

## Serendipitous altruism

*Military* 21 Sep 2008 at 13:56 by Jean-Marc Liotier

[American troops in Afghanistan through the eyes of a French OMLT infantryman](#)

The US often hears echoes of worldwide hostility against the application of its foreign policy, but seldom are they reached by the voices of those who experience first hand how close we are to the USA. In spite of contextual political differences and conflicting interests that generate friction, we do share the same fundamental values - and when push comes to shove that is what really counts. Through the eyes of that French OMLT (Operational Mentoring Liaison Teams) infantryman you can see how strong the bond is on the ground. In contrast with the Americans, the French soldiers don't seem to write much online - or maybe the proportion is the same but we just have less people deployed. Whatever the reason, this is a rare and moving testimony which is why I decided to translate it into English, so that American people can catch a glimpse of the way European soldiers see them. Not much high philosophy here, just the first hand impressions of a soldier in contact - but that only makes it more authentic.

[Here is the original French article](#), and here is my translation :

“We have shared our daily life with two US units for quite a while - they are the first and fourth companies of a prestigious infantry battalion whose name I will withhold for the sake of military secrecy. To the common man it is a unit just like any other. But we live with them and got to know them, and we henceforth know that we have the honor to live with one of the most renowned units of the US Army - one that the movies brought to the public as series showing “ordinary soldiers thrust into extraordinary events”. Who are they, those soldiers from abroad, how is their daily life, and what support do they bring to the men of our OMLT every day ? Few of them belong to the Easy Company, the one the TV series focuses on. This one nowadays is named Echo Company, and it has become the support company.

They have a terribly strong American accent - from our point of view the language they speak is not even English. How many times did I have to write down what I wanted to say rather than waste precious minutes trying various pronunciations of a seemingly common word? Whatever state they are from, no two accents are alike and they even admit that in some crisis situations they have difficulties understanding each other.

Heavily built, fed at the earliest age with Gatorade, proteins and creatine - they are all heads and shoulders taller than us and their muscles remind us of Rambo. Our frames are amusingly skinny to them - we are wimps, even the strongest of us - and because of that they often mistake us for Afghans.

Here we discover America as it is often depicted : their values are taken to their paroxysm, often amplified by ~~promiscuity~~ *lack of privacy* and the loneliness of this outpost in the middle of that Afghan valley. Honor, motherland - everything here reminds of that : the American flag floating in the wind above the outpost, just like the one on the post parcels. Even if recruits often originate from the hearth of American cities and gang territory, no one here has any goal other than to hold high and proud the star spangled banner. Each man knows he can count on the support of a whole people who provides them through the mail all that an American could miss in such a remote front-line location : books, chewing gums, razorblades, Gatorade, toothpaste etc. in such way that every man is aware of how much the American people backs him in his difficult mission. And that is a first shock to our preconceptions : the American soldier is no individualist. The team, the group, the combat team are the focus of all his attention.

And they are impressive warriors ! We have not come across bad ones, as strange as it may seem to you when you know how critical French people can be. Even if some of them are a bit on the heavy side, all of them provide us everyday with lessons in infantry know-how. Beyond the wearing of a combat kit that never seem to discomfort them (helmet strap, helmet, combat goggles, rifles etc.) the long hours of watch at the outpost never seem to annoy them in the slightest. On the one square meter wooden tower above the perimeter wall they stand the five consecutive hours in full battle rattle and night vision goggles on top, their sight unmoving in the directions of likely danger. No distractions, no pauses, they are like statues nights and days. At night, all movements are performed in the dark - only a handful of subdued red lights indicate the occasional presence of a soldier on the move. Same with the vehicles whose lights are covered - everything happens in pitch dark even filling the fuel tanks with the Japy pump.

And combat ? If you have seen Rambo you have seen it all - always coming to the rescue when one of our teams gets in trouble, and always in the shortest delay. That is one of their tricks : they switch from T-shirt and sandals to combat ready in three minutes. Arriving in contact with the ennemy, the way they fight is simple and disconcerting : they just charge ! They disembark and assault in stride, they bomb first and ask questions later - which cuts any pussyfooting short.

We seldom hear any harsh word, and from 5 AM onwards the camp chores are performed in beautiful order and always with excellent spirit. A passing American helicopter stops near a stranded vehicle just to check that everything is alright; an American combat team will rush to support ours before even knowing how dangerous the mission is - from what we have been given to witness, the American soldier is a beautiful and worthy heir to those who liberated France and Europe.


To those who bestow us with the honor of sharing their combat outposts and who everyday give proof of their military excellence, to those who pay the daily tribute of America's army's deployment on Afghan soil, to those we owned this article, ourselves hoping that we will always remain worthy of them and to always continue hearing them say that we are all the same band of brothers”.

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## 197 Responses to “American troops in Afghanistan through the eyes of a French OMLT infantryman”

1.  *french autor* Says:  
[September 21st, 2008 at 15:30](#)


thanks for having translate my article. thanks to my partnership U.S unit for all. American people must be proud to get this kind of boys.

2.  *Paul Honsinger* Says:  
[November 13th, 2008 at 18:59](#)


This is an amazing tribute to our fine troops. I am proud that my country is still capable of fielding a force with such honor, courage, and devotion to duty. Thanks you for sharing this with us.

3.  *Mad Yank* Says:  
[November 13th, 2008 at 21:09](#)

Obviously, this Frenchman is NOT a Parisian parlor pink, but an authentic French patriot, who knows the REAL score, and appreciates what America has done, and will continue to do, for our friends all over the world. To YOU, mon ami, I apologize for all the ‘Freedom Fries’ comments that circulated around the world after 9/11/01. I always knew there were good people living dans la Belle Patrie; now we’ve heard from one of them.

4.  *Jackson* Says:  
[November 13th, 2008 at 22:01](#)


I agree wholeheartedly with Mad Yank. And thank you for the translation & post.

5.  *Flyover Country* Says:  
[November 13th, 2008 at 22:05](#)

# french autor Says:  
September 21st, 2008 at 15:30


thanks for having translate my article. thanks to my partnership U.S unit for all. American people must be proud to get this kind of boys.

We are truly proud of our fighting men and women. It is wonderful to run across an ally who truly understands the nature of our struggle. It is not a war for a country...we fight, and YOU fight, so that people may be free to pursue the values that have lifted many a person from squalor and vice. You fight for life, liberty and the opportunity to pursue happiness. THAT is your mission...and as you so kindly thanked our men and women, I thank you for your sacrifice on behalf of the free peoples of the world.

6.  *NavyspyII* Says:  
[November 13th, 2008 at 23:24](#)


Merci beaucoup, mes amis.

We have always had much more in common, than we have had different.


7.  *USMC03* Says:  
[November 14th, 2008 at 2:37](#)

Such gracious words. Thanks to the author and the Troops who inspired him by leading by example.


It would be a great thing for France and the US to grow closer as nations.

8.  *mindy abraham* Says:  
[November 14th, 2008 at 2:59](#)


what nice words about our boys-thanks for your nice article

9.  *toad* Says:  
[November 14th, 2008 at 8:06](#)

I'm somewhat surprised about the physical size difference. I suspect that it is because the US has a larger group of volunteers to select from.

