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Spec. / 4 Lawrence Wayne Yochum and

The Animal Protection Institute of America presents the following letter on behalf of the men of the 59th Scout Dog Platoon and their faithful dogs — and dedicates this appeal to SP/4 Lawrence Yochum of Burney, California, and his dog King, both killed in action on February 13, 1970...

March 5, 1970

The Animal Protection Institute of America
5892 South Land Park Drive
Sacramento, California 95822

Gentlemen:

It is the purpose of this letter to bring to your attention what we feel to be a gross injustice with respect to our loyal canine friends serving the cause of freedom here in Vietnam.

Under present Army policy, not one of our hard-working and much decorated canine friends will return to the U.S.A. alive. Instead, they will be rewarded for a job well done by being sentenced to mass euthanasia---the healthy as well as the sick and wounded.

Unfortunately, the Army does not consider our German Shepherds as sensitive friends--but merely as "property" to be disposed of in the most convenient way possible once they have outlived their usefulness to the service. (Vietnamese mascot dogs are easily brought back to the U. S. after short periods of quarantine and a few shots are administered. Why not American canines???)

Furthermore, some of our dogs have contracted a disease called Idiopathic Hemoragic Syndrom or "bleeders disease." We believe the Army is not doing enough to find a cure for this disease. (Present Army policy states that even when a dog has this illness, it is perfectly all right to work him until he becomes too sick to function or drops dead.)

We of the 59th Scout Dog Platoon feel very strongly that all of our dogs should be given a chance to live out their lives in peace and reap their much deserved rewards.

We most sincerely seek your active support in this matter before it is too late!
One member of our unit who perhaps felt most strongly in support of this cause was SP/4 Lawrence Yochum who, along with his dog King, died in action on February 13, 1970...

We believe it is our duty to ask you to uphold his and our beliefs.

Sincerely,
The Men of the 59th Scout Dog Platoon

U. S. Contrary to popular belief, our Scout and Tracker Dogs have not been to attack or kill and could quite easily be converted into wonderful . . . Furthermore, Sentry dogs could be used by civilian police