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RELEASE: September 23

THE PANAMA TREATY TERMS

If we had lost a war to Panama and had to tender an unconditional surrender, the peace treaty wouldn't read much differently from the treaty that President Carter voluntarily signed on September 7, 1977 and now asks the Senate to ratify. Here is what the terms mean:

1. We immediately give Panama sovereignty over the U.S. Canal Zone that we bought and paid for at a price higher than the total price we paid for the Louisiana Purchase, Arizona and Alaska combined. All Americans in the Canal Zone will become subject to Panama law.

2. We immediately give Panama title to the land in the U.S. Canal Zone, which we bought from private landowners in addition to buying sovereignty from Panama. Present residents may continue to occupy their property only by paying rent to Panama.

3. We give Panama total ownership of the U.S. Canal in 22 years, and we start giving away "the management and protection and defense" of the U.S. Canal immediately and "increasingly."

4. After 22 years, the United States is prohibited from any action whatsoever to defend the Canal, and may not have any "military forces, defense sites and military insta11ations" at the Canal.

5. The United States gives up all right to build or even to negotiate for a new interoceanic canal anywhere in the Western Hemisphere without Panama's permission.

6. The United States agrees to pay Panama $10 mi1lion per year from the Canal tolls, an additional $40 to $55 million per year as a percentage of toll receipts, and another $10 million per year if revenues permit. This makes a total of $50 to $75 million per year.

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7. American citizens in the Canal Zone are prohibited from engaging in "any activity incompatible with the spirit of the treaty," and the United States pledges to "take all measures" to "ensure" that this provision is complied with. (Since Torrijos doesn't permit free speech or press within Panama to criticize the new treaty, this means that the United States promises to abridge the First Amendment rights of Canal Zone Americans.)

The impression cultivated by the Administration that we will keep the Canal until the year 2000 is not accurate. Here is the way that transfer of the U.S. Canal to Panama will begin immediately:

1. The United States is prohibited from increasing our armed forces at the Canal over the number presently stationed there.

2. We immediately turn over the defense of the Canal to "a combined Board comprised of an equal·number of senior military representatives" of the United States and Panama, who can take action "in concert" with each other.

3. We immediately give Panama control of the "police, fire protection, street maintenance, street lighting, street cleaning, traffic management, and garbage col lection" for the Canal operating areas, promising to pay Panama $10 mi11ion per year for such services, but not requiring any satisfactory performance of such services by Panama.

4. We immediately allow Panama to select and control four of the nine members of the Panama Canal Commission.

5. We immediately allow Panama to select and control the Deputy Administrator of the Panama Canal Commission. At the end of 12 years, Panama is given the right to select and control the top Administrator.

6. Panamanians are given job preference over Americans for Canal jobs. We are required to recognize all professional licenses issued by Panama and to institute training programs to qualify Panamanians to take over Canal jobs. Any non-Panamanian may be retained in a job only five years.

Ronald Reagan was right. The Carter Administration "doesn't 'know the difference between being a diplomat and a doormat."

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