10.  *cargosquid* Says:  
[November 14th, 2008 at 19:42](#)

Merci beaucoup for the translation.  
May God watch over your soldiers and keep them safe.


11.  *United Conservatives of Virginia* Says:  
[November 14th, 2008 at 19:47](#)

### **Serendipitous Praise from an unexpected source...**


We see only the opinions that the press deem worthy to repeat. Anti-Americanism sells papers in other nations as much as it sells here. We don't hear the voices of foreigners that work closely with Americans and admire them.

Until now.

Jean-Mar....

12.  *deb* Says:  
[November 15th, 2008 at 3:45](#)

Thank you for that lovely article. My husband served in Afghanistan last year. Although he spoke of serving with soldiers from other countries, I don't know if there were French soldiers assigned to his area. I will have to ask him.

13.  *V* Says:  
[November 15th, 2008 at 18:37](#)

While I'm not an obsessive watcher of the American news media, I have not yet run across a single media news source (outside the internet) that talks about how our soldiers act on the field.

No one says that our men are honorable; instead they go on about the horrors of war. No one even talks about why we are there, save blathering conspiracy theories about oil and racism.


THIS is a crying shame. Have people forgotten that Saddam Husein was a criminal in the same vein as Hitler?

Have people forgotten what happened to Germany after the First World War?


I am glad that, at least, the soldiers on the ground (not just the Americans) have not done so.

I hope and pray that the mess can be cleaned up with minimal damage even after our illustrious new president drops the ball and marches everyone out in the name of pleasing the media.


Good luck, men. Forgive us.

14.  *Jimbo* Says:  
[November 16th, 2008 at 17:21](#)

Toad, regarding the physical size of the troops, that is something that varies widely. A recent U.S. Congressional Medal of Honor recipient, Ross McGinnis, I believe only weighed 135 lbs. There was no larger man on the battlefield that day.

15.  *Julia* Says:  
[November 17th, 2008 at 16:56](#)


So little do we read such a beautiful and truthful depiction of our troops from a primary source such as this one. Thank you for your words..they made me even more proud of our American boys over there in Iraq and Afghanistan.

16.  *Bill Coffin* Says:  
[November 17th, 2008 at 17:19](#)


Merci beaucoup, mes amis!

The greatness of America stems in no small portion from the greatness of our friends, and the great people of France are very dear friends, indeed. And as proud as I am to be an American, I am likewise proud to think of France as a nation of friends, too.

Friends may squabble, but as this letter notes, when push comes to shove, friends are there. And just as France will be there for America, so too will America be there for France. Our history of brotherhood simply runs too deep and too strong for it not to.

17.  *me* Says:  
[November 17th, 2008 at 17:34](#)

what an absolute pile of bullshit

18.  *me2* Says:  
[November 18th, 2008 at 2:13](#)

Read that carefully and then make up your mind if it is a compliment or an insult. I would say sarcasm and insulting, excuse me if I am wrong and it was just the translation... but it sounds strange to me.

19.  *Eric Drexler* Says:  
[November 18th, 2008 at 4:18](#)

Care to offer any evidence at all? Did you even bother to check out the original article? I'm guessing that a lot "sounds strange" to you based on your grammar and diction. Just because something defies your expectations does not qualify it as "an absolute pile of bullshit." Also, if you are going to say something incendiary, have the courage to use your real name.

20.  *Mike* Says:  
[November 18th, 2008 at 6:07](#)

Thank you very much for writing this. It's very heartfelt. Depending on perspective, we probably see another as that "annoying" little bother. He picks on you, pulls your ear, sticks his tongue out at you etc. But, someone hurts little brother, there's hell to pay! In the end, we do get along.

Thank you!!


Mike

21.  *Stephen* Says:  
[November 18th, 2008 at 8:43](#)


Wow. I have NEVER read a positive thing about us from the French point of view. Thank you so very, very much!

22.  *Conor* Says:  
[November 18th, 2008 at 15:15](#)


Haha, despite saying he won't name the unit- it's abundantly clear if you've watched band of brothers.

23.  *Jerry Ginn* Says:  
[November 18th, 2008 at 16:35](#)


I do not think this is BS. Soldiers do not fight for the political view point and in many cases (most) all the way to Generals do not even know what it is. Soldiers fight to protect each other, their soldier brother. It does not matter what country they are from. Jesus and soldiers are the only two people who willingly give their lives for a cause but that cause is not IRAQ or AFGAN they die protecting their for their brother soldiers and not the war. No soldier is any different so how could the article be BS. Jesus died for you and the BS. I pray you will know what you died for. I would die protecting you. I spent 30 years protecting my brother soldiers, not my country. That comes as part of the soul of all soldiers. God Bless all soldiers.

24.  *Jan Scruggs* Says:  
[November 18th, 2008 at 17:30](#)

The French have taken casualties in Afghan and have recently done some effective fighting against pirates in Somalia. They are good people and courageous troopers

25.  *Greg* Says:  
[November 18th, 2008 at 18:16](#)

In reply... A good friend of mine just returned from a U.S. ETT (same as OMLT) mission with ARSIC-Kabul. He was extremely complementary in regards to the French soldiers and their competence, courage and dedication to duty.


26.  *George Worthington* Says:  
[November 18th, 2008 at 18:46](#)

LaFayette could have written this about Revolutionary soldiers. It makes me proud to be an American!

27.  *A\_USMC\_LCPL* Says:  
[November 18th, 2008 at 21:34](#)

This made me swell with pride, and I usually do not. Thank you so much for this article! I am wondering if you could post the site where you received this from, because I would personally like to talk to this man and thank him.

Semper Fi.

28.  *Robert Bateman* Says:  
[November 18th, 2008 at 22:45](#)

Mon ami, auteur et traducteur, merci beaucoup. Il est souvent difficile expliquant à mes pairs d'infanterie d'Américain (je suis une "ranger" américaine d'infanterie) la réalité non seulement de la France, mais au peuple de la France et à l'armée de la terre. Cet essai simple est une bonification.

Lieutenant Colonel Bateman


29.  *Red* Says:  
[November 19th, 2008 at 4:59](#)

You were by our side when we fought our war of independence from the British and we stood together in numerous wars since then. Now we stand together again! We may have had our differences at times, but we still support each other. Thank you.

30.  *Captain Jason Adler* Says:  
[November 19th, 2008 at 15:34](#)


It is truly rare that articles like this reach the mainstream media. As a Soldier who has fought in Iraq and am about to deploy to Afghanistan, it makes me proud to know that our Coalition partners appreciate all that we do. The American Soldier is absolutely amazing. When a comrade needs help, they will lay down their lives without a second thought. It is an honor and a privilege to command America's sons in battle. Thank you for writing such a positive article, and know that the US Soldier is appreciative of all that our Coalition partners do.

