

Chronology of the Panama Canal

The discovery of the Sea of the South by Vasco Núñez de Balboa hardly defined the destiny of the isthmus of 75 thousand kilometers square that today we know with the name of Panama.

The fact defined its identity like nation, its development like society, its creation like country, and its importance for the greater military and economic power of the hemisphere: The United States.

The construction of the route between the Atlantic and the Pacific represented at its moment a colossal challenge for the French, main precursors of the work, and for the Americans, their administrators by 85 years, whereas for the Panamanians meant, throughout century XX, reason for permanent vindication.

The isthmus

Few companies del man changed so much the knowledge of the true configuration of the Earth like the discovery of Is South of (the Pacific ocean)the 25 of September of 1513 by Vasco Núñez de Balboa.

When finding this new ocean, the Spaniards understood the dimension of the continent discovered by Cristóbal Columbus the 12 of October of 1492. They required of a fast and safe route to communicate the new possessions of the crown.

The down heart that seized of the explorers with the shortages of the trip of Hernando de Magallanes in 1520 by the Cape Horn caused that the interest was concentrated in the narrowest part of the Central American isthmus. There it was the Chagres river, navigable in many of his leagues, which shortened the trip by earth towards the sea recently discovered.

King Carlos V sent in 1534 a Real Certificate in that they recognize themselves for the first time and in official form the merits of the route.

After the independence of Panama of Spain, the 28 of November of 1821, and its voluntary annexation to Colombia, would again arise the idea from the construction of a channel.

The 31 of December of 1821, colonel Jose de Fábrega, superior commander of Panama, dictated norms for the commerce in the isthmus of Panama that declared frees the access for ' ' the friends ships ' ' to the ports of Panama, Chagres and Portobelo.

The aquatic route would take advantage of the resources the Chagres and the Bay of Lemon in the Caribbean Sea, and the terrestrial one would arrive until the city of Panama, in the Pacific sector.

The construction of the transístmico railroad, between 1850 and 1855, fortified the idea to

establish an aquatic route by Panama, although the proposals of Tehuantepec and Nicaragua existed.

The French Channel

The French, interested in the company, considered themselves most apt for the construction by virtue of the success achieved in the Suez Channel, under the direction of count Ferdinand de Lesseps.

In 1876 the Civil Society the Canal International Interoceanic entrusted lieutenant Luciano Napoleón Bonaparte Wyse to carry out the measurements and investigations to establish the route.

After exploring San Blas and Darien in Panama, and Colombia the region of the Atrato, Bonaparte Wyse obtained from the Government of Colombia a long term concession to continue its explorations.

Bonaparte Wyse recommended like the best route the strip istmeña. In 1880, the Universal Company of the Panama Canal, under the leadership of the count of Lesseps, signed a contract with the company Couvreux and Hersent for the accomplishment of the workings.

In the financing of the construction bottoms collected between the French citizens were used. The sale of the actions began the 10 of December of 1880.

The beginning of the works, in 1881, the French technicians and the workers, in their majority immigrants, faced a rival difficult to win: the yellow fever. In addition, the earthworks demanded of equipment and machinery until then strangers.

1884, Rod entered scene Philippe Bunau, that was gotten up like engineer to the Universal Company of the Channel, at a time dominated by the errors and the increase of the victims of the yellow fever.

The failure of the company guttering in 1892 brought for about 100 thousand French, who bet to the chimera of Lesseps, the loss of its savings. While the executives of the company looked for a solution, the French cuts took the control from the assets of the company; the count of Lesseps submerged in a depression.

It appeared Bunau again Rod, this time turned promoter of a channel by the Panamanian route. The French put all his persistence in disregard all other possible alternative and existed many at the time, to construct a transístmica marine route.

In 1901 Bunau Rod he visited the main cities of the United States. He sustained, before those who they loved to listen to it, kindness of his project. In 1902, the United States acquired, by 40 million dollars, the actions of the New Company of the Panama Canal.

The Commission of the Istmico Channel of the United States insisted to Washington to negotiate to perpetuity the rights of construction in Panama, and in 1903, the United States and

Colombia the negotiations for the establishment of the strip began that would communicate to both oceans.

After hard negotiations, in which the Panamanians were not taken into account, the Herra'n-Hay treaty was signed, whom it authorized to the United States to acquire of the New Company of the Panama Canal the French properties, including the transístmico railroad.

Meanwhile, a group of Panamanians planned the separation of Panama of Colombia. In September of 1903, Loving Manuel Guerrero was sent to the United States with the order to manage the support to independence.

The 3 of November of 1903, with the American endorsement, Panama separated of Colombia.

Four days later the United States it recognized the independence of the new republic. The 18 of November the Hay-Bunau treaty was signed Rod, which established the rules for the construction of the marine route.

From then, a conflicting relation between the United States and Panama settled down cyclical. The second alleged whenever no citizen his took part from direct way in the negotiations that allowed to first, to perpetuity, to settle down a jurisdiction different in an important portion from his territory, the one that she would be well-known like Zone of the Channel, for the construction of the route.

Sometimes stormy negotiations, and a climax of violence in January of 1964, lead after successive agreements between both countries to the subscription, the 7 of September of 1977, of the Treaty Torrijos-Carter.

Position in use the 1 of October of 1979, the mentioned agreement established for the 31 of December of 1999 the exit of the last American soldier of Panamanian territory.