

Save Our Canal!



American warship travels through Panama Canal: Strategic U.S. waterway in jeopardy.

The control of the Panama Canal is far more important to our national security than is the control of the Kiel Canal to that of Germany, or the Suez Canal to that of Great Britain. Its protection is more essential than the protection of any part of our coast or any of our seaports, however important, because it is the key to the protection of many seaports and thousands of miles of coast-line.

Henry L. Stimson
Former Secretary of War (1913)

The United States appears to be sleep-walking on a course to sure destruction, and America's leaders, who have plotted this course, appear to be completely oblivious to the mortal danger they are leading us into. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the imminent giveaway of the U.S. Canal in Panama. In just

Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, USN (ret.), one of America's foremost military authorities, and one of this country's most highly decorated officers, has served as Commander of the 7th Fleet, Supreme Allied Commander of the Atlantic, U.S. Commander in Chief of the Atlantic, Commander in Chief of the Atlantic Fleet, Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet, Chief of Naval Operations, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

a few months, unless the American people raise a terrific outcry, this strategic waterway, so vital to our economy and national security, will be turned over to Panama. But Panama, a tiny country of only 2.8 million people, does not even have an army. It has the capacity neither to defend nor maintain this valuable transoceanic thoroughfare.

China Takeover

In reality, if we allow this suicidal course to continue, we will be transferring *our* strategic canal not to Panama, but to whichever power moves in to fill the vacuum. And there is no longer any cause to wonder which power that will be. Over the past several years, the People's Republic of China has made unmistakably clear its designs upon the Panama Canal. In fact, it has already moved in and begun to take control of this critically important asset.

Yes, that is true; it is one of the great untold stories that have been completely ignored by our news media. If we proceed along our present course, by the end of this year, on December 31st, Communist China will become the de facto new owners and rulers of the Panama Canal. This is the same Red China that has been so heavily involved in massive espionage efforts to steal our satellite, missile, and nuclear

weapons technology; the same totalitarian regime that massacred thousands of students at Tiananmen Square, yet still denies this atrocity; the same Red China that is supplying terrorist regimes such as Iran, Syria, Libya, and North Korea with missiles and weapons of mass destruction; the same Beijing thugs who are threatening Taiwan, Japan, and the Philippines, who are helping Pakistan's nuclear weapons program, and who call the United States their "number one enemy"; the same Red China that has so thoroughly penetrated our government and our military research laboratories during the Clinton Administration.

Over the past year, the American people began to get a glimpse of the enormity and gravity of the multitude of ongoing Clinton scandals known collectively as "Chinagate." However, Clinton's allies in the media have been only too willing to help the White House divert attention from these serious matters. Thus, the public has remained largely uninformed on these vital issues, and we have not seen a sustained, determined attempt in Congress to hold accountable those individuals responsible for some of the most devastating betrayals of our national security.

As injurious as the many Chinagate treacheries have been to our nation's security, the impending surrender of our Panama Canal is more serious still. Tragically, Americans have come to take the Canal and its myriad benefits for granted. One of the great engineering marvels of the world, the Canal is not only a tribute to the genius, vision, determination, and political will of an earlier generation of Americans, but a crucially important artery and choke point for our Navy and merchant marine vessels. Its value far exceeds the \$32 billion we have invested in it over the years, though that price tag alone is reason enough to question the sanity of those who are so determined to relinquish this valuable property.

Over 13,000 commercial vessels transit the Panama Canal every year with some 190 million long tons of cargo. In the past year our Naval vessels used the Canal

countless times. This 51-mile waterway cuts 8,000 miles off the trip around the southern tip of South America, saving as much as two weeks of transport time. In warfare, time means lives, and that much time can mean the difference between defeat and victory. The Panama Canal has played a crucial role in World Wars I and II, the Korean War, Vietnam, Desert Storm, and many other conflicts. I find it unfathomable that this tremendous asset — which was bought at such a cost in gold, lives, sweat, and labor at the beginning of this century, and that is still so necessary to our nation's safety — could be surrendered nonchalantly now at the close of this tumultuous century.