Jason N. Adler  
Captain  
US Army

31.  *Frederick Rupel* Says:  
[November 19th, 2008 at 16:42](#)

I've made several visits to France but by far my most memorable came when I took a group of Soldiers to Normandy. Everywhere we went we were treated with great dignity. The people of Normandy have never forgotten 6 June 44. The Soldiers learned a great lesson about duty, honor and country during those 4 days visiting beaches, battle sites and the American Cemetery overlooking Utah Beach. Thanks for a great article.

Frederick M. Rupel  
Chaplain (Major), U.S. Army, Retired

32.  *T. D. Harrison* Says:  
[November 19th, 2008 at 23:21](#)

Veteran, U.S. Army-'70-'76  
Ancien Legionnaire-'85-'90  
Many thanks for the post. I am proud to be a veteran of both forces.

33.  *Kelley Smith* Says:


[November 19th, 2008 at 23:44](#)

Merci beaucoup,

Perhaps now we can see the great gifts France and the US have always given each other. Our history shows in dark times, we are more than friends but family.

Viva France, Viva US


An American

34.  [Adam](#) Says:  
[November 20th, 2008 at 3:38](#)

It is Soldiers like the one who wrote this article that were the reason the French were our allies in wars gone by (and still are). We have misconceptions of the French (snotty, dirty, rude and crass) just the same as they have of us (rural, dirty, rude, and crass).

When it comes to Soldiering, all countries are the same—get done what needs done; help whomever needs it; keep your weapon clean.


Great article.

35.  [Harry Meinhardt](#) Says:  
[November 20th, 2008 at 3:46](#)

Merci beaucoup, monsieur Soldat. J'ete aussi Parachutiste american.

Vive la France. Vive l' Amerique

Airborne6


36.  [Argghh! The Home Of Two Of Jonah's Military Guys..](#) Says:  
[November 20th, 2008 at 18:21](#)

**H&I Fires\* 20 Nov 2008...**

Open post for those with something to share, updated through the day. New, complete posts come in below this one. Note: If trackbacking, please acknowledge this post in your post. That's only polite.

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From a Canadian ...

37.  [Bill](#) Says:  
[November 20th, 2008 at 18:32](#)

My son is a platoon sergeant with the 101st in Afghanistan and was recently serving alongside French troops. He had nothing but positive comments to pass along about THEM! Seeing such a nice article about our own men (and women!) should make us all proud. He and his men will be happy to see how they are viewed.

38.  [Leland Burns](#) Says:  
[November 20th, 2008 at 18:38](#)


I have seen the love and gratitude from the French firsthand when traveling Normandy in 2007 in research of my own father's war journal. Old farmers I did not know wanted to hug me and start pouring strong drink. I'm glad the latest generations are showing mutual respect. I look forward to my return to France in 2009 (65th) when I'll be jumping with the Liberty Jump Team to honor the Airborne Soldier.

Leland Burns - USAF  
Co-author, Jump Into the Valley of the Shadow


39.  [A French Soldier's Perspective on American Troops](#) Says:  
[November 20th, 2008 at 18:45](#)
- [...] Serendipitous altruism [...]
40.  [Well, dang, I guess I have to lay off bashing the French for a while... « Bring the heat, Bring the Stupid](#) Says:  
[November 20th, 2008 at 23:07](#)
- [...] I was making my usual rounds today and stopped by The Castle, where I found this wonderful tidbit. I'm sorry to say that the only real interaction I had with the French was when a pair of [...]
41.  [L'anti-américanisme / Neptunus Lex](#) Says:  
[November 20th, 2008 at 23:07](#)
- [...] to maintain in the field, at least for this representative from l'armée du terre: Heavily built, fed at the earliest age with Gatorade, proteins and [...]
42.  [Jules Crittenden » French Soldier Recruited](#) Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 4:59](#)
- [...] admiration for America in Afghanistan, thanks to close contact with L'Soldats Americaine. That's what it is purported to be, though bits of it look like it might have been [...]
43.  [L'Hooah « Checks with Chart](#) Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 5:13](#)
- [...] But one thing you can't blame is our troops, who are simply the finest fighting force in the world. You know it. I know it. and our Allies know and appreciate it. [...]
44.  [The Captain's Journal » The French Perspective](#) Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 8:23](#)
- [...] the positive is encouraging. From a translation of a French article on American troops, here is an interesting take on things in Afghanistan. "We have shared our daily life with two US units for quite a while - they are the first and [...]"
45.  [French Fries Again? » Aaron Poeze](#) Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 11:44](#)
- [...] Milblogs have noticed this kindly offered translation of a French OMLT infantryman's words. The original post in French is in Le blog de [...]
46.  [Terence O'Clarity](#) Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 16:54](#)
- Thank You for that article. While some of it may have been playfully exaggerated, it is appreciated all the same. I wish our own newscasters and politicians would try to accentuate the positive once in a while.
47.  [Colonel \(US Army, Retired\) John V. Wemlinger](#) Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 17:07](#)
- From an old soldier,

Thanks for the first hand account. This is something the press can never get right. This is something that has to be experienced to be understood.

Where does America find such wonderful, young men and women to fill the ranks of its Armed Forces? And the French author reminds us that the same wonderful men and women exist outside of America as well.

48.  *Lara* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 17:07](#)

Merci beaucoup, mes amis. Thank you for the kind words.

49.  *Terry* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 17:34](#)

In four years soldiering with the French in France, Germany, and Iraq, I can tell all that the feelings expressed here were felt just as strongly about our French counterparts. Forget the stereotypes! Know the people.

50.  *French Praise for American Soldiers / The Anchoress* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 17:48](#)


[...] Via Friend Michael, this must must must read. It will do your heart, soul, sinews, lungs, kidneys and brain good, translated Via: [...]

51.  *Mike* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 18:01](#)


For those that doubt the difference in size, after many trips to Europe I can tell you that the average American is a few inches both taller, and disproportionately broader across the shoulders. A fact first brought to my attention when I was trying to buy a shirt, in Belgium. The shop keeper asked if I was an American, when I asked to buy the shirt. I responded in the affirmative and asked what that had to do with my purchase. She kindly informed me, "you'll need a size larger shirt than usual for your height to fit your shoulders" I then started to look and noticed sure enough, the people around me were not only a few inches shorter than the American average but also not built on nearly as stout a frame. After eating their usual diet for a few days I could see why. I was never so happy to hear a commercial say "Beef it's what's for dinner" when I returned. It is all a trade off, that same diet is likely what gives them extra years of life over the average American.

Having recently joined the Infantry myself, I can say that being tall or muscular is not a prerequisite of the profession, but certainly a result of being in it.

To the French Infantryman and Patriot; Thank you sir.

52.  *American troops through a French infantryman's eyes (inspiring!) « the "silent" majority no more!* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 18:05](#)

[...] the awesome letter from Serendipitous Altruism [...]

53.  *Uncle Jefe* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 18:24](#)

Thank you for sharing your perspective on the best ambassadors America has, the Troops.

As for the size difference:

It comes down to nutrition.


Europe was locked in military struggle for several CENTURIES, including the first half of the 20th.

When you don't eat much, and don't eat well, you don't grow.

Europeans are getting bigger and stronger, and like us, fatter, due to better diets especially in the last 30 years.

I lived there for several years and have seen the difference between generations.

