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U.S. Department of Defense ASK A QUESTION/SEND A COMMENT:

<http://www.defenselink.mil/faq/questions.aspx>

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United States Defense Leaders and Marine Corps:

Thank you for addressing the Marines recently videotaped taunting a defenseless puppy. I urge you to aggressively investigate this crime and take prompt punitive action.

As you know, a man identified as David Motari dangles a black and white dog by the scruff of the neck, cooing: "Cute little puppy." Another unnamed soldier baby-talks: "Ah, so cute, so cute...little puppy." To the horror of global Internet viewers, Motari then hurls the animal over a cliff into a rocky gulch. The dog, who looks about 12 weeks old, squeals while flying through the air. We hear a thud far below, signifying the dog's certain death.

"That was mean Motari," the unknown Marine jokes. Motari shrugs and grins.

The question is not WHO the victim is, but WHAT is done to him or her. Criminologists view the brutality of an act, regardless of the victim's identity, as a precursor to future violence. Animal cruelty is a key trait in the American Psychiatric Association's criterion for conduct disorders. David Motari displays characteristics associated with sociopaths.

ASPCA's Randall Lockwood, Ph.D. — who aids cruelty investigators, law enforcers and court officials — describes violence against small or non-threatening creatures unlikely to retaliate as a forerunner to assaulting children, women, the elderly, or other vulnerable victims.

I respectfully ask the Military Police Department of Hawaii, where Motari is stationed, to conduct a thorough probe. If Motari and other suspects are apprehended, please advocate maximum penalties for aggravated cruelty and intentional killing of a companion animal. Certainly, Motari and his accomplice ought to undergo psychological counseling.

This is not the first video leak of soldiers tormenting animals in Iraq. I hope this case prompts Defense Department officials to make regulatory changes for animals in war zones. Specifically, I encourage the DOD to:

- Insert and enforce an anti-cruelty clause in the Universal Code of Military Justice.
- Utilize non-lethal vaccination to cope with rabies in war zones.
- Implement an adoption system that lets soldiers bring vetted pets back to the U.S. with them.

The men in the video do not represent other brave men and women who serve our country. This is all the more reason to pursue rigorous judicial action against the few who sully America's moral repute.

Thank you for holding animal abusers accountable for their violent crimes.

Sincerely,