

No Jail for Officer Who Fed Dog Food to Troops

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The  **Moscow Times**

An army officer who fed dog food instead of canned beef to conscripts in the Far East was ordered to pay a fine of 202,000 rubles (\$6,600) on Monday, Interfax reported.

By contrast, the former officer who exposed the story was jailed last Friday for four years by a Vladivostok military court on unrelated charges that he claimed were retaliation for his whistleblowing.

A garrison court in the Primorye region found warrant officer Vyacheslav Gerzog guilty of neglect and abuse of office, the Investigative Committee's military department said in a statement.

Food supplies worth more than 1 million rubles, mostly canned beef but also canned fish and milk, butter, cookies and frozen meat, went missing from a warehouse managed by Gerzog, who distributed them on demand to unspecified recipients without any paperwork, the statement said.

In February, Gerzog learned about an upcoming inspection and tried to cover up for the missing supplies by slapping labels reading "quality beef" on cans of dog food.

Some of the dog food was served to conscripts, Major Igor Matveyev said in a 10-minute YouTube appeal exposing this and other cases of abuse at Gerzog's military unit.

The investigators said the fraud was exposed during the inspection, but the story first caught the public eye only after Matveyev posted the video in May.

Matveyev was later separately accused of beating up two subordinates. The case, based on testimony by two witnesses, both army officers, ended with the prison term, also on abuse-of office charges.

Gerzog pleaded guilty and returned another 900,000 rubles to the army before the trial, sparing him up to four years of jailtime, RIA-Novosti said.

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