

SECRET/RYPAT

2003

Routing Form
Doc. No.:
HG6A-1071
Date:

Indicate title of person to take action and title of originator. Place comments thereunder by numbered paragraphs. Initial in center of page and draw a line across the page and forward. Each recipient is to repeat above procedure until action completed and ready for filing. This cover-sheet must be retained with enclosure.

15 MAY 1954

TO:

FROM

DATE

~~DC/P~~
E/O
O/EW
C/PM

[]
[]

Now if we can beat the rains!
This rpt indicates strong likelihood of our being able to seize and isolate these points as reinforcements will be surely pressed particularly if we remove what bridges there are on the road and eliminate rail traffic. On cummo, I believe rapid, early removal of all strands between selected poles should take care of telephons/telegraph.

To [] [] - Made copy
of am covering 17/5/54

Gerry: Pls file in EEI 23
with ^{cross ref:} notes in EEI 21, 22,
24 and 25.

EEI EXTRACTED
MAY 20 1954
[]

SECRET/RYPAT

Lincoln

VIA: COURIER
(SPECIFY AIR OR SEA POUCH)

DISPATCH NO. HGGA-1071

~~PBSUCCESS/RYPAT/SECRET~~
CLASSIFICATION

TO : LINCOLN

DATE MAY 14 1954

FROM : Chief of Station, Guatemala

SUBJECT: GENERAL— Operational

SPECIFIC— GUALAN - Road trip made by ESPERANCE

Reference: HULA-455

1. ESPERANCE has just returned from GUALAN after two days thrashing about in the mud and rain. There isn't time to debrief him and get the information in the pouch which is closing in the next 15 minutes. A copy of his report has been photographed for debriefing purposes here and the original, which appears to be colorfully written is forwarded to LINCOLN now.

2. Arrangements are being made to have the film developed here. After the shots have been identified, they will be forwarded by a subsequent pouch.

[
Robert B. Riggs
]

Attachment: 8 page report.

RBR/rbr

15 May 54

Distribution:

2-LINCOLN w/att

2-Wash w/o att

2-Files w/photo of att

15 MAY 1954

~~PBSUCCESS/RYPAT/SECRET~~
CLASSIFICATION

May 13, 1954

Gualan

Who in the hell thought this one up????? I am going to do my best to impress you to drop any operation in this spot if you are depending on surface transportation.

Re: 5/13/54

I wanted to know where the road could be cut. Hell, Boy, it is cut already but they don't know it. I have driven a lot of bad roads in my life but this one takes the cake. Remember, I was in a Land Rover and I would have turned back a dozen times if I hadn't been so damn stubborn to see it through. Keep this fact in mind. They have had one rain so far and it is just starting the rainy season there. So if the road is as I describe it, picture it two months from now.

You leave Zacapa and immediately plunge into a river that would be hell after a hard rain. I saw where it had carried away two light poles the night before. The road turn from fair to poor to awful very quickly after crossing the river. I kept stopping and asking if I was on the right road as I couldn't imagine that this could be the only road to a town that size. It is badly eroded and rutted. It is narrow and in some spots the bank has been eroded away until there is just room for a car to pass between the bank and cut. In one spot I was one half hour trying various ways to get through. I almost turned the car over once I was on such an angle, I got it hung up on the oil pan, I had my drive shaft throwing rocks all over the place where it was dragging and it is set very high. You must go through several stream beds that look like they are hell after a rain. There are a couple of bridges made of criss-crossing small logs (3-4"). One isn't going to last long. At last after fighting through all this I arrive at the town only it is on the other side of the river. It looks like the Mississippi to me. It is about 25 yds. wide and going like hell. There is a truck on my side and I ask him about crossing and he says "Oh sure, go ahead" and pointed out the route to take. I start in and the first thing I know I am swimming. There is a foot of water inside the car. The water is over the fenders. Somehow I struggle through the truck starts and he makes it half way and was still there this morning. I was the guinea pig. However, it backfired.

I looked up my man that I was carrying a quotation for an irrigation system and after we talked I was ready to start back. I sent a telegram to the hotel to pick up my wabbb that had left in my room and went to the car. As I went to start, a fellow came to the car and asked my name. I told him and he asked again so I pulled out my Weilhauer, Pagrams card and he said "Oh, you looked like someone else." Like Hell. He was another secret police. I had asked the guardia Civil where my customer lived and they must have trailed me. I am sure now that they must have someone in each town checking on all strangers. I was never followed after that.

