

Memoranda : MNF, 1965

**MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA BY  
THE MIZO NATIONAL FRONT GENERAL HEADQUARTERS, AIZAWL, MIZORAM  
ON THE**

**30TH OCTOBER, 1965**

This memorandum seeks to represent the case of the Mizo people for freedom and independence, for the right of territorial unity and solidarity, and for the realization of which a fervent appeal is submitted to the Government of India.

The Mizos, from time immemorial lived in complete independence without foreign interference. Chiefs of different clans ruled over separate hills and valleys with supreme authority and their administration was much like that of the Greek City-States of the past. Their territory or any part thereof had never been conquered or subjugated by their neighbouring states. However, there had been border disputes and frontier clashes with their neighbouring people which ultimately brought the British Government to the scene in 1844. The Mizo country was subsequently brought under the British political control in February, 1890 when a little more than half of the country was arbitrarily carved out and named Lushai Hills (now Mizo District) and the rest of their land was parcelled out of their hands to the adjoining people for the sole purpose of administrative convenience without obtaining their will or consent. Scattered as they are divided, the Mizo people are inseparably knitted together by their strong bond of tradition, custom, culture, language, social life and religion wherever they are. The Mizo stood as a separate nation even before the advent of the British Government having a nationality distinct and separate from that of India. In a nutshell, they are a distinct nation, created, moulded and nurtured by God and nature.

When British India was given a status by promulgation of Government of India Act of 1935, the British Government, having fully realized in the district and separate nationality of Mizo people decided that they should exclude from the purview of the new constitution and they were accordingly classed as an EXCLUDED AREA in terms of the Government Order, 1936. Their land was then kept under the special responsibility of the Governor General-in-Council in his capacity of the Crown Representative; and the legislature of the British India had no influence whatsoever.

In other words, the Mizos had never been under the Indian Government and never had any connection with the politics of the various groups of Indian opinion. When India was in the threshold of Independence, the relation of the Mizos with the British Government and also with the British India was fully realized by the Indian National Congress leaders. Their top leaders and spokesman Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru released a press statement on the 19th August, 1946 and stated : 'the Tribal areas are defined as being those along the frontier of India which are neither part of India, nor of Burma, nor of any Indian State, nor of any foreign power'. He further stated: 'The areas are subsidized and the Governor General's relation with the inhabitants are regulated

by sanads, custom or usage. In the matter of internal administration, the areas are largely left to themselves'. Expressing the view of the Indian National Congress, he continued, 'Although the tribal areas are technically under the sovereignty of His Majesty's Government, their status, when a new Constitution comes into force in India, will be different from that of Aden over which the Governor-General no longer has executive authority. Owing to their inaccessibility and their importance to India in its defence strategy, their retention as British possession is most unlikely. One view is that with the end of sovereignty in India, the new Government of India (i.e. Independent Government of India) will enter into the same relations with the tribal areas as the Governor-General maintains now, unless the people of these areas choose to seek integration with India.'

From the foregoing statement made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the Government of India Act of 1935, it is quite clear that the British Government left the Mizo Nation free and independent with the right to decide their future political destiny.

Due solely to their political immaturity, ignorance and lack of consciousness of their fate, representatives of the Mizo Union, the largest political organization of that time and the Fifty Accredited Mizo Leaders representing all political organizations including representatives of religious denominations and social organizations that were in existence submitted their demand and choose integration with free India imposing condition, inter alia, "THAT THE LUSHAIS WILL BE ALLOWED TO OPT OUT OF INDIAN UNION WHEN WISH TO DO SO SUBJECT TO A MINIMUM PERIOD OF TEN YEARS".

The political immaturity and ignorance which lead the Mizo people to the misguided choice of integration with India was a direct result of the banning by the British Government of any kind of political organization till April 1946 within Mizo land which was declared 'a political area'

During the fifteen years of close contact and association with India, the Mizo people had not been able to feel at home with Indians or in India nor have they been able to feel that their joys and sorrows have really ever been shared by India. They do not therefore, feel Indian. Being created a separate nation they cannot go against the nature to cross the barriers of nationality. They refused to occupy a place within India as they consider it to be unworthy of their prosperity. Nationalism and patriotism inspired by the political consciousness has now reached its maturity and the cry for political self-determination is the only wish and inspiration of the people, ne plus ultra, the only final and perfect embodiment of social living for them. The only aspiration and political cry is the creation of MIZORAM, a free and sovereign state to govern herself, to work out her own destiny and to formulate her own foreign policy. To them Independence is not even a problem or subject of controversy; there cannot be dispute over the subject nor could there be any difference of opinion in the matter. It is only a recognition of human rights and to let others live in the dignity of human person.

While the present word is strongly committed to freedom and self-determination of all nations, large or small, and to promotion of Fundamental Human Rights, and while the Indian leaders are strongly wedded to that principle – taking initiative for and championing the cause of Afro-Asian countries, even before the World body, particularly deploring domination and colonization of the weaker nations by the stronger, old and new, and advocating peaceful co-existence, settlement of

international disputes of any kind through the medium of non-violence and in condemning weapons that can destroy the world, and in general wishing of goodwill towards mankind, the Mizo people firmly believed that the Government of India and their leaders will remain true to their policy and that they shall take into practice what they advocate, blessing the Mizo people with their aspiration for freedom and independence per principle that no one is good enough to govern another man without that man's consent.

Though known as head-hunters and a martial race, the Mizos commit themselves to a policy of non-violence in their struggle and have no intention of employing any other means to achieve their political demand. If, on the other hand, the Government of India brings exploitative and suppressive measures into operation, employing military might against the Mizo people as is done in the case of Nagas, which God forbid, it would be equally erroneous and futile for both the parties for a soul cannot be destroyed by weapons.

For this end, it is in goodwill and understanding that the Mizo Union voices her rightful and legitimate claim of full self-determination through this memorandum. The Government of India, in their turn and in conformity with the unchangeable truth expressed and resolved among the text of HUMAN RIGHTS by the United Nations in its august assembly that in order to maintain peace and tranquillity to formulate her own foreign policy, among mankind every nation, large or small, may of right be free to work out her own destiny, to formulate her own internal and external policies and shall accept and recognize her political independence. Would it not be a selfish motive and design of India, and would it not amount to an act of offence against humanity if the Government of India claim Mizoram as part of their territory and try to retain her as their possession against the national will of the Mizo people simply because their land is important for India's defence strategy?

Whether the Mizo nation should shed her tears in joy to establish firm and lasting friendship with India in war and in peace or sorrow and anger, is upto the Government of India to decide.

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(Source: True Copy)