  
Member of Executive Council.

Sima Hsinwa Nawng (Kachin),  
Deputy Counsellor.

U Vum Ko Hau (Chin),  
Deputy Counsellor.

Saw Sankey,  
Karen National Union.

Saw Myint Thein joined the Committee when it moved to Maymyo, in place of the Hon'ble U Kyaw Nyein, Home Member, who was a member in Rangoon, but was forced to resign owing to pressure of other work.

### 2. Programme of the Committee.

It was clear that, in order to arrive at a solution, the Committee must hear the evidence of all interested parties. Witnesses from every one of the Frontier Areas were therefore invited to testify before the Committee. The selection of the main body of witnesses was carried out by the Councils in each area; but it was also announced that any individual or organization who was dissatisfied with the selected list of witnesses might apply to the Committee for a separate interview. A number of requests of this kind were received and all were accepted.

It was decided that witnesses from the Arakan Hill Tracts and the Salween District should be heard at Rangoon, and that those from the other Frontier Areas should be heard at Maymyo, which was more accessible to them. The possibility of the Committee establishing its headquarters in every area in turn in order to interview witnesses locally was considered, but rejected because of shortage of time and transport, and administrative difficulties.

The Committee further decided that all meetings should be held in private and that the Chairman together with two Members each from Burma and the Frontier Areas should constitute a quorum.

It was agreed that Advisers to Members should be allowed to attend all meetings but should not participate in the discussions. Advisers who attended were:-

1. Sao Boon Waat, Political Secretary to the Hon. Sawbwa of Mongpaw.
2. Labang Grong, Adviser to Sima Hsinwa Nawng.
3. U Thong Chin Tang, B.Fr.S., Adviser to U Vum Ko Hau.

The Hon. U Kyaw Nyein, who resigned from the Committee when it left Rangoon, was also permitted to attend certain meetings in Maymyo as an observer.

### **3. Preliminary Tour.**

The Chairman, accompanied by the Hon'ble Sawbwa of Mongpaw, the Hon'ble U Tin Tut and U Khin Maung Gale, made a brief Preliminary tour of Kachin, Shan and Karen country from 7th to 17th March, 1947, and held informal meetings with local notabilities. Their programme was as follows:-

- 7th March- Rangoon to Myitkyina by air.
- 9th March- Myitkyina to Bhamo by road.
- 10th March- Bhamo to Lashio by road.
- 12th March- Lashio to Loilem by road.
- 13th March- Loilem to Taunggyi by road.
- 14th March- Taunggyi to Loikaw by road.
- 15th March- Loikaw to Mawchi by road.
- 16th March- Mawchi to Toungoo by road.
- 17th March- Toungoo to Rangoon by road.

The Hon'ble U Tin Tut and U Khin Maung Gale left the party at Lashio to return to Rangoon by way of Mandalay and Meiktila.

### **4. Meeting in Rangoon.**

The Committee held its first formal meeting in Rangoon on 18th March, 1947, and then proceeded to hear witnesses as follows:

- 19th March- Director, Frontier Areas Administration (for factual evidence relation to Salween District). Salween District witnesses.
- 21st March- Saw Marshall Shwin, President of Shwegyin Karen Association.
- 22nd March- Director, Frontier Areas Administration (for factual evidence on natural resources of Frontier Areas).
- 24th March- Arakan Hill Tracts witnesses.
- 26th March- Karen Youths' Organisation witnesses.

## **5. Meeting in Maymyo.**

On 27th March, 1947, the Committee moved to Maymyo, and resumed hearings in accordance with the following programme:-

11th April- Witnesses from:-

- (a) Shan States Peoples' Freedom Congress.
- (b) Kalaw, Taunggyi and Lashio Notified Areas, and Loilem.
- (c) Northern Wa States.
- (d) Kokang State.

12th April- Witnesses from:-

- (a) Southern Wa States.
- (b) North Hsenwi State.
- (c) South Hsenwi State.
- (d) Taungpeng State.