Well, Gualan has the damnest mess of wires that you ever saw. I walked myself down to the instep trying to trace them. Every time that I thought I had it, they would take a lead off and light a street lamp and back I would go again. They have three wires coming from the side of the building and three that go out the rear to the next street. I never could figure out which was which but I think the ones coming out the side must go to the municipal offices phones.

Anyway since we were only interested in where they left the city I didn't check into the local lines. These three wires that go out the back descend the hill and houses and head for the railroad tracks. About 100 feet from the track one wire takes off and climbs about 300 feet in one swoop to the top of a hill about 500' away. I think this wire goes to La Union. It is a single strand wire. The other two end up on the RR comm. pole and one goes towards Zacapa and the other towards Bananera along the tracks. I noticed a single strand wire that I picked up about a mile west of the town and was told that this goes to a village on that road. I checked along the river both ways from town and this is the only possible wire out of town. This is the first time that I have heard of them using the RR poles. We had better check this.

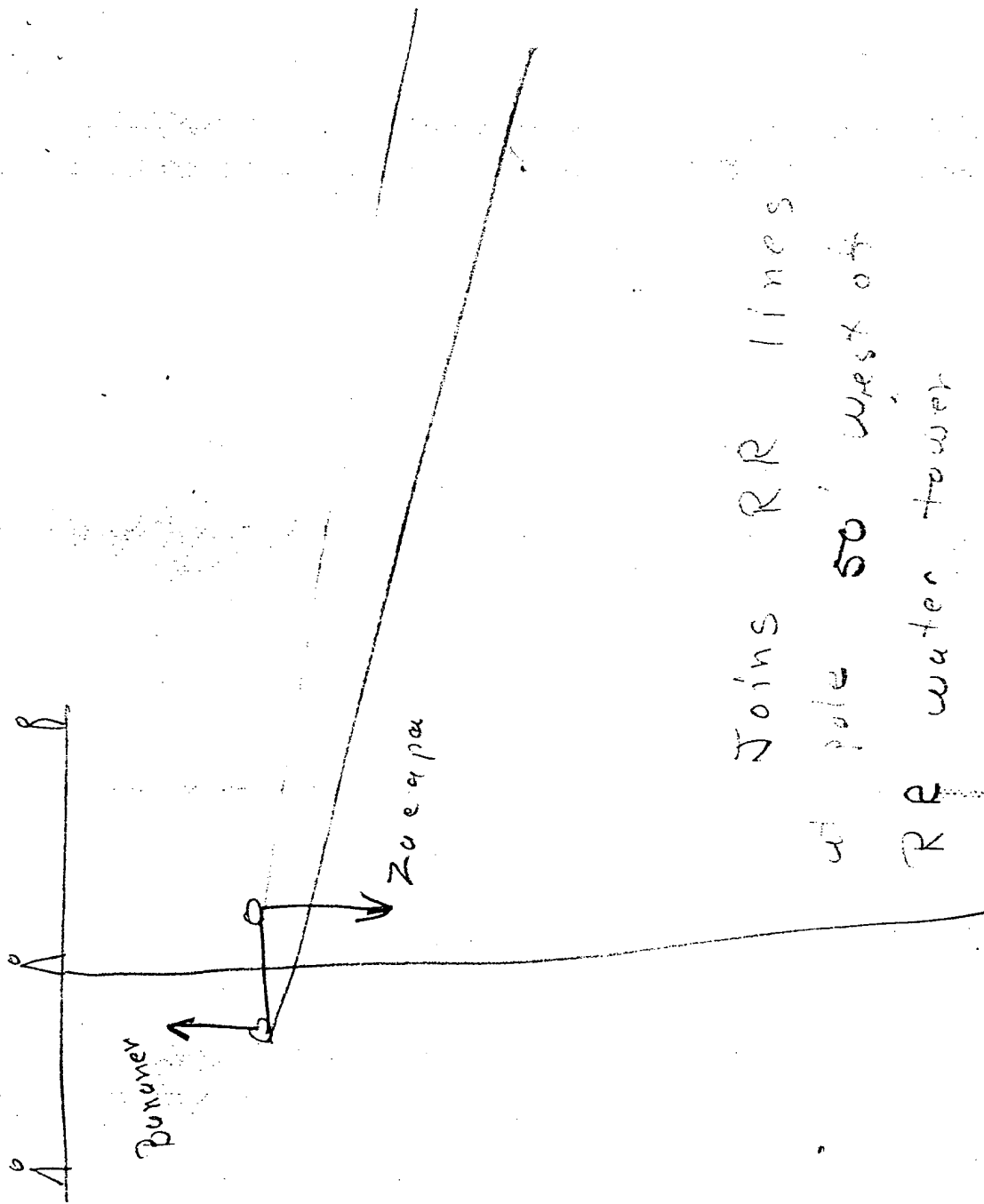
About a mile west of town, the road crosses the RR and this is about the best place to cut the lines. They are mounted on RR rails. There are three wires on top (cross bar) and one below. The one below is the one that joined from town.

