


THE HAYES COROLLARY TO THE MONROE DOCTRINE
(Birthplace of 'American Plan' for Panama Canal)

A THESIS
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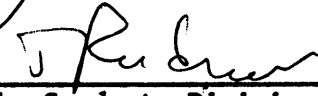
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INTRODUCTION

One could fill a small library with books written about canals or inter-oceanic crossing of the American Isthmus. The majority of those works have concerned themselves with the epic story of the engineering feat surrounding the construction of the Panama Canal (opened in 1914), or the very controversial issue of diplomacy and power that created the country of Panama in 1903. Many histories of the American Isthmus exist, but their length and style have detained the general public from knowledge of that narrow but important strip of land that separates two great oceans and connects the Americas.

Why has so much attention, interest, and time been spent on a waterway, a "big ditch", a strait? Well, as the French philosopher Cousin has said, "Tell me the geography of a country and I will tell you its destiny." In all ages there has been something extremely captivating about all straits and principal trade routes, and history records proof that the fiercest wars have centered on their possession (Dardanelles, Gibraltar, North Sea, Constantinople, Suez, Panama). Furthermore the trade which the Atlantic sought from the Pacific has in every age been so great that every new route from one ocean to the other has ruined and built up great cities.

A strait is a narrow passage connecting two larger bodies of water that brings the power of the land to control the important and vital navigation of the seas. It is often the key to the control of the adjacent seas. It becomes a rallying cry not only from a

geographically and political point of view but also from an intellectual one. Czar Alexander of Russia went so far as to offer Napoleon assistance in obtaining half of Europe in return for only the possession of one single strait - the Dardanelles, the key to the Black Sea.

To seize upon salient points and narrow straits of the world for the control of its trade and possessions has been the aim and object of all great nations. Each has demonstrated this feature of national ambition in their days of power and prosperity. Would the United States, in its moment of truth, with all the vast empire possibilities of the shore lines on the Pacific act differently, or would they too, consider the control of a 'strait to be', the American Isthmus, a must?

On March 8, 1880, President Rutherford B. Hayes issued the "Hayes Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine", a document that reflected the needs of economic expansionism and nationalism that were sweeping across the 'sleeping giant' of the New World. President Hayes informed the world of the new American policy regarding the American Isthmus, which still holds today - "The policy of this country is a canal under American control".

Historically, the motives for this United States policy have been attributed to the three months race of the United States battleship Oregon (1898) around the tip of South America to join in the battle of Santiago de Cuba and to the strong influence of the writings of Captain Mahan on sea power. Likewise, the credit for this

Isthmian policy is usually given to President Theodore Roosevelt and his presidential successors, Taft and Wilson.

The heart of this thesis demonstrates that the real author of this American Isthmian policy was President Hayes. In his "Corollary", Hayes not only presented a change in the evolution of Isthmian policies but also initiated the growth of a tough stance for the American Isthmus that paralleled the needs and designs of the American people.

This thesis will contain four major phases that establish the different yet interlocking canal policies that have affected the American Isthmus. Phase I, The European Plan, relates the early Isthmian history in the Americas showing the importance of the American Isthmus for the world ever since the discovery of America. Phase II, The Anglo-American Plan, builds on the foundations of the first phase, portraying the United States of America as the restless growing nation finding and making its place in the New World. This nation's involvement and interest in Isthmian affairs is seen through its documents - Monroe Doctrine of 1823, Treaty of 1846-48, and the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850. Phase III, The International Plan, illustrates an acceleration of interests by the United States regarding the American Isthmus that is paralleled by the international thinking and design for an interoceanic canal at Panama that would guarantee international usage and neutralization, based on the example of the Suez Canal.

Phase IV, The American Plan, reveals the elements that went into the making of the "Hayes Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine". It relates how the business ethic, farm and industrial overproduction and surplus, world market urge, defense fears and jingoism were all assessed by the Hayes Administration of the late Nineteenth Century. The "Corollary" was an adjustment of United States Isthmian policy to meet the country's needs and expectations. It encompassed parts of the plans of the previous phases and established the foundation for the acquisition of the American Isthmus.

Today, nearly one hundred years after the "Hayes Corollary", the American Isthmus again is in the limelight as the need for a larger or new canal is ever present along with an ever growing fever of Panamanian nationalism. Political controversy and debates over the sovereignty of the Panama Canal are present not only in the United States and Panama but also throughout the world as the American Isthmus now involves the United Nations as a focus point of power and rights between First and Third World Powers.

It is the author's hope that through a better understanding of the history, progression, and development of policies for the American Isthmus, one can gain a better world perspective. It is also hoped that this thesis might be of assistance to those with responsibilities and interests in order to aid them in making mature and foresighted decisions that will greatly affect the world and especially, the Americas.