14th April- Witnesses from:-

- (a) Karenni States.
- (b) Mongmit and Kengtung States.
- (c) Papun United Karen Organisation.

16th April- Witnesses from:-

- (a) Myitkyina and Bhamo Council Kachins.
- (b) Hkamti Long Shans.
- (c) Kachin Youths' League.
- (d) Jingpaw National Modern Civilisation Development Association.
- (e) Northern Hsenwi- Mongmit Kachins.
- (f) Army Kachins.
- (g) Frontier Constabulary Kachins.
- (h) Nepali Association, Myitkyina.

17th April- Witnesses from:-

- (a) Karen National Union.
- (b) Bhamo A.F.P.F.L.

19th April- Witnesses form:-

- (a) Falam Chins.
- (b) Haka Chins.
- (c) Tiddim Chins.
- (d) Chin Pensioners' Association.
- (e) Kanpetlet Chins.
- (f) Somra Tract (Part I Area) Chins.
- (g) Thaukdut State (Part I Area) Chins.
- (h) Singkaling Hkamti State (Part I Area) Shans.
- (i) Homalin Subdivision (Part II Area) Burmanised Shans.

21st April- Witnesses from:-

- (a) Supreme Council of United Hills Peoples.
- (b) Shan Sawbwas.
- (c) Other Southern Shan States.
- (d) Tiddim and Kanpetlet Chins.
- (e) Bhamo Part II Area Burman community.

## **6. Preparation of Report.**

After completing the hearing of evidence, the Committee proceeded immediately to consideration of their Report. On 23rd April they agreed unanimously on the Recommendations and Observations contained in the following chapter and the Report was formally signed on 24th April. The Committee held a total of 24 meetings, 17 devoted to the hearing of evidence and seven to private deliberations.

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# **CHAPTER III. RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS.**

## **PART I. GENERAL**

The terms of reference of the Committee appear to restrict us to enquire and report on the best method of associating the frontier peoples with the working out of the new constitution for Burma. We make these recommendations in Part II of this chapter. It, however, proved difficult in the course of our enquiry and in the examination of the witnesses who appeared before us to restrict the scope of our investigations strictly to the objective set out in our terms of reference. In the minds of many of the witnesses from the Frontier Areas the question of participation in the work of the Constituent Assembly is inextricably intertwined with the question of the future of the frontier peoples under the new constitution, and indeed, they appear to view the two questions as different facets of a single great problem. Our tours and our enquiry have also given this Committee unprecedented opportunities of contact with and insight into the minds of the frontier peoples. We would, therefore, be failing in our duty if we were to refrain from adding to our recommendations a summary of the salient features that emerge from the evidence on the second question and if we did not add to these certain observations which may be of assistance to the Constituent Assembly when it deals with the difficult problem of framing a constitution for the whole of Burma. These observations will be found in Part III of this chapter.

## **PART II. THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.**

(1) With the exception of the unfederated Shan States of Taungdut and Singkaling Hkamti, all the witnesses before us expressed without hesitation the desire that representatives of their States or local areas should take part in the work of the Constituent Assembly, the members of which, in respect of such portions of ministerial Burma as enjoy rights of representation in the Legislature under the 1935 Act, have already been elected. We recommend accordingly that their wishes be met and that the following areas be given representation in the Constituent Assembly:-

- The Federated Shan States, including Kokang and Mongpai.
- The Kachin Hills.
- The Chin Hills with the Arakan Hill Tracts.
- The Karenni States.
- The Somra Tract.
- The Salween District.
- The Homalin Subdivision.

