

Appendix I

Historical Background

Gareth's travels in the Far East and in particular his visit to Japan must be seen in the context of the social mores and the political history of the 1930s. The intrigues of the Japanese and their Emperor Hirohito are difficult to comprehend at the beginning of the 21st century. Our culture at that time was so different. The East has its fascination and it is not surprising that Gareth was captivated by it. It stimulated his enquiring mind to ask so many questions and I feel that his tremendous zeal and enthusiasm carried him away. He came from a Welsh Non-Conformist family and from his father came to believe that all men were good. To quote the letter of condolence to Major Edgar Jones from Mr R. Barrett of the *The Critic* in Hong Kong:

There is no doubt that Gareth was in deep waters, for the swirl of Far Eastern politics is more ruthless and treacherous than anything conceivable in the West, more a mixture of petty interests of money and 'face' with the enormous clash of national interests. They knew what he had discovered in Russia and they knew what he had found out in the East.

According to the eminent historian, Edward Bergamini, behind the Emperor Hirohito's pretence of virtue and innocence was a devious man. From the early 1920s when he was Crown Prince, he wished not only to rid Asia of the Western influence: "Asia for the Asiatics", but was also contriving to build a Japanese Empire. Gareth was not to know, or suspect at the time, of the intrigues, the ruthless suppression, even assassination, of those who deviated from the path or opposed the plan of expansion. Nor could he have suspected Japan's devious orchestration of incidents in China with a view to eventual domination and colonisation of that country. Still less that he would be at the centre of such international intrigue. The Japanese history of the period runs red with cruelty. Gareth was thoroughly informed about the news of the time, but most probably unaware of the merciless side of the Japanese Government. Though he asked penetrating questions, he must have been unaware of their sensitive nature when directed towards a government that had something to hide. Those ministers, or ex-ministers, he interviewed do not seem to

be as culpable as some were, but they were responsible to their Emperor.

Japan in the late twenties was going through a period of depression and was planning a campaign of expansion as the country was overcrowded and lacked natural resources for home and for war. At this time China was in a state of political unrest, ruled by local warlords. Chiang Kai-shek was trying to unite his country and endeavouring to rule South China. At the time he had a greater fear of the Communists than he had of the Japanese. In 1928 his Northern Expedition drove Marshall Chang Tso-lin, a bandit turned warlord, north to the Eastern Provinces known as Manchuria of which he was the Governor. He was returning to his capital, Mukden, from Peiping (Beijing or Peking) when explosives blew up his train. Following his murder, the Kwantung Army planned to seize the city of Mukden and much of Southern Manchuria, but this failed because dissent among the senior officers prevented decisive action. Marshall Chang Hsueh-liang, known as the Young Marshall, succeeded his father and was to become a very key figure in China during the early 1930s. Chang Hsueh-liang was to find out that his father's murder had been perpetrated by the Japanese, and for this reason he hated the Japanese vehemently.

Three years later Chang, who was Commander-in-Chief of the North Eastern Frontier Army, was to lose his Eastern Provinces and Mukden to the Japanese. On September 18th 1931, the Japanese planned and then executed an explosion on the South Manchurian Railway destroying a small section of it. This provocative deed, known as the Mukden Incident or to the Japanese as the Manchurian Incident, was merely an excuse to attack the Mukden garrison and the Young Marshall's small air force base. Coolly planned and orchestrated by Ishiwara Kanji to implicate the Chinese, the faked derailment of a Japanese train was created purely as an excuse to invade Manchuria. Thus the Young Marshall had further reason to hate the Japanese.

