

# MUST CLOSE CANAL FOR REST OF MONTH

**Colonel Harding Tells Garrison  
1,000,000 Cubic Yards Must  
Be Dredged Out of Ditch.**

## SHIPPERS BECOME ALARMED

**The Finland Ordered to New Orleans,  
to Discharge Passengers,  
According to Report from Panama.**

Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

PANAMA, Oct. 4.—Consternation prevailed in shipping circles here today, and also among the officers of the ships which are waiting to pass through the canal, when it became known that Lieutenant Colonel Chester Harding, the engineer in charge of the Panama Canal Board, had recommended to the Secretary of War the closing of the canal until Nov. 1. Governor Harding stated in his recommendation that it would be impossible to clear the channel before that date because there were over a million cubic yards in sight which must be removed before a permanent channel is again maintained. The canal can be declared officially closed only by an order from President Wilson.

When Colonel Harding's action became known the Captains of the vessels, tied up at both ends of the waterway, cabled to their companies for instructions. It is possible that many of the vessels will be ordered around the Horn, or else use the Tehautepec route.

The steamer Finland, which is at Colon with 300 passengers aboard, has been ordered to proceed to New Orleans, where the passengers will be sent to San Francisco by rail. It is understood that Colonel Harding has outlined a plan to transship the cargo of the other vessels across the isthmus by way of the Panama Railroad. This plan, however, would require a month, it is said, because there are now ninety loaded vessels in the canal waters.

No reply has been received from the Secretary of War regarding the course to be followed, but it is presumed that Colonel Harding's recommendation will be accepted and followed.

F. W. Ridgeway, manager of the operating department of the International Mercantile Marine Company, which owns the Panama-Pacific Line, said last night that it had not been finally decided what would be done in regard to the passengers on the steamship Finland, which left New York on Sept. 25, and those on the Kroonland, from San Francisco, on Sept. 29. He said it is possible that they might be sent across the isthmus by rail and changed from one steamer to the other. There is about 12,000 tons of cargo on each vessel, Mr. Ridgeway said.

Collector Malone received a telegram from the Washington Bureau of the Panama Canal yesterday which read:

For your information and the information of shipping: A cablegram dated the third, from Isthmus, states that another slide movement occurred on Saturday night. Considering the material to be removed from the channel, and the behavior of slides for the past week, there are no definite prospects for reopening the canal before Nov. 1. Please advise all shipping interests in your city who intend using the canal.

(Signed) PANAMA CANAL OFFICE.

Notice was posted in the Maritime Exchange yesterday advising shipowners not to dispatch any vessels via the canal until they had first communicated with the authorities in Washington.

In addition to the Finland and Kroonland, each of which costing the line \$1,000 a day during their tie-up at the canal, the Pacific line has the two 12,000-ton liners Siberia and Korea tied up at the Pacific end of the canal. They are loaded with cargo for London from San Francisco.

The American-Hawaiian Steamship Company will probably send its cargo ships to Puerto Mexico on the Atlantic coast, and send the freight over the ship railway to Salina Cruz, as it did before the Panama Canal was opened, if the blockade is to last some time.