CHAPTER FIVE

CONTENTS OF THE NEW EQUAL TREATIES
AND THE ESSENTIALS OF THE FUTURE
WORK OF NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

1. The Abandonment of the Unequal Treaties and the Meaning
   of the New Equal Treaties

As stated above, the Great Powers' appreciation of China deepened with the development of the War of Resistance. But to advance from this to the attainment of our major objective—the abolition of the unequal treaties—required vigorous diplomatic efforts on the part of the Nationalist Government. During the past five years, the foreign diplomacy of the Nationalist Government has been based on the spirit of nationalism and the objectives of the War of Resistance. This basic aim has never been altered, either by changes in the international situation or by internal criticism, and it has finally achieved the objective of abolishing the unequal treaties.

Let us first discuss the spirit of Chinese nationalism. China has long been a weak country because of the bondage of the unequal treaties, and she was therefore compelled to obtain international assistance in order to resist a powerful enemy. Since the beginning of the war, however, the Nationalist Government has based its policy on the ancient proverb: "one must do one's utmost," and has emphasized the principle of "salvation through self-endeavor." In five and a half years of war, the international situation has changed frequently, but the foreign policy of the Nationalist Government has remained consistent and we have never become pessimistic
because of discouraging developments, or been dismayed by precarious situations. We have neither gone out of our way to make enemies, nor displayed a readiness to compromise. We have never lost an opportunity to seek help from friendly countries, but at the same time we have never lost the spirit of self-reliance.

Let us next consider the objectives of the War of Resistance. China is fighting not only for the independence of the state and the survival of the nation, but also for world peace and righteousness. At the beginning of the war, these two great objectives were definitely proclaimed. The Nationalist Government firmly believed in the indivisibility of world peace, and therefore, in the midst of disunity and discord among the Great Powers, it foresaw the inevitable formation of an international front against aggression. The Nationalist Government also believed that the righteousness of the world could not be destroyed, and therefore, during the difficulties and reverses of the Allied nations, it foresaw the inevitable defeat of the aggressor nations. [It recognized that] the independence of the Chinese state and the survival of the Chinese nation will be assured simultaneously with the restoration of justice and peace to the world and the victory of the principles of human freedom and liberty, which in turn will depend on the independence of China. Such being the objectives of the War of Resistance, the Nationalist Government pursued a foreign policy of not shirking its own responsibility or depending exclusively on foreign help, and at the same time emphasized not only the principle of “self-help” but also the principle that “to help oneself is to help others.” From this it is clear that the reason why China could weather many difficulties and in the end attain a position of independence and equality among the Allied nations was not a matter of chance or luck, but was the result of great suffering and sacrifice on the part of the state and the nation.

After the incident of September 18, 1931, the Great Powers