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INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Serial 96-44-R Monograph Index Guide No. 601-200
From Naval Attache at Guatemala Date 2 November 1944
Source Costa Rican Government Authorities. Evaluation A-2
Subject COSTA RICA Principal Physical Features of Frontiers and
Monograph Area. Approaches.

Forwarding 601-200 sections (Frontiers and Approaches) of monograph for the Republic of Costa Rica, plus one map enclosure of Costa Rica-Panama boundary and one publication enclosure, delineating Costa Rica-Panama boundary.

Forwarded here with are two pages (exclusive of covering page) of monograph information, covering the 601-200 section (Frontiers and Approaches) of the monograph for the Republic of Costa Rica. Also forwarded herewith are the following enclosures (to ONI only):

- Enclosure A - Map of Costa Rica-Panama boundary, prepared by the Costa Rica-Panama Border Commission, August, 1944. *C302-23 3/563*
- Enclosure B - Copy of "La Gaceta", official Costa Rica Government publication, dated October 7, 1944. Pages 1848-1851 provide information regarding the Costa-Rica-Panama boundary.

VITAL STORAGE

COSTA RICA

601-200: FRONTIERS AND APPROACHES.

A. Costa Rica-Nicaragua Border.

1. Geographical Description. The northern boundary of Costa Rica was determined by arbitration proceedings which resulted in the Canas-Jerez Treaty of 1858, and by arbitration proceedings brought before U.S. President Grover Cleveland in 1888. The resulting boundary runs as follows from east to west: (1) The right bank of the San Juan River from Punta Castilla on the Caribbean Sea to a point 3 miles southeast of Castillo Viejo; (2) a described arc with its center in Castillo Viejo and a radius of 3 miles; (3) a line drawn parallel and 2 miles distant from the south bank of the San Juan River, and from the southern end of Lake Nicaragua, until it meets the Sapoa River; (4) a straight line from this junction to the center of the Bay of Salinas.

2. Approaches. Access to the Central Plateau of Costa Rica from the northern boundary may best be had via either of two routes; the Inter-American Highway route, which enters Costa Rica at Peñas Blancas, but is not yet (Oct., 1944) graded or drained until the town of Bagaces is reached; or the principal tributaries of the San Juan River. Although jeeps have made the run from the Nicaraguan border to San Jose, it will be a considerable time before motor vehicle convoys will be able to use this route. Still, it is to be noted that landings could be made with relative ease in Salinas Bay or Santa Elena Bay, and both bays are close to the Inter-American Highway.

Approach

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Approach to the Central Plateau from the San Juan River may best be made via the Frio, San Carlos, or Sarapiquí rivers. In this region, movement by boat is a necessity, due to dense jungle, swamps and mango growths between the various rivers. See the map of the Republic of Costa Rica enclosed with NA Guatemala report 421-41, dated 25 June 1941, for indication of the principal trails which cross the Nicaragua-Costa Rica border.

B. Costa Rica-Panama Border.

1. Geographical Description. ^{Begin} [The southern boundary of Costa Rica was determined in accordance with the findings of Chief Justice White of the U.S. Supreme Court in 1914, then modified in a treaty ratified in May, 1941, by the Costa Rican and Panamanian Governments. The present boundary is described as follows: "From the mouth of the Sixaola River in the Caribbean Sea, the boundary line follows the thalweg of the Sixaola upstream until its junction with the Yorkin River; thence follows the thalweg of the Yorkin River upstream until it reaches the parallel of latitude 9° 30' N; thence follows a course of 76° 37' W of S until the meridian of longitude 82° 56' 10" W is reached; thence follows this meridian southward to the cordillera which separates the waters running into the Atlantic Ocean from those running into the Pacific Ocean; thence follows the afore-mentioned cordillera to Cerro Pando, which is the point of union of the cordillera with the spur which separates the waters running into the Gulf of Dulce from the waters running into the Bay of Charco Azul; thence follows this spur to the midpoint of Punta Burica on the Pacific."] ^{end}
 For full geographical delineation of this boundary line, see Enclosure A (to ONI only), a map prepared by the Costa Rica-Panama Border Commission; also see pages 1848-1851 of Enclosure B (to ONI only), the official Costa Rica Government bulletin of October 7, 1944, which indicates the exact location of various boundary markers and reports the official measures taken to execute the boundary treaty ratified in May, 1941. In addition to the above-mentioned boundary data, Costa Rica and Panama agreed in May, 1941, ^{begin} ^{2nd} ^{quote} that the two countries should hold in perpetuity, and under identical conditions and without limitation or encumbrance of any kind, the right to free navigation on the Sixaola River from its confluence with the Yorkin to its mouth, and on the Yorkin River from parallel of latitude 9° 30' N until its confluence with the Sixaola. Should either of these rivers change its course, the frontier line would not be affected; both countries would continue to enjoy the navigation rights granted by this treaty.] ^{end}

2. Approaches. The southern border of Costa Rica is, for the most part, more mountainous and less accessible than the northern boundary. At the southeastern extremity of Costa Rica, the border is crossed by several well-defined trails, the two most commonly used being in the vicinity of Puerto Viejo and Sipurio. At the southwestern extremity of Costa Rica's border with Panama, habitation is sparse and progress by land difficult, but trails cross the frontier in the vicinity of La Cuesta. See the map of the Republic of Costa Rica enclosed with NA Guatemala report 421-41, dated 25 June 1941, for indication of the principal trails. In summary, it might be pointed out that entrance into Costa Rica can best be gained by sea or air, and most profitably in the vicinity of the Puntarenas-San Jose-Limon axis.

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