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PARLIAMENTARY GROUP FOR TIBET

STATEMENT

The Government of India's policy towards Tibet was evolved in times and circumstances which were very different from what they are now and on the basis of assumptions that have proved to be not well-founded. The Indian Government agreed to accept the suzerainty of Communist China over Tibet under the belief that the Chinese Communist regime was friendly and peace-loving and would continue to remain so. At the same time this acceptance was made contingent on the clear and categorical condition that the autonomy of Tibet would be fully respected.

The People's Republic of China, after committing wanton aggression on our country, makes no secret of her bitter hostility towards us. She has trampled under her massive feet the liberty of the Tibetan people and treated Tibet as a colony in the spirit of imperialism in its worst and blackest days. Therefore we are no longer bound by our agreement to concede to China's suzerainty over Tibet. Apart from that throughout our existence as a free country we have fought colonialism in every part of the globe. We cannot tolerate colonialism at our door step. When one nation rules over another and denies to it the right of self determination it is nothing else than colonialism. It cannot be gainsaid that Tibet is a nation distinct from China and has always had a separate existence, an independent entity and culture and history of its own.

What we are urging for is a new orientation of our Tibetan policy. The Tibetan issue should no longer be looked upon as a party issue but should be taken out of party politics and elevated to a position where it should be considered solely from the point of view of the national interest. It has important international aspects which should also be considered from what the Americans call a bipartisan angle.

There is a growing feeling that the time has come when we should adopt a more positive policy on the Tibetan question in the U.N.O. So far we have satisfied ourselves with emphasising the human rights aspect of the matter. We should now emphasise the right of Tibet to self determination and an independent national existence; and to give greater freedom to the Dalai Lama to fight his country's cause.

All this leads to the conclusion that there should be a group of Parliamentarians who should take active interest in Tibet, bring the question constantly before Parliament and persuade Government to change its present policy. Members of Parliament who wish to join this group will not represent their parties or their parties' views but will join in their individual capacity, but the intention is that the group should be as representative as possible.