

No 2875

Memorandum of a Conversation

[Washington,] May 20, 1941

The Japanese Ambassador, accompanied by Colonel Iwakuro and Mr. Wakawa, was received by the Secretary at his apartment at 8:30 this evening by arrangement at the suggestion of the Japanese Ambassador.

. . . .

The Secretary then observed that there were two points in regard to the section dealing with China which he would like to bring up. One was in regard to the joint defense against communism and the other was in regard to the stationing of Japanese troops in certain parts of Chinese territory. He said that he was not discussing the merits of the two points to which he referred but he felt that if and when this Government should approach Chiang Kai-shek on the matter of negotiating with Japan he would have to tell Chiang the basis on which Japan would propose to negotiate; that this basis should be one on which Chiang could carry his country with him; and that if the Chinese Government should be unwilling to proceed with negotiations on the basis proposed the Secretary would be in a very embarrassing position. He therefore wished to ask whether it would not be possible to cover these two points under some broader provision, such as a provision which would call for special measures of protection for Japanese nationals and property interests against lawlessness in areas where special measures for safeguarding the rights and interests of nationals of third powers were necessary.