



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WOMACK ARMY HOSPITAL SPECIALIZED TREATMENT CENTER
FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA 28307

AJBMD-P

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Dear Bud,

It was nice talking to you the other day and I'm sorry we were cut-off but that sometimes happens here at Fort Bragg. However, I had said about all that I had to say anyhow and will use this letter to finish up and "recap" our conversation.

Early in January, 1970, I was told by my room-mate (who was in Plans Section of Eighth Army G-3) that there was a classified project concerning dogs under study and that I should look into the matter. I did so and found that DA wanted to send ~~two~~ **scout dog platoons to Korea to arrive in January, 1970**. However, the general concensus of opinion was "We don't need them", "What would we do with them" and "It will cut into our other manpower requirements". I made it a point to discuss the use of such platoons with the G-3 people at Eighth Army, at I Corps and at 2nd Division and found to my surprise and disappointment that no one had any knowledge of the potential use of scout dogs, their value, or what was required in the way of facilities to maintain the animals; even worse, no one seemed to care one way or another. I finally got to talk to General Cassidy, the Corps Commander, who immediately started the wheels going to (1) advise Eighth Army that one platoon would and could be used by Corps and (2) told his G-3 to get with it so far as preparing to receive the animals, house and feed them and then use them. Needless to say, the Corps G-3 was not very happy with the General's decision.

I went back to Eighth Army G-3 and we drafted a message to DA saying we could accept and use one platoon of animals but asking that the platoon be programmed to arrive about the first of April, thus giving us time to prepare a kennel area and housing for the platoon as well as delay arrival of the animals until the weather moderated a bit. I did not want to bring animals from Ft Benning into a climate where the temperatures were below zero during the night without some time to acclimatize the animals.

We heard nothing more for almost a month until about 1000 on a Sunday morning (I think the date was **15 Feb**) when the G-3 called me and said the Platoon was arriving by air in an hour. This was the first indication we had that the unit was assigned or arriving.

Handwritten signature and initials

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The unit actually arrived at about 2100 that night and the only people who bothered to make any arrangements or meet the unit were the Veterinary Personnel. Our people managed to get transportation and got the platoon moved into the quarantine area of the Dog Training Center of the 820th MP Unit. That mix-up seemed to set the pattern for the things that followed for a period of two-three months.

Two days after the arrival of the unit in Korea and while the animals were still in quarantine, the personnel were ordered up north into the unit area to prepare their billets and animal housing. The original order included all personnel and ~~made no provision~~ **for care of the animals**. I was able to get that changed to at least leave three men (one the Vet Tech) at the quarantine station to care for the animals. The unit was assigned to Corps Headquarters and attached to the division then further attached to a brigade and finally further attached to a Combat Training School for Administrative and Logistical support. With that kind of a Command Channel it is easy to see how the unit got "lost" and no one took any interest in or assumed any responsibility for the platoon. Since our veterinary personnel were the only ones who had taken any interest in the unit, it is easy to see why the young Lieutenant commanding brought his problems to us when he could not resolve them locally himself. These problems ranged from shortages of dog food (due to computerized supply system), lack of materials to up-grade billets for personnel on a self-help basis, lack of adequate water supply and kennels for the scout dogs to lack of transportation.

The above information is supplied to illustrate the initial problems and relationships which developed between the 56th Infantry platoon (Scout Dog) and the Veterinary Service.

After receipt of your letter of 20 February 1970 concerning the presence of two of your dogs "Frank", tattoo number 0026 and "Fido", tattoo number 0027, I made more visits to the unit to observe the animals. Basically, we found these two animals to be physically sound, maintained their condition as well as any other animal even though they were physically smaller and lighter-boned than the rest of the platoon and that there was little, if any, difference in the quantity of food they required as compared to the other animals. Tempermentally, these animals seemed to be a bit more excitable or perhaps a better descriptive would be "super-alert". They seemed to react more to sights and sounds than the other animals. The handlers stated that they did not seem anymore difficult or easy to train than the other animals and were willing workers both in training and at work.