Hopefully they'll be able to outfight the islamic enemy within, both politically and physically, as currently they're losing.


54.  *susan* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 18:34](#)

Many thanks for posting,


One reason why I am devoted to sending care packages to the troops is the humble reminder I always receive about those who inspire grace, courage and will in quiet determination.

Despite all the obnoxious noise of the hollywoodize chattering class, our troops continue forward in confident, assured movement.

US Armed Forces, I am in awe of your indomitable American spirit!

55.  *Chrissy5754* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 18:42](#)


This Proud American Military Mom just wants to say a hearty MERCI BEAUCOUP! These words from a single soldier on the ground mean a great deal! God bless you for translating.

56.  *sjngf9wih29g* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 19:14](#)


Does this mean we can count on French support at the UN?

57.  *Maggie45* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 19:18](#)

Merci Beaucoup!! from a very grateful American woman.... I also offer my deepest condolences for your great sacrifice this past August. My prayers are offered for the repose of the souls who were lost, and for the well being of the wounded, and also for all the families and fellow soldiers, that they may be granted comfort.

58.  *Tim's World* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 19:20](#)

[...] Posted by dracphelan on 21 Nov 2008 at 10:19 am | Tagged as: Recipe "Heavily built, fed at the earliest age with Gatorade, proteins and creatine - they are all heads and shoulders taller than us and their muscles remind us of Rambo. Our frames are amusingly skinny to them - we are wimps, even the strongest of us - and because of that they often mistake us for Afghans..." - French soldier on the Americans they serve with in Afghanistan [...]

59.  *Emmanuel Zitnik* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 19:27](#)

I just discovered Merlin's blog a few days ago, like most of you, and I thought you might be interested in his views on US cuisine!

Here's the original entry in French:

<http://omlt3-kdk3.over-blog.com/article-23317223.html>

Here's my attempt at a translation:

[quote]

It's been 5 months now that we've been sharing our daily life, but also our food, with our band of brothers from the States. It's time for us Frenchies to give you a full report of our cross-Atlantic culinary experience (in Afghanistan of course).

We, as children born in the land of gastronomy and famous chefs like VEYRAT, COFFE, LOISEAU ... have sampled

things that will last forever in our taste buds.

This experienced is reserved for the luckiest of us because only two assignments allow to taste the flavours of US cuisine. For others, it's combat rations only.

Breakfast is more than welcome because it's very hearty and totally fits for morning patrols or any other activity. It's made of eggs, fried bacon (forget about your diet), various cereals, pancakes with cheese, fruits, spicy sausages and peppered minced-beef cream (???) which comes with balls of salty bread that one must cover with that same cream. Not much is missing from this meal, although; a purist like me would say that it lacks a good piece of grilled bread topped with a thick layer of salty butter. I am talking about feeling the grains of salt under your teeth and feel it melting on your buds (not place for cheap butter, you're a Breton or you're not).

Lunch is way less substantial than breakfast: simply put it doesn't really exist. So it's the occasion to open an MRE (combat ration). The American ration, designed for one single meal contrary to ours which is made for the whole day, is made-up of several packets with mysterious writings. Well, French curiosity is stronger. The preparation for the main dish is simple: fill the chemical bag with water, be careful not to fill it over the mark otherwise there a risk of explosion (let's not forget that we're in Afghanistan, it's relatively dangerous) , then you must quickly insert the meal in the bag, position it on a flat surface towards the North with a 14.9 degrees angle (it also works towards the south), water starts to boil... You just have to wait while eating the sweets, the dried meat, the peanut butter, the industrial cheese and the other stuff contained in the package.

Here we go, one of the 24 different meals available to US soldiers is ready, and with the plastic spoon present in the kit you eat it. Sometimes a facial contraction appears, but we somehow seem to agree on that point with our American friends because they all come asking for that good French ration.

Dinner, on the other hand, is a great moment for the taste buds. The famous hamburger is faithful to our expectations and is excellent. It comes with fried chicken wings, fried chicken legs, fried chicken balls, pork ribs, fried onions, fried shrimps, corn, and little pizzas which only have their name in common with the traditional pizza. A few American recipes highlight the meal: chili con carne, tapas, fajitas (with tortillas).

However, a few gringos have a problem like I do: apparently Americans especially like spicy things in general. Hot spice is present everywhere. I personally think their mouths must be made out of steel, they say it's to give taste to what they eat... well that Frenchman is not convinced.

Here's how a gastronomic day happens in the land of Uncle Sam in Afghanistan.

Conclusion: we're fortunate our Restaurant de France in Kaboul allows us to buy and enjoy our homely products, plates of cheese, cold cuts, but also vegetables which the US don't seem to know that well. The most important thing for us remains the small parcels, filled with great stuff for the morale, sent by our families. It's a moment we're all waiting for like kids every Mondays during mail delivery. Once a month, we bathe in a moment of culinary happiness: red wine served with hams, dry sausages, cheese, pâté, and sometimes it's our US comrades' turn to grimace! Not that easy to understand the subtleties of French cuisine!

MERLIN

[/quote]

60.  *HarleyDavidson* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 19:41](#)

This story was an honor to read for at its heart is the story of an entire nation and of its people.


Thank you to this French soldier who so eloquently reaffirmed our own hopes in ourselves and in our place in the world.

It is a pity how North American Media has lost sight of who and what we are.

61.  *Fabien* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 20:02](#)

This is a wonderful article that reflect how the French people, the mass, feels about American people in general. There is this envy that exists amongst most of the French people I know... Don't believe what the news say about the French because they are usually political comments by politicians... who would trust politicians?

–fabien, french guys living for 18 years in the US... and counting :)


62.  *Pam L* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 20:02](#)

This article moved me to tears. If you believe the U.S. media, the entire world hates us, especially our military. Both my sons serve. It really hurts me to hear this day after day. This moving tribute restores my faith in humanity. There is an old Army saying: There ain't no athiests in fox holes. Well, I'd like to add to the saying: There aint' no strangers in fox holes.


God bless the French. A big Merci from Texas. In closing, I just want to say my mothers maiden name was LeMonds.

And where can I get some of that French chow? You guys eat better than I do! :)

God bless the French military. May we forever be allies.


63.  *RebeccaH* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 20:15](#)

What a lovely article. Thanks for that. It reassures us that we're not uniformly despised in Europe, which is not something we ever hear from our own news-gathering organizations.

64.  *Solomonia* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 20:25](#)


#### **A Tribute to the Troops from a Frenchman...**

A must read: ...Here we discover America as it is often depicted : their values are taken to their paroxysm, often amplified by promiscuity and the loneliness of this outpost in the middle of that Afghan valley. Honor, motherland -.....

65.  *ak* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 20:37](#)


I'm not surprised by this. I've read a little about French anti-terrorist forces, and those people are no wimps. French soldiers know what's what. So I'm not surprised they admire good soldiers who can be relied on, no matter what their media and their elites have told them about Americans.

I did have to laugh about the size comparison. I had a mental image of little kids being fed Gatorade to prepare them for service twenty years down the road.