"In Perpetuity"

From the time that Vasco Nuñez de Balboa first crossed the Isthmus of Panama in 1513 and gazed upon the Pacific Ocean, the idea of a transisthmian canal was a mighty fixation in the minds of many men. In 1826, Simon Bolivar called a congress in Panama City at which construction of a canal was proposed, but the project was dropped for lack of funding. In 1850, in an attempt to head off British encroachments in the area, the U.S. signed the Clayton-Bulwar Treaty with Great Britain, providing that the signatories would share in the construction and control of any inter-oceanic canal.

In 1881, Ferdinand de Lesseps, the famed builder of the Suez Canal, began a French effort to construct a canal through Panama. But high costs, financial mismanagement, and deaths from tropical diseases brought that effort to a halt in



Under Teddy Roosevelt, treaty with Panama gave U.S. Canal Zone; 51-mile waterway was completed in 1914.



Military, commercial link: China's takeover of Canal will mean grave security threat.

1887.

In 1898, the Spanish-American War underscored the need for a canal when the U.S. had to send a battleship from San Francisco to Cuba around the tip of South America. In 1903, during the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt, the United States concluded the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty with the new Republic of Panama, conveying to the United States "in perpetuity" a ten-mile-wide strip across the isthmus for construction of a canal.

The tremendous feat of engineering and construction was completed in 1914 and the Panama Canal was opened to traffic on August 15th of that year. A paramount concern in the minds of many American leaders at that time was the necessity of properly defending this new strategic asset. The quotation from Henry Stimson at the beginning of this article is taken from an essay entitled, "The Defense of the Panama Canal," which was published in *Scribner's Magazine* in July 1913, the year before the Panama Canal's completion. The arguments made by Stimson, who had served as Secretary of War under President William Howard Taft (and later again under Franklin Delano Roosevelt), are more valid and apropos today than

they were when he wrote them.

"The military importance of the [Panama] canal to the American nation," wrote Stimson, "... has not been so clearly recognized by the people at large. While they have been quick to see how important it is that in time of war the canal should be open to our own fleet, it has not been equally appreciated how important it is that the canal should be closed to the fleet of our enemy."

Stimson continued:

If we are ever unfortunate enough to be at war, either with a nation strong enough to have fleets in both the Atlantic and the Pacific, or with two nations, one in the Orient, and the other in Europe, this difference of policy as to the canal would be vital. The closure of the canal to our enemies would permit our fleet to operate on interior lines and would compel the other fleets to operate on exterior lines eight thousand miles longer than ours. *It might easily make the whole difference between victory and defeat.* [Emphasis added.]

The only way to guarantee that we could close the Canal to our enemies while keeping it open to our own fleet, of course, is to have the Canal amply protected and completely under American control. Why is it that this principle so widely recognized and accepted back then is now regarded as unimportant? In 1880, a year before the French launched their Canal effort

in Panama, President Rutherford B. Hayes, in a message to the Senate, said:

The policy of this country is a canal under American control. The United States cannot consent to the surrender of this control to any European power or to any combination of European powers.... An inter-oceanic canal across the American Isthmus would essentially change the geographical relations between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of the United States and between the United States and the rest of the world. It would be the great ocean thoroughfare between our Atlantic and Pacific shores and virtually a part of the coast line of the United States.... No other great power would, under similar circumstances, fail to assert a rightful control over a work so colossal and vitally affecting its interest and welfare.

The following year, in 1881, Secretary of State James G. Blaine cogently remarked:

If a hostile movement should at any time be made against the Pacific coast, threatening danger to its people and destruction to its property, the Government of the United States would feel it had been unfaithful to its duty and neglectful toward its own citizens if it permitted itself to be bound by a treaty which gave the same right through the canal to a warship bound on an errand of destruction that is reserved to its own navy sailing for the defense of our coast and the protection of the lives of our people.

Can we honestly believe that we are less at risk today than we were a century ago when Secretary Blaine made that observation? Is our government not being "unfaithful to its duty and neglectful toward its own citizens" by its continued insistence on surrendering this vital lifeline through the fraudulent Carter-Torrijos Treaties?

When I testified on the Panama Canal and United States interests before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on June 16, 1998, I stated that our military readiness was at an all-time low as regards our ability to defend our country, and at an all-time high as regards the threat to our national security, especially in our own hemi-

sphere.

