

Under the guidance of a US Army ~~composite~~ MTT member, the Dominican Army's 2nd Engineer Battalion has recently established the beginning of a standardized supply and maintenance system. The previous lack of this ~~type of~~ organization had caused, among other things, the deadlining of 85 per cent of the battalion's vehicles.

Captain Richard Thompson, 146th Eng Det, 8th SFG (Abn), Ft Gulick, Canal Zone, was a member of a 14-man composite MTT sent to the Dominican Republic under the auspices of the US Military ~~Assistance~~ ^{Aid} and Assistance Group to train and advise various Dominican units. Captain Thompson's work at the temporary battalion headquarters on the outskirts of Santo

Domingo was with 1st Lt Eddy de la Rocha Martinez, Battalion S-4 and 1st Sgt ~~Walter E. Gonzalez~~ ^{Walter E. Gonzalez} made, afor. school of Am. instructor.

Much further progress in the direction begun by Captain Thompson is not possible due to a lack of parts, various trained personnel, and needed tools. However, ~~with~~ ^{some} progress has been made by the battalion with his assistance.

The main object was the establishment of a supply and maintenance system, a basic ~~unit~~ organization to provide for vehicle maintenance.

Within a short time, the system began proving itself as the ~~number~~ ^{number}

of deadlined vehicles sank to 15%. At the same time, Captain Thompson troop quarters,

secured tents for storage, and repair areas. But one of the main

holdups to more extensive repair ^{work} remains the lack of service pits. They

are not being built ^{because} the battalion location is temporary. What repairs

have been accomplished have also been due in a large part to ^{salvage materiel} ~~supplies~~

given the battalion by ^{the departing} USFORDOMREP, ~~as it began dismantling~~. The lack

of trained personnel was helped only briefly by some OJT training for

Dominican soldiers with USFORDOMREP. ^{And the bn GO remains one of the only 2 schools trained Eng. in the Dom Army.} ~~the~~ the battalion has two large

electric welders and no ^{one} qualified to use them. There is also a lack of

classroom facilities ^{but} ~~though~~ Captain Thompson has been giving the Dominican

soldier-mechanics QJT in 1st and 2nd echelon repairs.

Another problem is that much work exists for the engineers around the ~~national~~ nation, and most of the battalion is out doing some of it.

One of these projects is the construction of a needed road near the small community of Cristobal, located some 250 kilometers west of Santo Domingo on the Rancon Lake west-north-west of the coastal city of Barahona.

This road, and its conjunctive culverts, is needed to insure a continued flow of transportation in and out of the area during the thrice-yearly torrential rains that regularly wash out existing roads.

One of the main reasons a permanent transportation link must be established with the area is that the nearest drinking water for ~~Cristobal~~ the approximately 3-thousand residents of Cristobal is three miles away. ~~For this reason~~ The Engineer Battalion trucks in purified water three times a day in tank trucks ~~and distributes it to the residents~~ while working on the vital road.

Cristobal once relied on salt and gypsum mines for its livelihood. The mines have not been emptied, but the mining equipment is either rusted out or broken down. Another reason is the possibility that the mines may be re-opened some day and bring back with them, not alone work for the town, but a teacher for the school it doesn't really even have.