Having briefly toyed with the option of direct negotiations with Japan, as was the wish of Shidehara, Chiang Kai-shek concluded that he had no alternative, but to appeal to the League of Nations because he was in no position to fight the Japanese. Further to this, in January 1932, the Japanese engineered another incident, known as the

Shanghai Incident. Carefully orchestrated demonstrations hostile to those Japanese living there were organised. To protect her nationals, Admiral Shiozawa sent in his marines. Unexpectedly fierce resistance was encountered. The 19th Route Army Commander, General Tsai Ting-kai, and his troops fought very bravely and announced that the 19th Route Army would: “fight the Japanese to the last man if it has to dye the Whampoa river red with its blood”. Chiang Kai-shek did not wish to escalate the war against the Japanese and gave orders to Tsai that the: “19th Route Army should take advantage of its victorious position, avoid decisive fighting with the Japanese and end the war now”. Another interesting source gave a fascinating reason for the cessation of hostilities, in that the infamous female Japanese spy, Eastern Jewel, a distant relative of Pu Yi, had betrayed Tsai. In 1933 General Tsai led an unsuccessful coup d’état against Marshall Chiang Kai-shek known as the Fukien Rebellion. He proclaimed martial law in the name of the people and announced that the lack of financial provision for the 19th Route Army had compelled him to take over Fukien revenue. This coup, though not successful, suggests that it was Chiang who had influenced the outcome of the end of the fighting in Shanghai and it seems the more feasible historical fact.

The Japanese Year Book of 1934 states that:

On March 1st, 1932 a manifesto was promulgated announcing that Manchukuo was founded in response to the unanimous aspirations of the 30,000,000 people living in Manchuria and Mongolia and on March 7th Mr Pu Yi who once ruled over the entire territory of China as the 12th Emperor of the Ching Dynasty, consented to become the Chief Executive of Manchukuo.

The League of Nations set up a commission headed by Lord Lytton, which denounced Japan for its conduct in annexing Manchuria. The League Assembly convened a special meeting and an almost unanimous majority of the members accepted the report. Siam was the only nation to abstain. Due to this unfavourable result the Japanese delegation, headed by Mr Matsuoka Yosuke, left the assembly. In March 1933 Imperial Sanction was given for Japan to withdraw from the League.

In *The Last Emperor*, Edward Behr describes how Major General Doihara, a Japanese secret agent, persuaded Pu Yi to leave Tientsin. The Japanese officer convinced him that the Young Marshall wished to destroy the deposed Chinese Emperor and that there was a contract out on his life. The Japanese provoked riots, which were blamed on Chang Hsueh-liang and eventually Pu Yi was smuggled out of China. He was then formally enthroned as Emperor of Manchukuo on March 1st, 1934.

In his *China and the Origins of the Pacific War*, Youli Sun states that the Tanggu Truce of May 31st, 1933 legitimised Japan's control of China, north of the Great Wall. According to the Japanese version of events this practically put to an end the long protracted state of affairs known as the 'Manchurian Incident'. They declared that they had no other intention than to maintain peace in the Province of Jehol and pacify the provincial people from local banditry and the invading troops from across the Great Wall.

On April 17th 1934, the Japanese Foreign Ministry spokesman, Amau Eliji, stated that Japan had a special mission to maintain peace and order in East Asia and opposed any financial assistance to China by foreign countries and in particular any Western military or political aid. This statement in fact confirmed the status quo and was proof of Western inaction. The British and the United States responses to what became known as the Amau (Amō) Doctrine were extremely indifferent and both were unwilling to offend Japan by giving support to China. In May 1935 the Japanese Army presented a series of demands to the Chinese authorities in Peking, including the withdrawal from North China of Marshall Chiang Kai-shek's Central Army and the termination of all anti-Japanese activities.

According to Youli Sun, the Marshall conceded to every demand except withdrawal of the Central Army. Premier Wang Chin-wei and War Minister He Ying-qin were eager to avoid conflict at any price and they verbally agreed to all the demands requested by Major Takahashi Tan, the Military Attaché. Nothing was provided in writing and the crisis mounted. The British Ambassador to Japan, Sir Robert Clive, made representations to Japan, but wished to remain friendly with this country, because the British Government had to contend with the troublesome issue of Germany. America was following a policy of isolation and had just granted independence to the Philippines.