I noted that although we had engaged in more so-called "contingency" military operations than under any previous administration in the history of our nation, our military forces had suffered 14 consecutive cuts in the defense budget, invalidating the long-standing policy of our country to be able to win in two major regional contingencies simultaneously. The United States Marine Corps, by its own admission, is prepared and trained to fight one — not two, but one — major contingency at the present time. According to Representative Floyd Spence (R-SC), chairman of the



Red China used technology stolen from U.S. to develop nuclear warheads similar to those carried on Trident II missiles (pictured).

House National Security Committee, it is doubtful that we could win even one major contingency at this point. This is a particularly grave assessment coming from Chairman Spence, who, as one of our top elected civilian officials in Congress, is charged with overseeing our military preparedness and regularly receives detailed updates and evaluations from all the branches of our Armed Forces. Unfortunately, I see no reason to contradict this alarming appraisal.

I further pointed out in my testimony before the Senate committee last year the actual approximate figures on specific cuts which greatly endanger our nation:

• The Army was cut 14.2 percent, from \$74.3 billion in 1993 to \$63.8 billion in 1999; the Department of the Navy, which includes the Marine Corps, suffered a sim-

ilar cut of 14.1 percent, down from \$94.7 billion in 1993 to \$81.3 billion in 1999; and the Air Force is weathering a 14.4 percent cut, down from \$89.5 billion in 1993 to \$76.6 billion in 1999.

• In overall manpower, active duty military personnel suffered a 17.8 percent cut, down from 1,776,000 in 1993 to 1,459,000, despite the many so-called military contingencies and peacekeeping operations around the globe.

Since I delivered that testimony, our armed forces have been involved, of course, in the newest major "contingency" known as Kosovo. We are accepting military commitments, one after another, under the aegis of the UN or NATO, while simultaneously disarming America. Meanwhile, we have seen an alarming increase in tensions between North and South Korea, where we have tens of thousands of American soldiers at risk, without adequate naval and air support, because of our force commitments to Bosnia, Iraq, Kosovo, and elsewhere.

Trouble Ahead

Ironically, 20 years ago we were in better shape militarily than we are now. Today, unfortunately, the fears and concerns of those of us who have had military experience over a great number of years in a great many different situations have been absolutely confirmed. I have been honored to serve as this nation's commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet, commander in chief of the Atlantic and the Atlantic Fleet, Chief of Naval Operations, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I truly cannot remember a time when I have been more concerned about the security of our country. That remark may seem strange, considering the history of World Wars I and II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. But it is a statement I will stand behind for the following reasons.

Since 1812 no war has been fought against a foreign enemy on American soil. This is a very long time ago. I am an old sailor now, but I know trouble when I see it, and I see big trouble in Panama, trouble that could evolve quickly into a conflict in our own hemisphere with worldwide implications. As I stated earlier, the impending transfer of the Panama Canal to the Panamanian government, under the circumstances which now exist, amounts to handing over control of the Canal to Red China, an aggressive, brutal, expansionist,

totalitarian regime that has shown, by word and deed, that it is our enemy.

China's penetration of Panama is of utmost significance to the United States, but the Clinton Administration and its media friends have turned a blind eye to this dangerous development. In light of what has already become public concerning Beijing's massive payoffs to Clinton-Gore and the Democratic National Committee, and President Clinton's subsequent radical changes of policy to benefit the PRC, it is fair to ask if this willful blindness to so clear a danger is another *quid pro quo* for Chinese cash.

The Chinese penetration of Panama has been effected primarily through an entity known as the Panama Ports Company, a front corporation for Hutchison-Whampoa Limited, a Communist Chinese-controlled company owned by Hong Kong billionaire Dr. Li Ka-shing. Dr. Li's business empire has long been intertwined with enterprises that front for the Communist military and intelligence arms of the People's Republic of China. Ten percent of his Panama Ports Company is owned by China Resources, the commercial arm of China's Ministry of Trade and Economic Cooperation.

