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MPs lobbied on HK refugees

11th-hour push for UK haven

From MICHAEL O'NEILL

London, Dec 2.
An 11th-hour bid is being made through 50 MPs in both houses of parliament to force the Government to resettle Hongkong people who do not want to live under communist rule.

The last minute push to influence parliamentary opinion on the eve of the debate which seals Hongkong's future comes from British academics who share a close link with Hongkong.

Fifty MPs, including the leaders of the major political parties, will tomorrow receive a long and emotional petition urging them to force the British Government to set up an "Operation Haven" to ease Britain's own immigration policy and to make available to Hongkong citizens a travel document guaranteeing freedom of travel similar to that enjoyed by holders of a full British passport.

Aside from the Labour leader, Mr. Neil Kinnock, the Social Democrat leader, Dr



Umelco may send regular delegations to Peking — Page 18.

David Owen, and the Liberal leader, Mr David Steel, people on the list include influential MPs like the leader of the Commons, Mr John Biffen, Mr Edward Du Cann and Sir Peter Blaker, and peers in the House of Lords like the former Prime Minister, Mr Harold Macmillan, now Lord Stockton, Lord MacLehose, and Lord Kadoorie.

One name on the appeal is that of Mr Felix Patrikeeff, from the Department of International Studies at the University of Warwick who, together with an Oxford academic last summer, wrote three controversial and critical papers on the Sino-British negotiations published in The Times.

The other two names on the petition are Mr Mark Elvin of the Asian Studies Centre at St Antony's College at Oxford and Mr Alan Birch who was with Hongkong University's History Department and is now at Oxford.

The trio are urging MPs to force the Government to take the initiative in launching an international effort, especially through the Common Market, the Commonwealth and the NATO alliance to create "Operation Haven" for resettlement in participating countries.

"The purpose is to establish the principle that, in the last resort, no British citizen or his or her offspring will ever be handed over against his or her will permanently and irrevocably to another nation."

The academics want "Operation Haven" to last for the next 13 years as well as during the 50 years of guarantee.

Aside from asking for a passport with equal standing to that of the full British passport, the academics are asking the Government to re-examine the immigration law with a view to easing restrictions on the right of abode.

These proposals will be con-

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UK urged to provide haven

(Cont'd from Page 1) ... subject people of British territories overseas. ... considered an unfriendly act by the Chinese.

They feel that a further guarantee of freedom to the people of Hongkong is a "matter of national honour, obligation and self-interest."

"The British people must still recognise a moral responsibility for the so-called sub-

ject people of British territories overseas. ... Describing the agreement as "more appearance than substance" the academics said the concessions wrong out of the Chinese in return for abandoning self-determination and sovereignty were not cause for self-congratulation.

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