With the world powers indifferent to China's fate on July 9th 1935, Wang wrote to General Umetsu (Umezu), the Japanese Commander in Tientsin, to concede the demands. This became known as the He-Umetsu Agreement.

Japan obtained similar concessions in Chahar Province as in the Hebei Province and Chiang Kai-shek realised that China would have to stand firm against further demands from the Japanese. Much of his time had been spent combating the Communists in the south. Mao Tse-tung and his Communist followers were in the southwest and 1935 was the year of the Long March. During these last negotiations Gareth was travelling north of the Great Wall of China with his German companions Baron von Plessen and Dr Herbert Müller to Prince Teh Wang's court. Prince Teh Wang, leader of the Mongol Princes was keen to establish his own independent government of Inner Mongolia. Wang's arrangements with Nanking failed and then he turned to the direction of the notorious Japanese secret agent Major General Doihara. He had the task of sponsoring Chinese leaders to establish their own autonomous regimes in 1933. From then on Prince Teh Wang was secretly in league with the Japanese at the shrine of a Hundred Spirits. Little by little, Teh's Mongol Government gained allegiance of Inner Mongolia's seventy-seven tribes or 'Banners', but realising that they would be entirely dependent on Japan, many of the Silingol banner and others eventually stopped supporting him.

Early attempts at southwards expansion had failed because the Japanese (Kwantung) Army believed the northern warlords could be bribed into declaring independence from Nanking. In November 1936 Prince Teh Wang, his Mongol roughriders and the Kwantung Army, underwrote a Mongol expedition force to establish an independent Inner Mongolia. The Chinese National Forces at Pai Ling-miao in Suiyan Province soundly beat Teh's troops. Though he had once been a strong supporter the Young Marshall, Chang Hsueh-liang, lost faith in Chiang Kai-shek following the He-Umetsu Agreement, as the 51st Army in Hebei (Hopei) was his army. Chang established contact with the Communists in 1936 and also with Zhou En-lai. He captured Chiang Kai-shek in Xian on December 12th 1936 and persuaded him that the Communists (CPP) and the Kuomintang (KMT) should present a united front against the Japanese. He kept Chiang Kai-shek captive for two weeks until he agreed to abandon his anti-Communist campaigns and resist the Japanese in their aggressive plans. Chang

persuaded Chiang Kai-shek to become the leader of a united China. It was this unity of the Chinese nation that the Japanese feared. Following a further fabricated incident, the 'China Incident', the Chinese and Japanese armies clashed near the Marco Polo Bridge outside Peking. On July 29th 1937 the Japanese troops entered Peking and China was formally at war with Japan. On the 10th December the city of Nanking was entered by the Japanese and there followed for the next three months atrocities of an inconceivable nature. This reign of terror by the Japanese Army became known as the 'Rape of Nanking'. In September Prince Teh Wang joined the Japanese in the war against China and occupied the Province of Suiyan. He was designated a traitor of the National Government.

The history of China at this time was so closely linked with Japan that one must now turn one's attention back to that nation. During the thirties Japan experienced a period of unchecked aggression abroad and murderous conspiracy at home. The Japanese-inspired murder of Chang Tso-lin, by blowing up his train, led to the resignation of the Japanese government following which in 1928, Hamaguchi Yuko became Prime Minister. Two years later he was shot and wounded by a right-wing 'patriot' at a Tokyo station and later died of his wounds. For a short time Shidehara Kijuro, the Foreign Minister became Acting-Prime Minister after the attempted assassination of the Prime Minister though at the time of the 'Mukden Incident' he had resumed the office of Foreign Minister.

