

Ramon Valdez's Statement on Panama's Decision to Enter the War *7 April 1917*

Panama entered the war a day after the United States. Here, Valdez explains Panama's decision to enter the war, which is largely based on the fact that Panama's wellbeing was largely dependent on that of the United States.

Our indisputable duty in this tremendous hour of history is of a common ally, whose interests and existence as well are linked indissolubly with the United States.

As the situation creates dangers for our country, it is the duty of the Panaman people to cooperate with all the energies and resources they can command for the protection of the canal and to safeguard national territory.

The attitude of the people was foreseen and interpreted faithfully in a resolution unanimously approved by the National Assembly on February 24th, and confirmed by later laws, and the moment has arrived for the Executive to act in accordance with the declarations of the supreme body.

I therefore declare that the Panaman Nation will lend emphatic cooperation to the United States against enemies who execute or attempt to execute hostile acts against the territory of the canal, or in any manner affect or tend to affect the common interests.

The Government will adopt adequate measures in accordance with the circumstances. I consider it the patriotic duty of all Panaman citizens to facilitate the military operations which the forces of the United States undertake within the limits of our country. Foreigners, resident or transient, will be obliged to submit to the conditions of this declaration.