66.  *Steve Fox* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 20:41](#)

As a Brit living in Normandy, who worked alongside wonderful Americans in North Sea oil drilling (Ocean Victory, Odeco, 1980-1) it's good to read this post and the comments. HarleyDavidson writes about the American press, well you know what those people are the same over here in France and the UK. They purport to speak for us, but really don't have any grip on the way ordinary people live or see the world. They don't understand patriotism at all, for example. France is maybe more dominated by its so-called intellectuals than any other country, so it tends to come over as pretentious and arty-farty, but I know from living in the country out here, its full of warmhearted, gifted, yet modest people who match up to anyone anywhere.


Lets all make sure we listen to the people behind the frontpeople, people...

67.  *Danny Warren* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 20:45](#)

Many thanks to the Brave French man who worte this article. It is wonderful to see that there are people in other countries who understand that "Freedom is not Free" and are willing to fight to make sure that all of our ally countries still maintain those rights.


All too often, all we hear is the BAD stuff about our brave fighting men and women on all sides. Sadly the MEDIA wants everyone to think that things are far worse than what people like this brave man sees them. God Bless you for your taking time to help some of us Americans to see things from other's perspectives. We are ALL in this together and must have each other's backs.

Thanks again for taking time to write this article.. And Godspeed for a complete and peaceful ending to what the TERRORISTS started. They started it.. together, our brave men and women of all countries will END it.

68.  *Anachronda* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 21:12](#)

58: "peppered minced-beef cream (???) which comes with balls of salty bread that one must cover with that same cream."


That would be biscuits and gravy.

69.  *Holdfast* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 21:19](#)

America really does seem to recruit big kids into the infantry, and then helps them get bigger (in a good way). I am 5'11" and was about 185lb in my soldiering days, yet when we'd play with the Americans, I always felt like we were on the small side.

70.  [Galen Slade's Place » Blog Archive » American troops, through the eyes of French soldiers.](#) Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 21:28](#)

[...] Absolutely great post, translated from the French. It's worth reading the comments, as well. [...]

71.  *Bill Morris* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 21:41](#)


First, naysayers, go elsewhere.

Second...I was moved to tears, as I remember the quote (forgive spelling),


"Lafayette, Nous avons ici"

Lafayette, we are here, (spoken as we arrived on French shores during WW I.)


Keep the faith friends. The legacy has been preserved to now. Keep it alive

72.  [Nice French salute to the troops « The Cockpit](#) Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 21:49](#)

[...] French salute to the troops This is a nice salute to American troops from a French infantryman: "We have shared our daily life [...]"

73.  *doxiemama* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 22:03](#)

Thanks to all of the French troops, from this American mom who is extremely proud of our American troops. I pray for all of you!


74.  [In their Boots, the French and monkeys?! « Homes for Heroes](#) Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 22:11](#)

[...] by a French soldier (which by the way France is now an all volunteer force) with his impression of American Soldiers.

I have lived in France for two years and this soldiers article was the French people that have [...]


75.  *American wife* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 22:32](#)

Your generous piece brings tears to my eyes. Vive la France et vive l'amite entre nos deux belles republicues. Thank you so much, from a grateful American wife.

76.  *Jean-Marc Liotier* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 22:52](#)

Whoah ! I though that translating this piece would surely raise some interest, but I never expected it to be that much... This page has now gathered more than twenty thousand page views and 75 comments - that is three times the second most viewed page on this blog and ten times what a page normally gets... Thanks for the love everyone ! I'll forward that to the French soldier who authored the original version of the article !


By the way - one of you pointed a translation error, so I changed "promiscuity" to "lack of privacy" which is more appropriate in this context.

77.  *French Soldier Recruited* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 22:53](#)


[...] admiration for America in Afghanistan, thanks to close contact with L'Soldats Americaine. That's what it is purported to be, though bits of it look like it might have been charmingly [...]

78.  *French Infantryman Comments On His 101st Airborne Coworkers / Blue Grass, Red State* Says:  
[November 21st, 2008 at 23:26](#)

[...] rest is here, translated from the [...]

79.  *woundedduck* Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 0:38](#)

To my fellow Americans:  
The French weren't criticizing our troops when they opposed our invasion of Iraq, they were resisting Bush's abject dishonesty in making the case for war. Our lying, disgraceful President Bush sold us all a bill of goods, and hopefully President Obama will give him his day in court.


80.  *Eddy* Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 0:41](#)

Make sure to go and visit the site to read the response written in english by an American soldier about the French OMLT. It is just as gracious and heart warming.

The link is:


<http://omlt3-kdk3.over-blog.com>

God bless all the troops who so selflessly protect freedom wherever they serve. I thank you all heartedly.

81.  *A Patriot* Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 1:11](#)

To woundedduck:  
Obviously congress believed what our president believed to be true. And our president got his info from our intel agencies. So if you notice, he did not make the decision to go to war on his own. A large amount of our govt. helped with


the decision.  
So get off bush's back.

82.  *NewYorkerMike* Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 1:30](#)


Woundedduck, you two faced piece of crap. "President" Al Gore would have had to do the same thing but he'd have dragged his feet for another few months, then do an LBJesus redux of Vietnam, try to bring Saddam to the "bargaining table" and, ultimately, bring humiliation to the U.S. and our superb military once again. If President Bush lied then so did all the world's intelligence services. It's not President Bush who'll be on trial. It will be Obama and his despicable Socialist agenda. Just take a look at the vermin he's letting into the Executive Branch. We in the U.S. will get what we deserve because this country as a whole totally ignored the salacious background of a man raised by communists because we let the press obsess over the Republican vice presidential candidate. Sarah Palin would have been head and shoulders better than that incoming imbecile Biden as v.p. and the country will come to realize that, sadly, just a bit too late.

We are fighting the right war at the right time with the right kind of military. We've only got a couple of months more to get the job done before this "political agitator (oh, excuse me, I should have said "community organizer") and disciple of Saul Alinsky and Bill Ayers' cripples us and throws this country to the wolves.

May God have mercy on our souls.


83.  *DAR daughter* Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 1:40](#)

To Woundedduck: Heard about the 500 tons of yellowcake recently removed quietly from Iraq to Canada ? It, and a lot of other chemical weaponry was indeed there. Bush did not lie.


84.  *Truth is where it's at* Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 1:53](#)

To Woundedduck:

I guess you never read "Saddam's Secrets" by George Sada, written by Hussein's second in command in the Air Force. Saddam Hussein secretly transported his WMDs to Syria just prior to the war. He used 50 some-odd planes with their seats removed; a dam had broken in Syria and everyone thought Iraq was involved in humanitarian missions. Gen. George Sada was interviewed by numerous American TV and radio talk shows in 2006. This subject was also written about in "Because They Hate" by Brigitte Gabriel and reported on in the New York Sun, the Jerusalem Post, etc. Check out Google.

85.  *old\_airman\_2000* Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 2:18](#)

Thank you for the lovely words about our soldiers. Please take care, and may you return to your loved ones safe and sound.

86.  *Dav!* Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 3:07](#)

a nos amis francais, je peut offrir seulement "Merci"... to our French friends I can only offer thanks..