The next year, 1931, the 'Young Officers' plotted a 'coup d'état' to assassinate the entire Cabinet and recommended that Araki Sadao be made Prime Minister. He had urged the high command [following the murder of Chang Tso-lin] to send an army to overrun Manchuria. He headed the 40,000 strong Kodokai: an organisation based on the philosophy of Koda 'the Imperial Way', which recommended reform at home and expansion abroad. "There is a shining sun ahead for Japan in this age of Showa", prophesied Araki. Showa or 'Enlightened Peace' was the title given to the period of Hirohito's reign. The coup was suppressed and Araki was appointed Minister of War in December 1931 with the Seiyukai party. [Seiyukai means Association of Political Friends.] This party favoured economic, rather than military, expansion. He also favoured the Strike-North rather than Strike-South movement, which was the vehement intention of Hirohito and with whom he eventually fell out

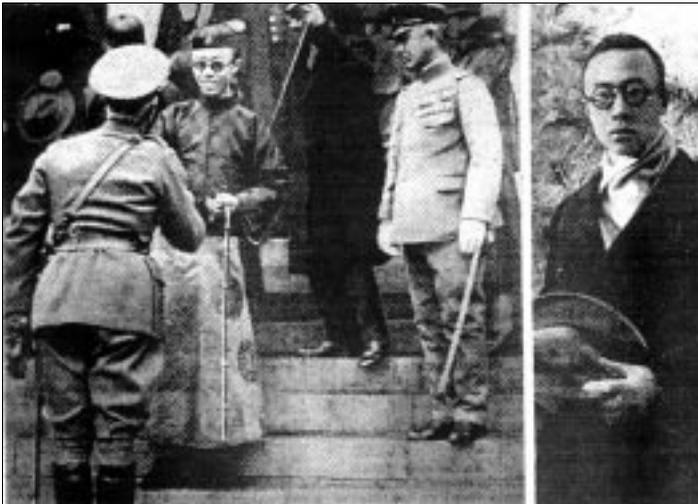
of favour. The Strike-North faction favoured expansion into Communist Russia rather than southwards into China and other Asiatic countries where there were raw materials in which Japan was lacking. He believed there would be war with Russia by 1936. Araki put short-term military preparations in hand. He was the most powerful man in the cabinet. He and his friend, General Mazaki, were regarded as leaders of the Kodo-ha or the 'Imperial Way School' (Strike-North Faction). The Kodo-ha began to lose ground in 1934 and General Araki resigned, supposedly from ill health. In January 1934 he accepted elevation to the ranks of the Supreme War Councillors.



Emperor Hirohito and Empress Nagako.



Hirohito in Imperial robes.



EMPEROR CHI-YUN OF MANCHUKUO.

Formerly the "Bar Emperor" of China, and after his deposition known as Mr. Pu-Yi, he is now the titular head of Japan's new foster State of Manchukuo, a country more as large as the British Isles and inhabited by some 30,000,000 people, mainly Chinese. In the larger picture he is seen receiving congratulations after his coronation last March. The right hand picture shows him in Western dress.

The Emperor Pu Yi of Manchukuo.

The rival faction was the Tosei-Ha or 'Control School'. General Hayashi, who had once been Commander-in-Chief of the Kwantung Army, took over office as Minister of War from Araki and came under the influence of Major General Nagata. In 1935 he was active in opposing the Strike-North Faction and ridding those in the army that supported it. After much intrigue, he effected the resignation of Mazaki. In the spring and summer of that year there were plots and counter-plots culminating in the assassination of Nagata on the same day that Gareth was killed. On August 12th 1935, outraged by the virtual dismissal of Mazaki, an obscure lieutenant colonel cut Nagata down with a sword. Hayashi then had to resign to save the government. In August 1935 Matsuoka was appointed to the Presidency of the South Manchurian Railway. He identified the Railway Company as the economic spearhead of Japan's expansion into China and predicted that:

Because of the activities of the Soviet Union and the situations prevailing in China, Japan is going to start operations in North China. Most of the people of Japan do not yet quite understand the great importance of the future operations and their lack of understanding, I believe will beyond doubt bring about a really serious crisis in the nation. Regardless how serious the crisis may become, Japan cannot halt her Chinese operations. The arrow has already left the bow. The progress of these operations will decide the destiny of the Yamato race.