Gualan has telephone service and telegraph. The telephone is quite good as I used it. The doors close about 9:00PM but there is someone there ~~all night~~ all the night to receive messages. I wonder if this is the same system that is used in Jutiapa that I reported as closing at 9:00PM. Better check this.

The road was so horrible that I was afraid to start back on it at that hour and actually tried to put the car on a flatcar to haul it back to Zacapa. It is that bad. I was too late to make the train so had to spend the night in the glorious Pension Gualan. Did you ever sleep on boards? I did last night. It was so dirty and that I didn't dare eat. I went from noon until almost noon again without a bite. I awoke with the rooster this AM. I am speaking literally. After not sleep at all the entire night, it was just getting light when I dropped off only to have this horrible screech practically in my ear that scared me half to death and I open a blood shot eye to see a four pound red rooster perched on the foot of my bed crowing at me. That settled me with Gualan for life! You can have it! Give it back to the Mayas!

I hope the pictures come out to show you what kind of a road I have been talking about. Have I made myself clear concerning the road. IT'S NO GOOD!

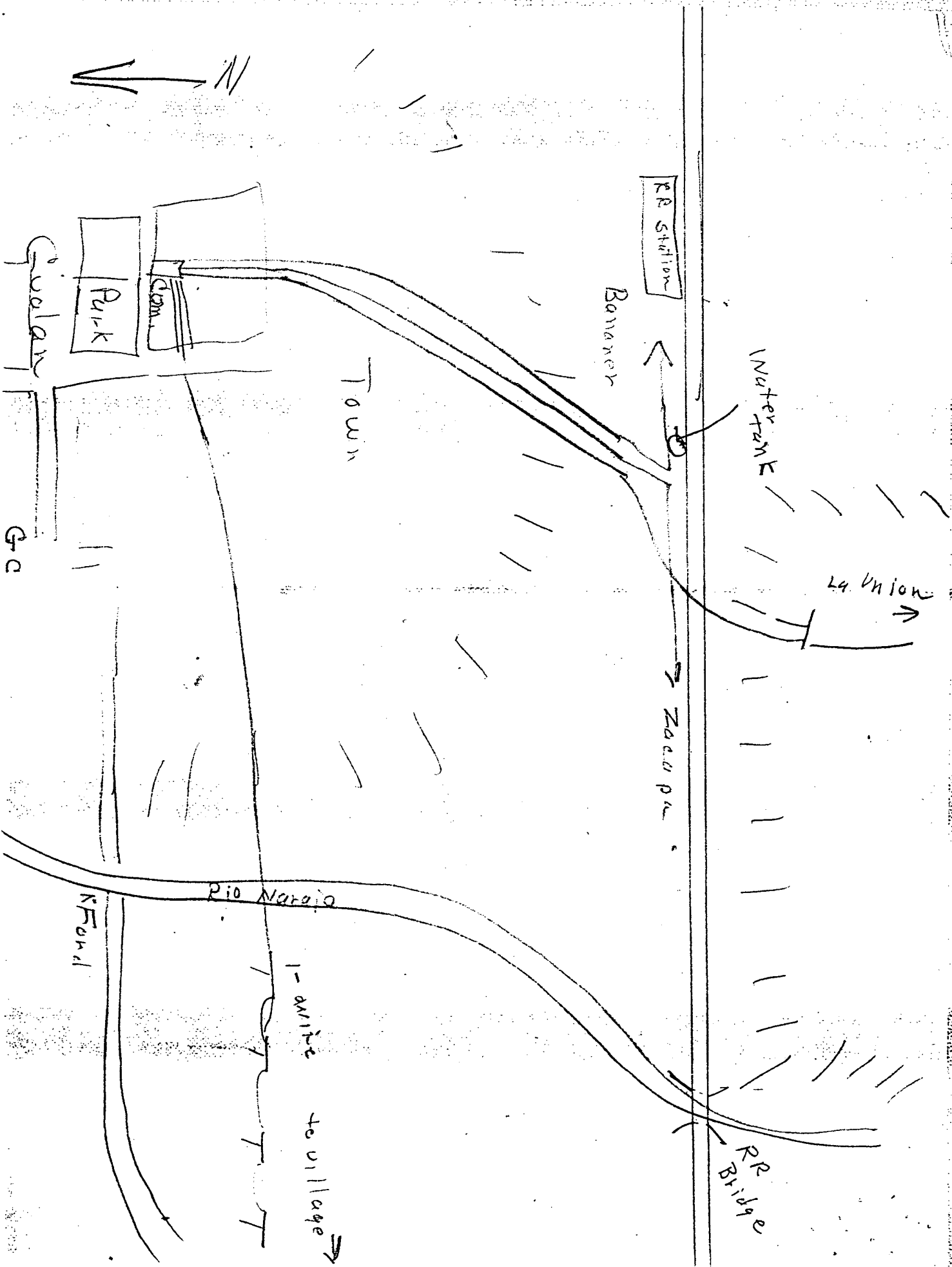
RE lines on top



Joins RR lines

at pole 50' west of

RE water tower



Police Checking points between Guatemala City and Gualan

The first point is at the Puente de Las Vacasa . At Sanarate I never saw anyone going but on the way back a police drifted out of the station and looked at me and drifted back in. I don't think he was checking. Probably got stuffy inside at that moment.

At El Progreso, there is an old checking point strong box just as you cross the RR on the west edge of town but this gave no indication of having been used lately. However, in town at the Guardia Civil Hdq., there was a man outside with a desk that checked both coming and going. There is no way to avoid this point.

I saw no other actual check points although at Jicaro, there were two GC outside the Hdq. that looked at me.

The next actual point is at the bridge at Zacapa.

There is actual only two the three points that looked like they were in business for sure, Guatemala, El Progreso, and Zacapa.

Communications

There are some wires leading into Guatemala from Zacapa direction that run along side the RR east of the Puente de Las Vacas. They are on wooden poles and are two cross bars full of wires so probably are the main lines.

I could find only one wire leaving Sanarate for Guatemala.