We have grouped Kokang with the Federated Shan States though its de jure position is not quite clear. We have, however, ascertained from the Federated Shan States that one of the seats to be allocated to them for the Constituent Assembly will be given to a representative of Kokang. We have grouped the Arakan Hill Tracts with the Chin Hills, as the witnesses from the former area have shown a clear desire to be associated with the Chins of the Chin Hills, and we have ascertained that one of the seats to be allocated to the Chin Hills will be given to the Arakan Hill Tracts. Witnesses from the States of

Thaungdut and Singkaling Hkamti not only expressed a desire to be incorporated in ministerial Burma but stated that they are prepared to accept whatever future constitution is drawn up by the Burmese. We found it impracticable to procure witnesses from the Naga Hills and the Wa States, but we have no hesitation in recommending that representatives need not be sought from these areas for the Constituent Assembly on account of the primitive nature of their civilisation and the impossibility of their finding persons who will be able to assist in the drawing up of Burma's future constitution.

(2) We have found the question of determining the number of seats to be allocated to the Frontier Areas in the Constituent Assembly one of considerable difficulty. Strictly on a population basis they would be entitled to a maximum of some 35 seats as against the 210 seats allocated to the constituency areas of ministerial Burma. But some consideration is due to the fact that, though the population of Frontier Areas is only one-sixth of the population of ministerial Burma, in point of area they constitute some 47 per cent. of the whole of Burma, and also to the fact that many parts of the Frontier Areas are subdivided into numerous States or tribal areas and that too small a number may impede a satisfactory division of seats within the same territorial unit. Thirdly, there are small units which, though they may not be entitled to one seat each on a population basis, cannot be given less than one member if they are to be represented at all. We accordingly recommend that the Frontier Areas (by which we mean here the areas set out in Part I of Schedule II of the Government of Burma Act, 1935) and the Karenni States be allocated 44 seats and that the Homalin Subdivision, a Part II non-constituency area in the same Schedule, be allocated one seat.

In regard to the distribution of the seats our recommendations are as below:-

Federated Shan States (including Kokang and Mongpai)	26
The Kachin Hills	7
The Chin Hills with the Arakan Hill Tracts	6
Karenni	2
	<u>41</u>
	.
The Salween District	2
The Somra Tract	1
The Homalin Subdivision	1
	<u>45</u>

We have shown in the above table the Salween District, the Somra tract and the Homalin Subdivision in a separate compartment for convenience, as witnesses from these areas expressed a desire for their incorporation in ministerial Burma.

(3) The physical difficulties of travel in the Frontier Areas, the unfamiliarity of their peoples with the system of expressing their will through the ballot box and the limiting factor of time preclude us from recommending for the Frontier Areas elections to the Constituent Assembly the method of electoral rolls and the ballot box, and, indeed, with the exception of a small section of the witnesses from the Chin Hills, every witness before us to whom the question was put replied in fact that full-dress elections are impracticable. Simpler and quicker measures are essential and for the Federated Shan States we recommend that the Council of Shan States should form the electoral body for returning the members for these States to the Constituent Assembly. This Council is a representative body, half of which consists of representatives of the Shan Sawbwas and the other half of representatives of the

people of these States. There are no bodies of a sufficiently representative nature in the other Frontier Areas and we make the following recommendations after taking due account of the local conditions:-

(i) For the Kachin Hills we recommend that the electoral body should consist of the members of the District Council, the members of the subdivisional or domain councils, the duwa in charge of each administrative unit and a peoples' representative from each such unit. The peoples' representative should further be elected at a mass meeting of the members of such unit.

(ii) For the Chin Hills we recommend that one representative be elected in the Arakan Hill Tracts by a mass meeting, one be elected at a mass meeting in the Kanpetlet subdivision and the remainder be elected at a joint mass meeting of the residents of the remaining subdivisions, all these meetings to be held in such manner as may be approved by the Deputy Counsellor in charge of the Chin Hills.

(iii) For the Karenni States we recommend that the chiefs or administrators of the three States may be asked to consult the wishes of their peoples and to nominate jointly the representatives for the Constituent Assembly .

(iv) For the Salween District we recommend that the representatives be selected by a mass meeting to be convened in such manner as may be approved by the Hon'ble Counsellor in charge of the Frontier Areas.

(v) For the Somra tract and the Homalin Subdivision we recommend that the representatives be selected at mass meetings to be convened by the principal civil officer administering each area.

