

TRANSIT OF U.S. TROOPS

Exchange of notes at Panama July 18 and 20, 1912

Entered into force July 20, 1912

Superseded by procedure set forth in records of the negotiations of the treaty of Mar. 2, 1936¹

Department of State files

The American Minister to the Secretary for Foreign Relations

F.O. No. 221

PANAMA, July 18, 1912

EXCELLENCY:

The Department of State is advised that it is the intention of the War Department to initiate at an early date the practical instruction of the mobile troops forming part of the Panama garrison in their duties in connection with the defense of the Canal Zone. For the proper performance of these duties it will be necessary that the troops become familiar with the possible landing places for a hostile force within reasonable distance of the Canal, the routes of advance from the Canal Zone to such landing places, and that terrain beyond the limits of the Canal Zone which would probably be involved in operations incident to repelling successfully an attack upon the coast defense works or the vulnerable parts of the Canal system.

This will involve the passage of troops and reconnoitering parties across territory belonging to the Republic of Panama, and while this Government regards this work as a necessary incident to the protection of the Canal as contemplated and provided in the treaty, and therefore as within the rights given by treaty stipulations, yet it desires to avail itself of this opportunity of calling to the attention of the Republic of Panama the aforementioned facts in order to avoid any possible misapprehension on the part of the Government of Panama as to the reason for this free passage of topographical parties and troops of the Panama garrisons across such parts of the territory of the Republic as it may be necessary for them to use for instructional purposes.

The Government of the United States feels that it need not assure the Government of Panama that the presence of these parties and troops on Panamanian territory has no other significance or purpose than that mentioned above and that, having completed that work, they will at once retire from Panamanian territory and return to the Canal Zone.

¹ TS 945, *post*, p. 742.