El Rancho to El Progreso was a large pole that looked more like power lines than communication.

Zacapa has no radio. There telephone is limited to that area. They use the same wire for telegrams as for radio.

General

I saw two cannons about 1 p unders in the camp at Zacapa. They looked like they were on the ball as this morning they had various groups sitting under trees with blackboards, instructors, ect. The hotel keeper said that they had two tanks. He knew nothing of any newly arrived tanks. Same thing reported at Gualan.

The radio is coming in very good in that area.

All trucks should carry; mud chains, shovels, if in convoy, one should have winch, planks. Should not be loaded to capacity should one get stuck and reloaded to another truck.

I think that signs should be put up incating route. It is very easy to get confused on both the Zacapa road and the road to Jutiapa. I have an idea that we could do it by using K ilhauer-Pagram as advertisement.

Cutting Roads between Guatemala City and Gualan.

Living Guatemala city there is an overpass of the RR 7 Kms out. They are building a new concrete bridge but probably wouldn't have it finished in time. This an old structure and the planks are laid over a steel truss.

There is a wooden bridge under the Puente de las Vacas.

Probably the best in the route is 30Km out at Agua Caliente. This is a long brige over a deep gourage. It is 2"x 8" creasota planks.

There is a nother bridge at just about 100Km out.

There are several besides this that are constructed more or less the same. 2" x 6" laid over 6"X6" runners which rest on steel trusses.

The Bridge at Marmol is a long bridge (200 feet) whith planking and steel trusses. Deserted area

The bridge at El Ancho is the same. The Dept. of Camino has a large fuel dump at the foot of the bridge on the El Ancho side.

May 13, 1954

Guatemala City to Zacapa

The Ruta Al Atlantico is as far as Agua Caliente and for the most part is in fair shape. It has a good grade on it but is starting to get washed from the rains, some places very badly rutted. There are a few short detours around rock cuts that are being blasted.

After leaving the new road the other is the same as always. Narrow, twisting and steep, cut right from the side of rugged mountains. Many times hanging over steep cliffs. When another car is encountered, one must back up. Very few places where two can pass.

After hitting El Rancho (foot of pass) the road is wider, straighter and generally better surfaced. There are a few mud holes. This is on the Jicaro side. (Old Road) The country here is like Arizona or west Texas.