The history of the Far East following the First World War should not be seen in isolation, but should be viewed from a global context. Japan had entered The Great War on the side of the Allies in August 1914. She soon captured the German fortress of Tsing-tao and became firmly established in Shantung as well as Manchuria. The ruthless German submarine campaign in the North Atlantic forced President Woodrow Wilson to join the Allied cause in April 1917. Prior to the entry of the United States, Britain and France had secretly negotiated with Japan that she should acquire Germany's Chinese Concession of Shantung. President Wilson was very much against this secret agreement, though he had to concede to it despite American affiliation with China and growing anti-Japanese sentiments. This

acquisition incited Chinese students to demonstrate against the Imperialists on May 5th 1919. (It was relinquished in 1922 following the Washington Conference.) It was partly on account of this settlement that the Congress of the United States failed to ratify the Treaty of Versailles or join the League of Nations, which had been suggested by the President. On her part Japan was aggrieved at the outcome of the Treaty because she felt she deserved more recognition for the support that she had given the Allies. Japan was merely given the mandate for the Pacific Islands that she had taken from the Germans in the First World War, despite the fact that she wanted permanent sovereignty. Japan failed to have a clause inserted into conditions of the League of Nations declaring the principle of racial equality. Further indignities were piled on this sensitive nation. In 1922 at the Washington Disarmament Conference she was only given the smaller quota of a 3-5-5 proportion of capital ships and the United States persuaded Great Britain to end the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. In the following years America became very anti-Japanese and denied the immigration to the U.S.A. of Japanese workers because in their opinion the Japanese émigrés did not assimilate into the American way of life. In 1930, while Gareth was working for David Lloyd George, the London Naval Disarmament Conference was held. He mentioned having seen some of the delegates in one of his diaries and records his and Lloyd George's unfavourable comments. The ratification of the Treaty by Prime Minister Hamaguchi and his cabinet had far reaching repercussions, because it was considered by the Japanese that he had conceded to the Americans to accepting a below the minimum number of warships. They agreed to a lower ratio for auxiliary warships than the 10-10-7, which had been laid down as the accepted minimum. This issue caused a bitter protest and, with the Nationalists demanding action in Manchuria, culminated in the attempted assassination of Hamaguchi.

Following the 'Mukden Incident' in September 1931, Japan felt that the Imperialist nations supported China and were excluding Japanese merchandise through tariff barriers and the restriction of free trade. An article in Gareth's possession by Ishihara Koichiro expressed the opinion that the world was dominated by the white nations and that Japan had long put up with insults by them. "Japan's present solitary position, international, economic and racial, in the nature of things stimulates Japan to greater activity and advance. Up to the present the white powers have been oppressing the coloured

racism, and through exploitation of the latter have enjoyed luxury and prosperity.” Ishihara considered that German-Japanese co-operation was the only step to save Germany from total collapse and was also an effective way for Japan to challenge the advance of the United States, Britain, France and Italy into the Asiatic continent.

Contemporary national sentiments have a way of influencing the politics of a country. Gareth was well versed in the reasons for American isolationism. The depression of the early thirties caused great hardship with much unemployment and financial loss in the country. The Americans blamed this on the failure of the repayment of the war debts and war reparations. They failed to understand that insisting on the payments of war debts was causing them far greater loss than the millions owed to them. It was not understood that the method of repayment and tariff barriers prevented free trade and was causing poverty in the countries that they felt owed them money. When Gareth visited the Philippines he was to see the problem of this isolationism and political lobbying. Just prior to the 1932 election Gareth wrote in *The Western Mail* an article entitled: ‘How America sees the Debts Question’, portraying her ignorance and mistrust of Europe. The previous year an American Congressman had even declared the President of the United States was a ‘German Agent’, because he had declared the Hoover Moratorium. Circumstances of the financial crisis had forced President Hoover to pronounce this moratorium. Franklin Roosevelt bowed to the strong lobby of farmers and America voted him into power as President of their country.