That story moved me like little else I've read recently. It is so easy to assume that stereotypes apply more universally than they do.

I lived in Belgium for years, spent lots of time with Frenchmen, and I do recall that the vast majority of them were decent, good and reasonable people. Their media is as leftist as ours, and as disregarding of public opinion.


alors, merci encore aux soldats forts, bon courage, et bonne chance aussi~

87.  *GraniteGrok* Says:

[November 22nd, 2008 at 3:25](#)

**If you think our soldiers are vilified by our allies, think again...**

One of the main themes of the Left is that our soldiers are either victims because of economics or culture and have not other choices. And, once in theater and as that dirtbag Murtha said, the Left then proceeds from.....

88.  *Bo Xian* Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 4:32](#)

Am humbled and blessed by your kind words.


We thinking, brain functioning patriots here—maybe what—half our population now—at least 30% of the population???

WE, at least, are quite proud of our military folks and the excellent job they do for the ungrateful in very trying circumstances.


Their civilian leaders are not worthy of them.

Thankfully, God is keeping score.


May God bless you and your family for your honest kindness regarding our troops and sailors.

89.  *Bev* Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 4:38](#)

As one who has a nephew serving in Afghanistan, it is a relief to know that each serviceman, regardless of nationality, has each other's back. Thank you for that consolation. God bless you all.

90.  *Fortunate Grandson* Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 4:50](#)

Thank you. My Grandpa soldiered his way across France in WWI and again in WWII. He returned home wounded each time, the second time home saw him "alive" for 3 months before his death just prior to Tibet's mission/victory. Your thoughtful article left me envisioning a calmer, warmer, breeze and a quieter ocean lapping the shore next to the Pacific seaside grave where he was laid to rest. And yes, those are a very fine bunch who serve today.

91.  *Concerned Citizen of Indiana* Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 6:43](#)


To Woundedduck and your like: you're Kool-Aid drinkers.

Check your facts, and read a little world history once in a while.

As for President Bush: you have been safe for 7 years+ -thanks to the fact that he stepped up to the plate, and let us take it to the enemy.

You are free to sleep at night because of those who face danger 24/7 and stand beside the footprints of those who have stood careful watch over our nation for many generations.

P.S.- I'm thankful to know the French and Europeans apparently have skewed media too.

92.  *Steve O* Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 6:57](#)

NewYorkerMike,


Actually, Gore said that he wouldn't have invaded Afghanistan.

Woundedduck, If you're going to post on a site like this, your knowledge has to be a little deeper than what you get from reading AP news articles in the NYTimes.

Democrats in the House and Senate do not get their intelligence reports filtered through the White House. They get briefings from the intelligence agencies themselves.

Face it, Democrats voted to invade another country — not because they believed it was the right thing to do, but as part of a political calculation of domestic politics. They were dishonest with the American people about their true positions, and then they undermined our soldiers while they were fighting in the field.

Meanwhile, nothing Bush has said regarding Iraq was a lie. Saddam had chemical WMDs and a dormant nuke program ready to be kick-started as soon as sanctions fell.


93.  *Idaho SAYS:*  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 7:37](#)

God, I pray that our military will be strong to deter evil, and strong to quickly perform their orders. God, I pray that you will enlighten our leaders so that their orders will be your will. Not our desires but your will, will be done. Amen. Oh, and please help me be a good Marine. Amen.

94.  *Mikel SAYS:*  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 9:25](#)

There's another English translation posted on the French blog under Comments (Commentaires). It's more accurate. The Rambo spoofing and tongue-in-cheek observations regarding American military readiness and "disconcerting" tendency to bomb first and ask questions later is much more pronounced. It's an obvious satire very much in the French tradition; I'm surprised the author was so benevolent as to include the two or three straight-forward commendations about Americans. Maybe the author was hoping non-French speaking patriotic Americans would get all misty-eyed and widely circulate this on the net as a tribute.

But you know what they say in France. Faire l'ane pour avoir du son.

95.  *Steve Fox SAYS:*  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 13:12](#)

Pour ceux-là qui nous font l'honneur de nous accueillir dans leurs postes avancés de combat et qui tous les jours font preuve des plus belles qualités militaires, pour ceux-là qui paient tous les jours un lourd tribut au déploiement de l'armée des Etats-Unis d'Amérique sur le sol afghan, pour tous ceux-là nous leur devons bien cet article, en espérant à notre tour de ne jamais démeriter et de pouvoir continuer à leur entendre dire que nous sommes tous de la même « band of brothers ».


This is the last paragraph of Merlin's post, Mikel, and as a fluent French speaker resident in Normandy, I find no satire or irony in it.

My translation would be:


"To those who do us the honour of welcoming us to their forward combat posts, and who every day show proof of the highest soldierly qualities, to those who pay every day a heavy price in the deployment of the army of the United States of America on Afghan soil, to all of them we owe this article, hoping in our turn to never prove unworthy, and to be able to continue to say in their hearing that we are all the same 'band of brothers'"

The translation in the post above is not perfect, eg it represents the Americans as saying 'we are all the same band of brothers', when in fact Merlin has the French saying it, but the sense is true. Likewise the paragraph which mentions the Americans style of combat. Merlin is admiring the directness, and lack of pussyfooting.

I have no idea what your motivation might be in attempting to twist this into a satirical attack, and do not care to guess.

96.  *Sagchic SAYS:*  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 16:25](#)


Thank you so much for this article. It is beautiful and it has touched me deeply. It is a sad day when so many in our own country do not see what these amazing soldiers are doing for us.  
God Bless America.

97.  [juscruzn](#) Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 16:52](#)


To French Autor, Merci for writing and translating this article mon ami. This is truly a GREAT STORY! It is a shining example of what our two countries can accomplish when working together to defeat these hirabi's. I am reminded of an example which I always remember about French Commandos. There was an attempted hijacking of an Air France jet I believe in Paris in the 1990's. The hijackers intent was to crash the plane into the Eiffel Tower and kill as many innocents as possible. French Commandos stormed the aircraft and killed all the hirabi's while saving the aircraft and it's crew, except for one passenger who was struck by I believe a stray round. This serves as a true example of what your forces are capable of.

98.  [Dick Hill](#) Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 17:00](#)

64 years ago, last June, I participated in the Invasion by bombing ahead of troops that were wading ashore at Omaha Beach. We were flying B-24's. All wars are hell, but the evil has to be stamped out or we would all be speaking German today. The targets are smaller today, but not less important. The USA has always tried to assist it's allies and destroy those who would destroy the American freedoms [or anybody else's freedom.] It is a big expensive burden to the American taxpayers. I might note that the loudest pipsqueaks try to threaten the USA, but they do not fully understand the will of the American people!

99.  [Jayem Vidrine](#) Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 17:06](#)

A very well written essay. Let us U.S. folks not forget that it was the French who helped us win the American Revolution and saved our asses at that time.

100.  [Argghhh! The Home Of Two Of Jonah's Military Guys..](#) Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 17:42](#)

### **H&I Fires\* 22 Nov 2008...**

Open post for those with something to share, updated through the day. New, complete posts come in below this one. Note: If trackbacking, please acknowledge this post in your post. That's only polite.