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The infantry units doing patrol work at first did not want the dogs with them and it took direct orders to get the dogs out on working patrols. However, after ~~"Frank"~~ made an actual "contact" while on a patrol, **all patrols began asking** for the dogs and in June it was necessary for me to visit the Division G-3 and request that the dogs be given some rest time - i.e., at least 24 hours in kennel after a two day patrol. The schedule till that time had been to work the animal on patrol 12 hours plus three hours transporting time round trip each day for three-four days followed by a return to the base kennels for maximum of two days then out on patrol again. Under this schedule it was impossible for the animals to consume enough of the normal ration (dry meal and horsemeat) to maintain them in an acceptable working condition due to the bulky ration. We started trying to get the M.S.D. ration at that time but had not been successful up until I left.

Although the handlers reported that some members of the patrols were still making uncomplimentary comments to the dog handlers while on patrol, I thought it very interesting that the same people who had originally resisted use of the animals had completely changed and now were very unhappy if they could not have a scout dog with them on patrol.

O.K., the above all is leading up to one thing - I firmly believe that the Army **Veterinary Corps** should be given and assume the responsibility for **procurement, training of dogs and handlers** and use of the animals in tactical situations. By the latter, I mean that the veterinary officer would, jointly with G-3 Operations, plan all the uses of the animals and cast the deciding vote on when, where and how often the animals were to be used.

In all my discussions with personnel of Tactical units, one conclusion was inescapable - **unit commanders don't know** the capabilities of the dogs, nor how to use them. This applies to senior commanders as well as Lieutenants. They just don't recognize a dog as the most efficient and sensitive bio-sensor we will ever have available. One of the major problems I encountered was the using of dog handlers as gate guards, K. P.'s and jeep drivers during the time they were not on patrol duty. The common comment was the soldier did very little and just laid around in his bunk much of the time all day. When I pointed out that the handler should spend at least an hour a day in grooming, feeding, and keeping the kennel clean and a minimum of an hour of conditioning and training the animal in addition to the 8-10 hours on patrol, they seemed surprised but continued to insist that the dog handlers had to "do their share". The animals quickly showed the lack of care produced by such an attitude on the part of the commanders.

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As you know, Korea had its own training school for training handlers and refresher training of the dogs. This school was originally intended for Sentry Dogs and was under the 820th MP Platoon; however, it was not effective and so in July, I proposed a merger of the 477th Medical Detachment (Small Animal Hospital) and the Dog Training Center of the 820th MP Platoon into a provisional Dog Remount and Training Center under direct control of the Veterinarian commanding the hospital (Cpt) with the CO of the MP Platoon (Lt) as executive officer of the provisional unit. The unit was to operate for a year and then be evaluated by G-3, The Provost Marshal, G-4 (who supplied the animals, equipment and feed) and Veterinary Personnel. The above listed personnel all agreed to the proposal and enthusiastically endorsed the plan; unfortunately, we ran into a snag when it was announced that there would be a reduction of personnel in Korea; we were told to hold any action on the proposed merger pending the accomplishment of the troop reduction. So, unless Tex Brooks can get the program revived, we'll never have a trial program to test the concept. Willlys Lord, at USARPAC, had given the proposal his O.K. also.

I believe we could have demonstrated through the provisional merger, more efficient use of all dogs, both sentry and scout, more effective response to requirements for the animals and had better trained animals and handlers. Where the health of the animals is a responsibility of the Veterinary Corps and the training and use of the animals is the responsibility of the Provost Marshal, you will always have problems of communication and command. This will vary with various headquarters, of course, but the end result is always that the dogs suffer - i.e., do not receive proper care or else are not properly used, resulting in critical comments on their efficiency or a false sense of security on the part of the using agency.

I am convinced that the Veterinary Corps is the one agency best qualified to run the total dog program and I am equally convinced that we can do it better than anyone else. I have talked this concept before but so far I have not hit receptive ears. Presumably, you pretty much feel as I do - Have you any further suggestions?

General Osteen called on the 4th of March to say "Hello" and said he would stop in to see me when he came down home on his next visit. I plan to discuss this concept with him then.

Pues, Amigo mio, es todo par ahora. Me gustaria' mucho a verlo y sera bueno a tener una visita por usted y senora a la primer oportunidad.

Saludos,



DONALD E. GUY
Colonel, VC
Installation Veterinarian