Two years ago, on July 16, 1997, Senator Fred Thompson (R-TN) was quoted in the *South China Morning Post* as stating that China Resources was "an agent of espionage — economic, military, and political — for China." Shen Jueren, the Communist official who heads China Resources, and Li Ka-shing are both partners in the Riady family's Hong Kong Chinese Bank. Dr. Li is also a principal in the PRC's huge China Telecom, and the China International Trust and Investment Corporation (CITIC), a ministry-level conglomerate with global assets of \$21 billion run by Chinese "princeling" Wang Jun. As chairman of Poly Group, Wang Jun also serves as the PRC's main arms dealer to Communist regimes, terrorists, and rogue states. Nevertheless, Shen Jueren and Wang Jun, like many other notorious Red Chinese agents bearing campaign gifts, were welcome guests at the Clinton-Gore White House.

Communist Control

Dr. Li's Hutchison-Whampoa is a partner with the China Ocean Shipping Company (COSCO), the merchant marine arm of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Hutchi-

son-Whampoa also controls countless ports around the world. Because of its relationship to the PRC and the potential impact this implies for our global maritime interests, this should be of major concern to the United States. But my specific concern is that Beijing, operating through this company, has virtually achieved, without a single shot being fired, a stronghold on the Panama Canal, something which took our



Dr. Li Ka-Shing: Hong Kong billionaire at head of Chinese penetration of Panama.

country so many years and such tremendous effort to accomplish.

This stronghold of power has been almost completely accomplished through something called Law No. 5, passed by the Panamanian legislature on January 16, 1997. This law gives Hutchison-Whampoa — and, therefore, China — exclusive concessions, including, among other things:

- Responsibility for hiring new pilots for the Canal. Pilots have complete control of all ships passing through the canal. They determine which ships may go through and when.

- Control of the port of Balboa on the Pacific end of the canal and the port of Cristobal on the Atlantic end. In addition to these critical anchorages, Hutchison was granted a monopoly on the Pacific side with its takeover of Rodman Naval Base, a U.S.-built, deep-draft port facility capable of handling, supplying, refueling, and repairing just about any warship.

- Control of the order of ships utilizing

the entrance of the Canal on the Pacific side, and even authority to deny ships access on either side if they are deemed to be interfering with Hutchison's business. This is in direct violation of the 1977 Panama Canal Treaty, which guarantees expeditious passage for the United States Navy.

- The right to transfer "contract rights" to any third party — i.e., any company or nation. This means Hutchison could transfer rights to China, Russia, Cuba, Iraq, Syria, Libya, or corporate fronts for the Russian mafia or Colombian drug cartels.

- Control of certain public roads, such as Diablo Road, allowing access to strategic areas of the Canal to be cut off.

- Control of U.S. Air Station Albrook and Telfers Island.

In addition, we can expect that China will also move, sooner or later, to take control of Howard Air Force Base, Galeta Island, Fort Sherman, SOUTH-COM Quarry Heights Headquarters, Ancon Hill, Amador, and other vital military facilities built by Americans with U.S. taxpayer money.

"Bucketloads of Money"

How has this come about? At the same time that China's Communist leaders were buying their way into the Clinton White House, they were also directing large sums of cash into Panama's political process. Panama is a small and relatively poor country, and China, a major power with \$45 billion in cash reserves, has had a fairly easy time getting its way with bribery.

As Congressman Leopoldo Benedetti, a member of Panama's Legislative Assembly, put it in an interview with *El Siglo*, "Bucket loads of money from Asian contractors are pouring in." President Ernesto Balladares and members of his administration and the legislature have been very cozy with Hutchison-Whampoa and the PRC, as well as with Fidel Castro and the drug lords of Colombia. They rigged the bidding process to guarantee that Hutchison would get the bid. They were lured on, no doubt, by Hutchison's bid of \$22 million per year, but we do not know how much additional money changed hands "under the table," as one Panamanian legislator put it.

We know that the Panamanian administrator of the Panama Canal Commission, Alberto Aleman Zubieta, is also the own-

er of a private company, CUSA, which has been awarded multi-million-dollar contracts to tear down facilities at the strategic Amador military base. Then there is Balladares' Foreign Minister, Jorge Ritter, who has purposely torpedoed base talks in Panama, even though polls have shown that 80 percent of Panamanians want the U.S. to stay. Previously, Ritter served as Panama's ambassador to Colombia during the time that dictator Manuel Noriega was servicing Colombia's drug cartels. In truth, Ritter was Noriega's "point man" to the cartels and has been noted in the press for his many connections to the most notorious and violent of the drug capos.