Guatemala City to Sanarate	74 Km.	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours
Sanarate to El Rancho	42 "	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
El Rancho to Zacapa	78 "	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
Zacapa to Gualan	39 "	2 -eternity

El Rancho to Guatemala City 4 $\frac{1}{2}$

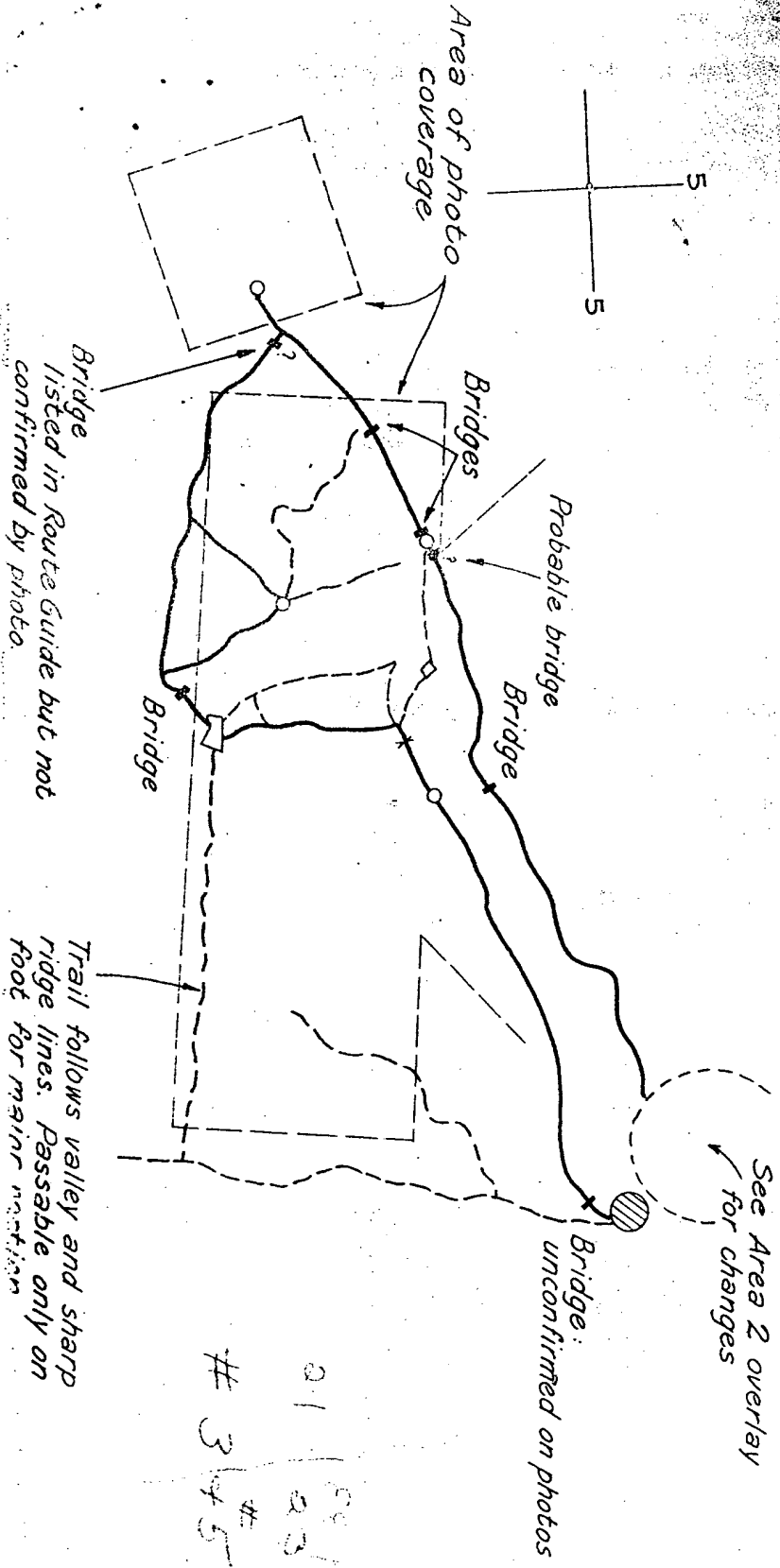
The Ruta Al Atlantico from the bridge at Marmol to El Rancho is from fair to poor shape. Parts are surfaced and ready for paving but for the most part it lacks a lot. There are no bridges yet so a detour through the rivers is made at each crossing. Soon the rivers will be too high for this.

There is a bad detour at 20 Kms out that might be in use before it is needed but at this time it really takes some doing to get up the steep slope.

The car took an awful beating and so did I. I am just whipped. However, a good night's rest without roosters will probably fix me up. The car goes back in the shop tomorrow for a check and draining the axels. I checked them after getting back from Gualan and they were both full of water-oil mix. I can't tell you what that takes out of a driver and car. It amounts to 8-10 hours of continuous chatter, banging, skidding and pitching.

As soon as I am rested I am going to Jutiapa. After I found the oil in the axels, I didn't dare risk it and beside I wanted to get this all down as I took no notes.

EEI No. 23



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 # 3
 23
 # 4
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