\*\*\*\*\*

At the Weekly St...

101.  [RLaRaia](#) Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 18:14](#)


The "peppered minced-beef cream (???)" could be biscuits and gravy but in the old Army (Vietnam and earlier) it more likely would have been something we affectionately referred to as "SOS." The concoction that any decent mess sergeant would have in the chow line for breakfast everyday consisted of ground beef cooked in a heavy cream sauce (flour and milk) and was ladled liberally on slices of toast. Of course the official name was creamed beef on toast but soldiers as they are wont to do came up with a much more poetic term of endearment and it stood for "sh\_t on a shingle."

As to the Frenchman's compliment, it is heartening to know that comrades in arms are that and always will be in ways that no civilian can ever imagine.


102.  [Rita Thibert](#) Says:  
[November 22nd, 2008 at 19:41](#)

This made me cry, My husband is one of these Rambo's there right now!

And to see that the French people are seeing and telling the truth about what honorable men and women are risking it all to help others they never knew, and that they do not hold grudges against people of France because a handful had spoken against us. Everyone else had said sooo much, and I too thank the Author for his words!

103.  [American Troops in Afghanistan: A French Soldier's View / The Blog of Record](#) Says:  
[November 23rd, 2008 at 2:53](#)

[...] This article first appeared back in September, but it is worth re-reading today, on Victory in Iraq Day, about the respect Americans in uniform earn from our European allies who share the dangers of combat duty with them. An excerpt: Heavily built, fed at the earliest age with Gatorade, proteins and creatine - they are all heads and shoulders taller than us and their muscles remind us of Rambo. Our frames are amusingly skinny to them - we are wimps, even the strongest of us - and because of that they often mistake us for Afghans. [...]

104.  [Emmanuel Zitnik](#) Says:  
[November 23rd, 2008 at 5:42](#)

Some Pr\*ck made an ill-willed translation in order to discredit Merlin's message.

ps: I'm not talking about JM Liotier's translation.

105.  [French autor](#) Says:  
[November 23rd, 2008 at 13:25](#)

One month after being back of Afghanistan, I read your comments. May be there are some bad translation in some sentences or words. I've been during 3 months embedded with my team of 4 guys with a US Army platoon, in a far away combat out post. during this time, we have been mortared, rocketed, fired with small arms... All those events and our relations make us stronger against the enemy. despite of this, I have the felling to get half of my life with those men, and I consider them now like my brothers. There were no political view in our job. Only make the job, helping afghan Army and trying to stay alive. On the 6th of november, I know that our combat out post has been erased by a suicide truck (with 1500 pounds of explosive). thanks to God, there has been no serious casualties and after 24 hours everybody was working again. In order to give the right way to the translation, I give you the one made by the U.S platoon leader, who corrected my translation to prepare the ceremony of our departure :

Since three months we are deployed in SAYED ABAD. During this time, we have shared our everyday life with this platoon. You guys, are from of one of a well known infantry battalion. To someone who has not worked and lived with you, you appear to be no different than any other unit. Having lived with you and gotten to know you, we have had the honour to live with one of the most highly recognized units.

We are involved in an exciting, but tough, adventure in Afghanistan. It seems convenient to return to our everyday life with "common soldiers who live an extraordinary story".

Who are you, soldiers from the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, and what support do you bring to my guys of the OMLT? Only a few of you belong to E. Company, Most of you are from A. Company of this prestigious Battalion in which we have had the chance, and the honour, to work alongside. We have also been able to conduct combined missions with this company. We indeed owe you these thoughts which will shed some light on you guys.

They got a terribly marked accent. You are American. I will explain that in America you do not speak English. How many times was it necessary to write to you what I had to say rather than lose the precious time it would take to try several pronunciations of a word which would seem commonplace? Whatever your native State is, we never find the same accent. Even you admit that in certain crisis situations you cannot always understand each other due to the excitement in your voice and your heavy accent.

You are large men. From a young age you are fed Gatorade, protein, and creatine. You appear as though you are head and shoulders taller than us, and your muscle structure reminds us of John Rambo in his prime. Not like us.

Your values are where we discover America, as it is often depicted: the values which are yours are carried on here in your actions, amplified by the crowded conditions and the solitude of our post in the middle of this Afghan valley. Honour, Homeland. Everything reminds you of it: the American flag blowing in the wind above the combat outpost. In spite of recruitment, nobody here has the any other motive then to proudly represent the Stars and Stripes.

It comes as a shock to view your successful ideals: the American soldier is not individualistic. The teams, the squad, the platoon fight are at the centre of all its attention. We who believe what it means to be an American have made a mistake.

And what soldiers you are! From Kabul to our combat out post, we did not meet one bad soldier. Strange when we know how critical French infantrymen can be! Even if some of you show a light stoutness, all of you give us lessons of everyday life as an infantryman. Beyond the port of the battle dress which never seems to bother you, with helmet chin strap, helmet, ballistic glasses, rifle, the long hours of guard do not seem to truly bother you. your only protection a wooden tower, which is only a square meter of plywood thrown above outer walls maintaining 5 hours of guard. You use your night vision devices to constantly observe any possible danger. You are like statues, no entertainment and no breaks. As night falls the operations on the combat outpost are the same. All movements are made in the dark.

The vehicles move in the same manner. Everything is done in the dark, to include manual refuelling of your vehicles.

If you ask me how you are when you are in the fight? I would say if you saw RAMBO you have seen everything: always ready to quickly come to the aid of a team in need of support. It is one of your secrets: you change from your t-shirts and into your battle dress in about three minutes. When you arrive near the enemy position your mode of action is simple and puzzling: you charge! Followers of the off-loaded assault, you throw yourselves into the fight first and then ask questions, what limits the procrastinations. No badly posted soldier, no soldier who seems lost in the middle of the crash of the fights. Without a doubt this is most surprising for someone who is used to being alongside our French platoons.

You came in support of our troops even though they were unaware of how dangerous the situation might have been. The American soldier is a beautiful soldier, a deserving heir of those who freed France and Europe, a deserving heir of those of the 101st Air Airborne.

For those who honour us with welcoming us into their combat outpost and who every day displayed the most beautiful military qualities, for those who pay every day a heavy toll to the deployment of the Army of United States of America on the Afghan ground, for all this guys we simply hope in turn that we proved worthy of being considered a part of the "Band of Brothers".

God bless you all, god bless coalition forces, god bless America.

HOu-aa!!

Then on our website, you can find the same kind of article made by the platoon :

For about two months now I have been working side by side with the French OMLT. I remember when I first showed up to take charge of the combat outpost my unit was located at and I found out it would not just be American forces there but also a small section of French. Being the typical American I was making jokes in my head about the French Army. These last two months have truly been enlightening for me and corrected a grave misconception of the French Army.

