

In fact, however, there has been nothing at all conclusive as yet in the renewed discussions between Japan and the United States. The conversations between the Secretary of State and the Japanese Ambassador were broken off when the Japanese moved into Indo-China. Mr. Hull was twice approached by Admiral Nomura with an enquiry from Prince Konoye whether he was prepared to renew the conversations. In each case Mr. Hull replied that the conditions for a settlement between the United States and Japan had often been stated by him, that the principles which he had enunciated still stood, and that these included the restoration of the status quo in Indo-China, the evacuation of Chinese territory by Japanese armies, and the re-establishment of the Open Door for trade in China. The Ambassador, on his first two approaches, left Mr. Hull with the definite impression that these conditions were completely unacceptable. His third approach, however, which led to an understanding that the conversation should be resumed, was more promising. Mr. Hull did not say that the Japanese Government had agreed to negotiate specifically on the basis of the Nine-Power Treaty, but he did say very definitely that he had not backed down from his often repeated principles respecting the Far East.

Campbell asked him whether the status of Manchukuo had come up as yet. Mr. Hull answered with a smile that he had not mentioned Manchukuo to Admiral Nomura. Campbell's enquiry was prompted by a report from the British Ambassador in Lisbon of a talk which he had had with the Reverend Mr. Norris, the well known Baptist Minister, on his arrival from New York by Clipper. In this conversation Mr. Norris had told him that Mr. Hull, in a conversation a few days before, had implied to him that the United States Government might be prepared to recognize the Japanese position in Manchukuo as part of a Far Eastern settlement.

The current position is that agreement has been reached to resume conversations, but that the conversations themselves have not really got under way. Mr. Hull hopes at any rate to gain time, and thus bring about a relative weakening of Japanese power. Even if the Japanese Government are being completely disingenuous in implying their acceptance of the principles of the Nine-Power Treaty as a basis for a settlement, he believes that the longer a fresh crisis is avoided in the Far East the better will the British and Americans be able to cope with it. He mentioned to Campbell more than once a despatch from Tokyo in yesterday's papers to the effect that the Japanese Government expected an agreement to result within a week from the Washington talks. He said that there was, of course, no prospect of such an agreement, but he thought it probable that Konoye was encouraging this report as a means of raising public hopes and checking the Army extremists.

Mr. Hull made the rather surprising statement that he had information which led him to believe that the Chinese Government did not wish a withdrawal of the Japanese armies from China to be effected by agreement now;