(4) We commend that the Frontier Areas members of the Constituent Assembly should have the same status in the Assembly as members elected from ministerial Burma and that they be entitled to participate fully in the deliberations of the Assembly and be eligible for places on such committees as the Assembly may appoint. We further recommend that the participation of representatives from various parts of the Frontier Areas in the work of the Constituent Assembly should not be regarded as committing them to union or federation with Burma. As a further protection to the Frontier Areas, we recommend that no proposal relating to the mode of government in the Federated Shan States, the Kachin Hills, the Chin Hills and the Karenni States shall be deemed to have been carried in the Constituent Assembly unless it has been voted for not only by a majority of the members of the Assembly present, but also by the majority of the members present of the unit concerned. Similarly, we recommend that no proposal relating to the constitution of a federated Burma shall be deemed to have been carried in the Constituent Assembly unless it has been voted for not only by the majority of the members of the Assembly present, but also by a majority of the members present of the Frontier Areas which will form states in the federation.

### **PART III. OBSERVATIONS.**

#### **1. The Future of the Frontier Areas.**

The view of the witnesses from the Federated Shan States and from the Kachin Hills are strongly in favour of a federated Burma in which the Federated Shan States will form a state or unit and the Kachin Hills another. They desire the fullest possible autonomy for the states within the federation but agree that certain subjects of general scope should be entrusted to the federation. On the evidence

tendered before us, representatives from the Chin Hills do not desire to federate the Chin Hills with Burma proper but prefer an amalgamation of their area with ministerial Burma, stipulating only that there should be no interference with their tribal customs and traditions and that their chieftains should be allowed to administer their tracts as at present. The Chin Hills would otherwise become one or more ordinary districts of Burma proper. On the day after they had tendered this evidence, the witnesses submitted a letter saying that they had not understood the point correctly and that they intended to say that the Chin Hills should form a separate state within a federated Burma. The only conclusion we can safely draw is that the people of the Chin Hills are not yet in a position to come to a firm conclusion on this matter and that it will have to be left to their representatives in the Constituent Assembly to define their views precisely. The witnesses from the Arakan Hill Tracts, the majority population of which is Chin, expressed no independent views but desire to follow the lead of the Chin Hills people. The witnesses from the Somra Tract, Thaungdut, Singkaling Hkamti and the Homalin Subdivision expressed categorically the view that their areas should be incorporated in ministerial Burma and should be given the same constituency and other rights as other areas in Burma proper. The representatives from the Karenni States, while stating clearly that they wished to be represented in the Constituent Assembly, did not definitely commit themselves to any views in regard to the entry of the Karenni States into a federated Burma. A group of witnesses from the Salween District, appearing before us early in our meetings, expressed views in favour of forming a state within a Burma federation. Another group, appearing before us later, supported by a letter from the leaders of the first group, stated that, after further consideration at a mass meeting of the residents of the district, they now desire the incorporation of the district as a part of ministerial Burma.

The picture that emerges from this welter of evidence is that of a federated Burma, with the federated Shan States and the Kachin Hills as two constituent states and with the Karenni States possibly another, but with Burma proper enlarged by the possible incorporation of the Chin Hills, the probable incorporation of the Salween District and the elimination in respect of many of the Part II Scheduled areas of the political disabilities now suffered by them. These amalgamations should reduce the craziness of the patchwork quilt which the present administration of the Frontier Areas resembles.

## **2. The Federal Council.**

With due reference to the difference in political experience between Burma proper and the Frontier Areas and between the Frontier Areas themselves, not to mention the present preponderating importance of Burma proper, it may be found inexpedient for the Constituent Assembly to attempt to draw up the constitution of a fully-fledged federation, even if the decision should be that the future political structure should be in federal form. The present circumstances may call for an elastic interim constitution establishing perhaps a Federal Council which will be somewhat on the lines of a Legislature, with such subjects as may be allocated to the federal sphere. The majority of the members of this council in equity be allocated to representatives of Burma proper in view of its present preponderating importance. But, in determining the number of seats to be allocated to the other states, we think that considerable weightage should be given, in order that these members should have a real share in the control of the federation. In assessing this weightage due account must, we think, be taken of the probability of party differences among the members from Burma proper.