On January 28th of this year, Fidel Castro's Radio Havana reported that "Cuba and Panama signed at the Panamanian capital an agreement for the promotion and protection of investments in the two countries, as well as a basic cooperation agreement between the two governments. The documents were signed by Cuban Foreign Investment and Economic Cooperation Minister Ibrahim Ferradaz and Panamanian Foreign Minister Jorge Eduardo Ritter. Following the signing of the two documents, Ibrahim Ferradaz emphasized the importance of this event, which strengthens Cuban-Panamanian ties...." Yes, this is the same Jorge Ritter.

Another major player in the current Panama drama is President Balladares' National Security Adviser, Gabriel Castro. Communist Chinese Ambassador Ju stated in an interview in Panama's *La Prensa* that Gabriel Castro is the best friend that the PRC has in Panama. Castro has pulled every string available to aid Red China and to sabotage their opponents and competitors. The Chinese Communists have been allowed to order the Panama Canal Commission out of their ports, thus creating large zones into which anything, including armaments, could be shipped in sealed containers without monitoring or inspection. Such sealed containers could contain missiles with nuclear warheads that could be easily launched to reach targets within the continental United States. It was not so long ago that Chinese officials warned that U.S. intervention in any PRC-Taiwan conflict could result in the nuclear vaporiza-

tion of Los Angeles. With a missile base in Panama, China would be in a good position to carry out such a threat, or to blackmail us into submission.

Deception and Fraud

In 1978, I, along with Admiral Robert Carney, Admiral George Anderson, and Admiral Arleigh Burke, pleaded with President Carter not to give away the Panama Canal. We pointed out the vital security needs of the United States that were at stake. He did not listen. In fact, he and his negotiators engaged in deception and fraud, presenting the U.S. Senate with completely different treaties than those agreed to by General Omar Torrijos, who was then Panama's dictator.

There are two Panama Canal Treaties involved: The first provides for the piecemeal transfer of the Canal and all facilities by December 31, 1999. The second

tary force *after* it has been taken over by a hostile force compare to the advantage of occupying defensive bases that could *prevent* the takeover of the Canal by an enemy in the first place? Retaking the Canal and its fortified positions would not only be costly, but could also end up rendering the Canal inoperable.

However, even the weak DeConcini Reservation was unacceptable to General Torrijos. So Carter allowed him to have a secret counter-reservation that was never submitted to the U.S. Senate. This counter-reservation conditioned any U.S. military intervention in Panama to that based on "the principles of mutual respect and cooperation." In other words, Torrijos was allowed to establish a secret (and, therefore, invalid) treaty claim that the U.S. could not rightfully intervene in the Canal without Panama's "cooperation," which is a complete repudiation of the DeConcini Reservation's defense guarantees.

The Panama Canal treaties ratified by the U.S. Senate are radically different from, and completely contrary to, the treaties agreed to by Torrijos. This makes them null and void, since both parties did not agree to the same document. Dr. Charles Breecher, one of the State Department's most knowledgeable treaty authorities, was certainly right in calling the Carter-Torrijos Treaties "the greatest fraud ever perpetrated against the United States and against the American people."

In 1978 I testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee concerning the Panama Canal. I stated:

The defense and use of the Panama Canal is wrapped inextricably with the overall global strategy of the United States and the security of the free world. I submit that if the United States opts to turn over full responsibility for the maintenance and operation of such an important waterway to a small, resource-poor, and unstable country as Panama and then withdraws all United States presence, a vacuum will be created which will be quickly filled by proxy or directly by the Soviet Union, as is their practice in every opportunity.



Balladares with Cuba's Castro: Panamanian president has been cozy with anti-American leaders, interests.

promises permanent neutrality and open access to the Canal for all nations.

The treaties were fatally flawed, even if taken at face value, because they ignored completely the vital national security interests of the United States. But we were to learn later that secret Carter-Torrijos agreements had made the treaties far more dangerous than we had feared. In order to gain Senate ratification, President Carter acceded to the DeConcini Reservation which guaranteed to the United States the right to use military force, with or without Panama's consent, to keep the Canal open. This was a false hope even if it had been made with honorable intentions. How can the "right" to go into the Canal with mili-



Carter beams as Torrijos signs treaty: Process marked by deception and perfidy.