In the summer of 1934, Gareth interviewed Randolph Hearst, the newspaper magnate at his Welsh home, St Donat’s Castle, initiating the conversation with the remark: “Was not the Americans’ contribution to the War millions of dollars, whilst that of Britain and France millions of men?” He replied that: “It was not their War, but the Allies”. Gareth went on to say that in Wales they were amused by Hearst’s remark: ‘Welshing on a debt’. Hearst’s response was that it would be more accurate and more definitely descriptive to say: “that a man who had repudiated on an obligation had ‘Englished’ on his debt. It was a phrase devised by Englishmen to gratify the vanities and prejudices of Englishmen”.

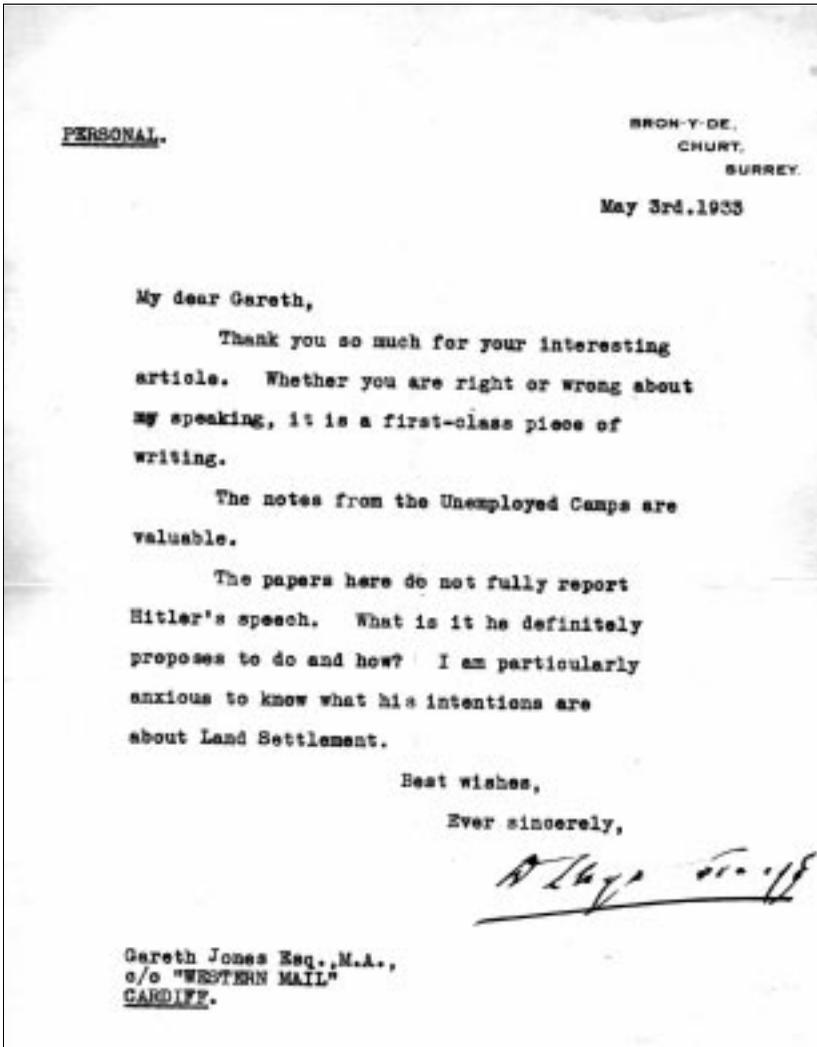


Gareth standing directly behind President Hoover at the White House, Washington together with the Children of the Revolution, April 23rd 1931.