## **3. Future Development.**

In view of the fact that there exist differences in the stages of development between ministerial Burma and the Frontier Areas and between the Frontier Areas themselves, the Constituent Assembly may find it desirable to postpone the formation of a Federal Constitution on the lines adopted in other countries, till such time as the Frontier Areas become more developed. The Federal Council, when established by the Constituent Assembly, could then be elaborated into a Senate or a federal Legislature. We note in this connection the existence of a Supreme Council of the United Hill Peoples, representatives of which

gave evidence before us, and which is at present a representative advisory body dealing with Shan States, Kachin Hills and Chin Hills affairs and which also hopes to be entrusted with Karenni affairs. We see scope for this Council playing a part of considerable importance in advising Frontier Area states in the proposed Burma federation on subjects which are within state jurisdiction and upon which joint action or a common doctrine is desirable.

#### **4. Common Subjects.**

The weight of opinion among the witnesses examined by us is that, if there should be a Burma federation, the federal organ should deal with the following subjects:-

1. External affairs.
2. Defence.
3. Post and telegraphs.
4. Communications.
5. Currency and coinage.
6. Customs.
7. Titles and honours.

There is danger that the anxiety of the constituent states for the fullest possible internal autonomy might lead to the constitution of a weak federal or central government which will be the government in Burma which deals with the outside world. It is not for us to make recommendations regarding federal subjects, but we see obvious omissions in the above list, which makes no mention of foreign trade or of inter-state commerce or of federal finance.

#### **5. Right of Secession.**

The majority of the witnesses who favoured a federation of Burma asked for the right of secession by the states at any time. Few federal constitutions contain provision for the secession of states. It seems to us that, if any such right is to be contained in the federal constitution for Burma, it will have to be carefully limited and regulated.

#### **6. Constitutional Safeguards.**

The recommendations of the Constituent Assembly relating to the Frontier Areas should be incorporated in the Burma Constitution and in the appropriate Act of Parliament.

#### **7. Interim Arrangements.**

During the transitional period, the Shan Counsellor and the Deputy Counsellors for the Kachins and Chins should continue in office. The Frontier Areas Administration should also continue in this period under the control of the Counsellor and his Deputies. Where possible, administrative officers should be drawn from the indigenous peoples of the Frontier Areas.

#### **8. States and other Territorial Units.**

##### **(1) The Federated Shan States.**

(a) This federation should consist of the present States. The notified areas of Lashio, Taunggyi and Kalaw and the civil stations of Loilem and Loimwe should, for convenience in the administration of the federation, be incorporated in the respective States in which they are situated.

(b) Mongpai State should continue to be grouped with the three Karenni States for administrative purposes. Its political future should be decided by a Committee consisting of representatives of the Shan States Council, Mongpai and Karenni.

(c) The Kokang State or Sub-State should remain as a Sub-State of North Hsenwi.

**(2) The Kachin Hills.**

If a Kachin State is to be established as a Constituent State in the Burma Federation, the question is whether the Part I and the Part II areas should be amalgamated to form the new administrative and economic unit. Evidence given by representatives of Part II areas in the Bhamo District indicated probable unwillingness on the part of the Burmese and the Shan-Burmese population of the Part II areas to be merged in the new State, particularly as some of these are constituency areas. We must leave the point to be settled by negotiations in the Constituent Assembly. We agree, however, that the Triangle should be included in the new State and also the Hkamti Long area. The Namwan Assigned Tract should also be included in the State, but this inclusion will not of course, as such, affect its position as an Assigned Tract. Kachin witnesses assured us that, if Part II areas should be united with Part I areas to form the new state, they would willingly guarantee the rights and privileges of the non-Kachin peoples and freedom to retain their own customs.