The Soviet Union's thinking and conclusions about the Canal, and its approach to gain control of this important, strategically situated waterway, were not lost on the Chinese Communists. They have replicated the Soviet Union's intent to the letter — quickly, silently, and successfully. Simultaneously, they are establishing bases on Tarawa in the Spratly Islands near the Philippines, with the obvious intent of controlling another key maritime choke point, the Malacca Strait, through which much oil and other strategically important trade commodities are transported. The Chinese have shown repeatedly that this is a favorite tactic, to get behind their enemies' lines of supply and interrupt their access to vitally needed goods. There can be no doubt that their intent is inimical to our national interests. Yet we are being told by our elected leaders to trust our security to fraudulent agreements.

Paper "Guarantees"

I agree with the statement of Secretary Stimson in 1913, that "a canal protected by international agreement could not possibly meet the requirements of the United States." Stimson went on to point out very persuasively why paper agreements are no substitute for concrete defense measures. He said:

We could not afford to risk our national security upon the faith that an international guarantee would be stronger in our behalf, in some future crisis, than it was, for instance, in 1793, when Prussia, after having guaranteed only two years before the

independence of Poland, joined in the partition of Poland; or in 1807, when Great Britain entered the harbor of Copenhagen, belonging to a nation with which she was at peace and under relations of amity, and destroyed the Danish Fleet; or in 1904, when Japan, after having guaranteed the independence of Korea, violated the sanctity of the harbor of Chemulpho by attacking there the Russian fleet.... *To insure, therefore, that the Panama Canal will always be open to our own fleet and closed to the fleet of our enemy, it must be under American control, complete and unhampered, and every step must be taken in time of peace, by the construction of fortifications and the preparation of other military defenses, to make that control effective in the emergency of war.* [Emphasis added.]

We must face some hard realities. Since Mr. Stimson penned the above warning, our century has witnessed hundreds of treaty violations, most especially by totalitarian regimes. We have also seen ample proof of the maxim that nature abhors a vacuum. If we abandon the Panama Canal, as currently planned, China will take our place. As we have noted, it is already doing so. We are thus setting ourselves up for inevitable conflict. We will be forced, as a matter of national survival, at some not too distant point in the future to go to Panama and win back militarily what we have bought and built, and what is rightfully ours. When that happens, we will have to pay a high price in blood and

treasure — because the alternative will be far worse.

A Golden Opportunity

But that does not have to happen; we do not have to place ourselves in that situation. On May 3rd of this year, Mireya Moscoso was elected as Panama's first female president. Mrs. Moscoso is the widow of former President Arnulfo Arias, whose administration was overthrown by General Omar Torrijos 11 days after taking office, in 1968. A businesswoman and a pro-U.S. political moderate, Mrs. Moscoso defeated Martin Torrijos, the son of the man who had deposed her husband three decades earlier and who had been heralded as the favorite in the election. She is scheduled to take office on September 1st. Between now and the end of the year we have a golden opportunity — perhaps our last opportunity — to rectify the terrible fraud perpetrated through the Carter-Torrijos Treaties. Many of Panama's political, business, and intellectual leaders have voiced their desire to have the U.S. stay in Panama, and, as previously noted, the Panamanian people in general have overwhelmingly indicated their support for a continued U.S. military presence.

However, President Clinton has made no effort to contact President Moscoso and other Panamanian leaders to avert the impending surrender of our Canal. That is not surprising, since it would require him to go against the interests of his main campaign contributor, Red China, something he has shown time and again he will not do. What is surprising and distressing, though, is that no Republican members of Congress are making any substantive effort to stop this mad rush to disaster. They say that it is too late, that the surrender of the Panama Canal is already a *fait accompli* that we must accept. Well, I do not accept it. As an individual who has laid his life on the line for our country for many years and led numerous others into battle who have paid the ultimate price, I for one cannot understand why our government leaders passively permit this dangerous travesty to continue.

If you have not already contacted your representative and senators on this most urgent matter, I cannot implore you more earnestly to do so. The hour is late, and it is high time the American people let our elected leaders know with unmistakable clarity that we will not allow them to place our nation at risk by allowing the Panama Canal to fall into enemy hands. ■