Gareth was aware of the interdependence of the great nations of the world. As David Lloyd George's Foreign Affairs Adviser, he would have fully understood the repercussions of the Treaty of Versailles, which were reverberating more than a decade later. The British Prime Minister was one of its signatories in 1919, after the Great War. The Treaty was sacred to the French and she was against its revision. In Germany it had fermented great bitterness. In an article he published in *The Western Mail* entitled: "The World in Banking Crisis in 1931" he wrote graphically of how the collapse of the major bank, Credit-Anstalt in Austria, had been sufficient to cause a knock-on effect resulting in a financial crisis of global proportions - a spark as small as that which set Europe afire in 1914. He poignantly wrote: "the rumblings of disaster have grown more ominous. Japan has taken advantage of the trouble in Europe to send troops into Manchuria. The forces of Hitler, the fascist, have mounted in Germany". Appearing in *The Western Mail* on July 30th 1935, two

days after bandits captured him, was an article by Gareth entitled: “Anglo-American Relations from the Japanese point of view”. Lloyd George, General Smuts and other statesmen were in favour of an Anglo-American alliance and such an understanding was supported by one of his colleagues in Japan. The latter considered that Japan was aiming to dominate North China. Another view from Tokyo was that speeches by Western politicians who had never visited the East, advocating such an alliance, only antagonised a sensitive nation like Japan and increased her feeling of isolation. A 1934 trade mission had improved relations with Britain. The British Ambassador believed that Japan was becoming friendlier towards the Soviet Union. A third colleague considered an alliance with America was nonsense and that the Americans could not be relied upon, that they had a passion for isolation and that they had no great interests in the Far East. They were abandoning the Philippines and would not help Britain defend Hong Kong or Shanghai. The only alternative would be a close understanding with Japan. Gareth closed his article with these words: “Which is the right point of view? I shall not make up my mind until I have been through the Far East, visited China and Manchukuo and returned for a second visit to Japan”.

As a consequence of the war loans of the First World War, Britain was indebted to the United States. Despite these debts, in the period prior to the Second World War, the British Empire was considered a great and a dominant power in the Far East. On the other hand, Germany had become an impoverished country. Following her defeat in the Great War and as a result of the conditions of the Treaty of Versailles, which financially crippled the nation, she lost her Empire. The German economic and financial paralysis of 1930-32 made repayment of the war reparations prohibitive and after the temporary moratorium these were permanently repealed. Gareth was to see for himself the poverty of the people and the demoralised youth who were unemployed and who had no hope of finding work. Rebelling against the bondage of war reparations and the failure of democracy, a disillusioned Germany allowed Hitler and the National Socialists to come to power in early 1933. She began to re-arm and turned to China, away from the “Jewish-Bolshevik” state of Russia to import raw materials including wolfram (for tungsten) and antimony required for armaments. In return, with the knowledge of the War



Personal letter to Gareth from David Lloyd George.

Ministry, the Reichswehr, she gave advice and military equipment to Marshall Chang Kai-shek for the purpose of suppressing the Communists and the eventual war that might take place against the Japanese.

The retired General, Hans von Seeckt, one-time Commander-in-Chief of the Reichswehr, went as a German military adviser to the

Marshall and introduced an industrialist, Klein, to him. With General von Seeckt's knowledge, Klein was also involved with the development of an armaments factory and an arsenal in Canton for Marshall Chen Chi-tang's Army. On Gareth's first visit to Hong Kong he saw Von Seeckt with a Chinese General in mufti. The German Foreign Office (the Wilhelmstrasse) wished to keep a balanced foreign policy between China and Japan. Unbeknown to this department in the late spring of 1935 the Nazi, Joachim von Ribbentrop, began secret negotiations with the Japanese Military Attaché, General Oshima Hiroshi, in Berlin against the Soviet Union. The significance of these negotiations, in the light of the suspicions of Mr David Lloyd George's Secretary, Mr A.J. Sylvester as to Gareth's inexplicable death, should become apparent to the reader on completing this book, *Gareth Jones: A Manchukuo Incident*.