

JAPAN HAS A MONROE DOCTRINE

W. Morgan Shuster Discusses Her Attitude Toward Far Eastern Questions.

IN testifying before the Senate Philippines Committee on the Jones bill providing for the ultimate independence of the Philippine Islands, Mr. W. Morgan Shuster remarked that the attitude of Japan toward Far Eastern questions was consistent with a well-defined Monroe Doctrine of its own. The phrase has attracted considerable attention. For that reason Mr. Shuster, who occupied for nearly nine years important Government posts in the Philippines and later served as Treasurer General of Persia, was asked to explain the phrase in detail for THE NEW YORK TIMES.

"In many respects Japan's attitude toward her sphere of influence in the Far East and our policy as expressed by President Monroe are identical," said Mr. Shuster. "Both countries are very much in earnest in enforcing these policies.

"Japan's Monroe Doctrine, as it may be called, has taken form within the past few years. It dates, I should say, from the close of the war with Russia, scarcely earlier. As a result of this conflict Japan greatly widened her political horizon. Her victory over Russia made her more assertive and confident of her power to exercise a decisive influence over the general region within which lie the Philippines. At first this attitude was merely a sentiment, but in a few years it has crystallized. As time passed it found expression in the words of Japanese statesmen, and at present doubtless has the almost universal support of the Japanese people.

"Japan is today without question the first power in the Orient. She dominates the Far East much as the United States, because of its wealth, size, and power, occupies the first place on the American continents. And, like the Americans, the Japanese are a very high-spirited people. They have a pride of their own.

"Any encroachment upon this sphere by foreign powers would arouse much the same spirit of distrust or resentment as we should feel at a similar encroachment in the Western Hemisphere. I have no doubt that Japan would back up her Monroe Doctrine should affairs reach an issue, exactly as we should back up our own policy.

"Public opinion in Japan, as in the United States, is opposed to any plan for Japan's colonizing the Philippines. The Japanese have no more idea of raising their flag in the Philippines, for instance, than have we of colonizing the Central or South American republics. The Japanese have experimented with colonial empires in Formosa and Corea, and they do not care to extend the experiment.

"The Japanese employ scientific methods in their political plans, and they have carefully investigated the question of colonizing in the tropics, and have decided against it. At the time when it seemed possible that the United States would



W. Morgan Shuster.

part with the Philippines the Japanese sent their scientists to these islands to determine if they were suited for settlement and development by Japanese. The world recognizes that the Japanese do excellent research work. It will be remembered that during the Russian war a staff of biologists preceded the troops to examine the wells and the various climatic conditions, and that the health of their troops was largely due to this precaution. The Japanese scientists decided that the Philippine Islands did not offer the proper climatic conditions for colonizing and the Japanese Government and the people trust their scientists.

"Furthermore, Japan is not in a position to face the cost of colonizing this

territory. Her colonial enterprises in Formosa and Corea have been a heavy burden. The cost has not been justified by the results obtained. There is a popular prejudice against making any new ventures.

"Still another point common both to our own Monroe Doctrine and the attitude of Japan may be found in the attitude toward the Governments within the spheres of influence. We Americans are friendly to the small republics to the southward, and so is Japan to the existing States in the Far East. She would welcome a republic in the Philippines, for instance, because it would be neutral. It would not serve as an entering wedge for some aggressive world power. She would

encourage such a Government exactly as we encourage the continuance and independence of the republics of Central and South America.

"It should be very easy for the American people to understand Japan's attitude. We would not want a foreign power to establish a naval base within 400 miles of our coast, and for exactly the same reason Japan does not want such a base in the Philippines. We believe that no European power has any right to acquire further territory on our side of the Atlantic, and Japan probably thinks that we have no right on the other side of the Pacific. We have been strongly committed to our Monroe Doctrine for upward of a century, while Japan in little more than a decade has reached convictions no less earnest.

"Japan again does not need to expand her territory to the southward any more than does the United States. It is true that Japan proper is crowded and scarcely suffices to support her growing population, but she already has ample territory to relieve this congestion. Her opposition to the Philippines becoming the dependency of some great nation does not mean that she desires them herself. Our attitude, as expressed by the Monroe Doctrine, may be similarly misunderstood in Europe, but we hold it absurd to say that we guard Central and South America from foreign occupation because we want to keep it for our own colonizing schemes.

"It may be assumed that Japan will lend herself to any diplomatic policy which will tend to keep the Far East out of the power of European or American nations. She will, if necessary, police any territory within this sphere of influence rather than permit any new outsider to do so. Our own feelings respecting the Monroe Doctrine should enable us to understand perfectly her attitude. Let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that trouble, similar to the present unrest in Mexico, arises in some land near Japan. In such a case Japan would undoubtedly resent any foreign interference without her consent, exactly as we should refuse to permit it in Mexico.

"Japan's Monroe Doctrine, to employ the phrase once more, may be said to commit her, as does our own, to a policy of disapproving foreign influence with the neutral countries within her sphere. She would witness changes of Government within such independent neutral countries exactly as we do in the Western Hemisphere. Only if an outside power threatened to take any territory within this sphere of influence would she feel called upon to interfere.

"A Japanese policy looking to the acquisition of further territory in the Pacific would be extremely unpopular in Japan today. She would be strongly opposed, however, to a transfer of the Philippines, for instance, to the control of some European power."