**(3) The Chin Hills.**

In view of the doubt regarding the wishes of the people of the Chin Hills and of the Arakan Hill Tracts in regard to their political future, it must be left for negotiation and decision in the Constituent Assembly.

**(4) The Karenni States.**

The representatives of the Karenni States expressed a desire for some form of association with the other Frontier Areas. The exact form should be worked out in the Constituent Assembly.

The future of Mongpai State has already been referred to in paragraph 8(1)(b) above.

**(5) The Salween District.**

Evidence from the second group of representatives of this district indicated the desire for incorporation ministerial Burma as an ordinary district, but with the rider that, wherever possible, administrative officers in the district should be Karens.

**(6) The Naga Hills.**

External government of some kind is, we think, still necessary in this area, till such time as its people are fit for administering their area as a state in the Burma federation or a unit in ministerial Burma. We have considered whether the Federal Council which was mentioned earlier in this report, might suitably be entrusted with the supervision of the administration of this area. We think, however, that, since the Homalin Subdivision, to which the Naga Hills adjoin, will be part of Burma proper, the Naga Hills administration might be supervised by the Government of Burma proper. At present Homalin is the headquarters of the Naga Hills District. In the meantime it is desirable that close liaison should be maintained by the Burma Government with the Government of Assam, which also has Nagas on its borders, in order that a common policy for the Nagas can be worked out and operated by these two authorities.

**(7) The Wa States.**

The administration of these areas should be supervised either by the Federal Council or by the government of the Federated Shan States, until their people are fit to take over the administration of their own area either as a state in the Burma federation or as a unit of Burma proper. At present the Wa States are under the charge of the Resident of the Northern Shan States. On the whole we are of opinion that the Shan States government rather than the federal authorities would be in the best position to supervise the administration of the Wa States.

## **(8) Other Areas.**

(a) Tamu Township. This, we think, should be included in ministerial Burma and have full constituency and other rights

(b) Eastern Toungoo, Kyain, Myawaddi and Thaton Part II Area. In our opinion, these areas should be include in ministerial Burma and should have full constituency and other rights, but negotiations to this end should take place in the Constituent Assembly.

(c) Thaugdut and Sinkaling Hkamti. These should, we think, be included in ministerial Burma with full constituency and other rights. The Sawbwas in these states should continue to perform their present functions.

(d) The Homalin Subdivision. This should also, in our opinion, be included in ministerial Burma and have full constituency and other rights.

(e) The Somra Tract. We think that this should be included in ministerial Burma and have full constituency and other rights.

(f) The Katha Part I Area should be, in our opinion, incorporated in ministerial Burma and have full constituency and other rights, this is a matter to be negotiated in the Constituent Assembly.

## **9. Acknowledgment.**

Our task, enhanced in difficulty by the time factor, was facilitated by the energy and ability displayed by Mr. W.B.J. Ledwidge of the Burma Office, our Secretary; U Tun Pe, B.Fr.S., our Joint Secretary; and Major Shan Lone, O.B.E., M.C., B.Fr.S., our Assistant Secretary; and by the devoted and efficient services of our staff of reporters, interpreters, typists, clerks and peons, all of whom worked overtime and throughout the Burmese New year holidays. To each and every one of our Officers and Staff we wish to convey our grateful thanks and appreciation.

Signed: 1. D. R. REES-WILLIAMS, Chairman.

2. THAKIN NU.

3. SAO SAM HTUN.

4. TIN TUT.

5. HSINWA NAWNG.

6. KHIN MAUNG GALE.

7. VUM KO HAU.

8. MYINT THEIN.

9. SAW SANKEY.

**Maymyo,  
24th April, 1947.**

*[The above section of the document is taken from the text on the Shanland.org website - <http://www.shanland.org/oldversion/index-3143.htm> The following section is from the Kachin elibrary - <http://kachinlibrary.com/English/frontier-areas-committee-of-enquiry-1947.html> ]*