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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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Cleared: S/S
5/10/68

Memorandum of Conversation

Approved by S

DATE: May 6, 1968
TIME : 11:00 a.m. -
12:25 p.m.
PLACE: Department of
State

SUBJECT: China (Part 3 of 3)

United States
The Secretary of State

PARTICIPANTS: United States Ambassador to Brazil, John W. Tuthill
Department of State Interpreter, A. Jose de Seabra

Brazil
Foreign Minister Jose de Magalhães Pinto
Brazilian Ambassador Vasco Leitão da Cunha

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The Foreign Minister asked a general question about U.S. re-examination of its relations with Communist China. The Secretary replied that the U.S. problem with China was of a very special nature, pointing out that Peking has always said that it refused to discuss anything whatsoever with the United States until, and unless, Formosa was surrendered to it. Since the U.S. is not willing to turn Formosa over to Communist China, that country will not consider any discussion on the possible exchange of newspapermen, scientists, agricultural material, weather information, and the like. The feeling in the U.S. is that as long as the present leadership stays in power there will not be any change in the Chinese attitude on those matters.

The Foreign Minister explained that he had asked that question because during a recent trip to Asia he was asked whether he was willing to meet in Hong Kong with a representative of

GROUP 3
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Communist China. It had been stressed that since he was Foreign Minister political and economic matters would be discussed.

The Foreign Minister turned down that suggested meeting saying that he was not prepared to engage in such discussions, and also because he felt that no step could be taken that would correspond to Brazilian wishes to be helpful in that situation. As a matter of fact, he added, he felt that Brazilian acceptance of the invitation to that meeting might have been construed as taking a stand.

The Secretary showed appreciation for the Foreign Minister's remarks and commented that in Asia it is important to consider the "real" attitude of nations in contrast to what might be termed their "public" attitude with regard to China. He felt that if a private poll were conducted among the free nations of Asia, including such neutrals as India, Burma, and Cambodia, the results would show that Peking is pretty well isolated in Asia. Therefore, any concessions made to Peking might cause serious misgivings in Asia, although they might please certain European nations.