Let me say this first I am not envious of their job. Being responsible for training and mentoring the Afghan National Army (ANA) is a job that can only be described as herding cats. Having only worked with the ANA on a couple of missions I have come to realize that the OMLT must have the patience of a Saint. I seriously doubt that I would have the patience to do the job they are doing and I don't think I could do it nearly as well. Their patience was also displayed almost every night while dealing with me and my soldiers. Due to the rough living conditions some of the OMLT were living in a tent that also housed our television. Although we would try and remain quiet and respect the fact they were sleeping it didn't always work that way. Too many times while watching a close football game we would begin screaming and yelling over the game. Somehow each night they never yelled at us and never complained. Their patience in dealing with us alone can be considered amazing.

The French willingness to help is amazing. No matter where we, as the American Army, would go the French Commander located at my base would always try to arrange support from his OMLTs and the ANA they were training. Their willingness to support our guys made my job a lot easier and gave me a better feeling knowing that the French OMLT and ANA were watching our back. On more than one occasion we would respond to a situation and when we reached the location the French would already be there and would give me the current situation on the ground.

The French always seem to know what was happening. As an American I, like my fellow Americans, take pride in what we do and think that everything we do is the best. I will have to say when it comes to the French Intelligence versus American Intelligence the French have us beat. All too often the French Commander would come to me and ask if I knew about a situation. I would be forced to stand there and give him the confused puppy look. Typically about thirty minutes after the French told me I would finally get the same information from the American Intelligence. This proved to extremely valuable on more than one occasion. American convoys on several occasions were struck by an IED in which we were informed immediately by the French. Thankfully for their quick reporting we were able to come to the aid of those convoys in a timely manner. Luckily in each case there were no severe casualties however if there had been our ability to quickly respond, due to French information and reporting, would have saved lives.

The French have a handicap; they do not have the training, resources, money, and assets in their military the same as Americans. They have been forced to make due with less and they have still managed to out perform us in some ways. The French military is a force that commands the respect of everyone else in the world. I can't imagine what they would look like, and how truly incredible a force they could be, if they had the same training, resources, and assets. These past few

months have truly opened my eyes and corrected a few misconceptions I've had about the French as an American. Although they are not as big as us and sound funny when they talk I am truly grateful to have had this opportunity, and I am honored to call these men my comrades and friends.

This ends my comment. Best regards to you all.  
Major G. French Army


106.  [Sally Drumm](#) Says:  
[November 23rd, 2008 at 15:25](#)

One of the writers I've worked with in creative writing workshops I lead aboard MCAS Beaufort sent this to me. I am now preparing an anthology of works produced during Milspeak workshops. I would like to include the Major's translation of the piece in the anthology, due for release on July 4, 2009. Please visit the program website <http://www.milspeak.org> for more information about Milspeak. If you would like to have this work included in the anthology, please contact me. Thank you.

107.  [Public Secrets](#) Says:  
[November 23rd, 2008 at 17:08](#)

#### **How a French soldier sees his American comrades...**

Via Tigerhawk, a French infantryman in Afghanistan gives his opinions on the American soldier. What you read might surprise you. Vive la France! Technorati tags: allies, French soldier, American soldier, Afghanistan.....

108.  [CHARLES W. STROUD JR.](#) Says:  
[November 24th, 2008 at 0:16](#)

THIS IS VERY INSPIRING!! BEING A COMBAT VET. WE CAN APPRECIATE THESE FREEDOM FIGHTERS.  
"FOR GOD AND COUNTRY"

109.  [James Speros](#) Says:  
[November 24th, 2008 at 5:27](#)

Thank you for the accurate and concise impressions and observations of fact. I have been in Afghanistan over 2 1/2 years now as part of the Civilian Police team from the US. As a retired police officer with nearly 32 years total time, including advising in Iraq, I wholeheartedly agree with my French compatriot about the quality of troops we see and work with here. Of course, when you get to the 0-5 level (Major) and higher, the common sense and reality check goes out the window with many. The same as in many international bureaucracies!!

Keep up the good work and thank you

D Greek Cop

110.  [Old Salt](#) Says:  
[November 24th, 2008 at 6:05](#)

I can remember reading stories about the French Foreign Legion and seeing movies like Beau Geste.

We cannot criticize all Frenchmen for what their politicians do. We have some pretty stupid ones ourselves.


Thank you mon ami. My God protect you and your service personnel.

111.  [SilentWatcher](#) Says:  
[November 24th, 2008 at 11:55](#)


Je suis très heuse de lire votre lettre. Vous avez donné un plus grand honneur aux hommes militaires des États Unis. Je vous remercie.

112.  [BizzyBlog](#) » [Positivity: American troops in Afghanistan through the eyes of a French OMLT infantryman](#) Says:  
[November 24th, 2008 at 11:57](#)


[...] is “a rare and moving testimony” from a French soldier (French original here): “We have shared our daily life with two US [...]

113.  [Ex-Xo](#) Says:  
[November 24th, 2008 at 17:09](#)

Zut alors! A la Chris Matthews, le soldat is getting le petit froisson up le jambe de fatigues, oui?


114.  [11-24-08 / Drive Time Happy Hour](#) Says:  
[November 24th, 2008 at 20:09](#)

[...] Jean-Marc Liotier: American troops in Afghanistan through the eyes of a French OMLT infantryman. [...]

115.  [Hyscience](#) Says:  
[November 24th, 2008 at 22:07](#)

#### **American troops as seen through French eyes...**

Jean-Marc Liotier at Serendipitous Altruism has a translation of an original French article about American troops in Afghanistan through the eyes of a French OMLT infantryman. As Liotier points out, here in the US and in France echoes of worldwide host...

116.  [Randy Cates](#) Says:  
[November 24th, 2008 at 22:07](#)

Thank you for this very important news.


As a former Marine (Vietnam), I’ve come to realize that America’s fighting forces are the best Americans of us all. We’re raised to put others first and wear the uniform with pride. Behave in a manner that is representative of our branch of service and the country we love (and an occasional protein shake).

“Some” of our politicians in recent years have strayed off course but the “real” Americans are still here, waiting for a leader who will alert the world to the simple truth that “real Americans” still live here. We are not politicians, we never have been and for but a handful never will be.

God bless you my friend.

R.Cates  
(fmr) LCPL USMC

While “some” American politicians are not acting in the best interests of the world, others still “get it” and are waging their own war in Washington.

117.  [The Real American Soldier](#) Says:  
[November 25th, 2008 at 0:28](#)

[...] following is some excerpts from a French OMLT (Operational Mentoring Liaison Team) infantryman’s blog that was translated to English. It [...]

118.  [Weekend Pundit](#) Says:  
[November 25th, 2008 at 3:55](#)

#### **A Different View Of US Troops...**

Our friends at Granite Grok steered me to this, a translation of an article by a French infantryman serving in Afghanistan along side soldiers from the US Army (from what I could tell from the article, the US soldiers.....


119.  [Oil Field Trash](#) Says:  
[November 25th, 2008 at 4:32](#)

I wish the MSM could acknowledge the strength and courage of our troops even a fraction as eloquently as this soldier.


God bless our troops and and all the men and women standing on that wall to keep us safe, both American and her allies.

120.  [judithod](#) Says:  
[November 25th, 2008 at 6:20](#)

This mother of a U.S. Marine thanks you.

121.  [American Troops in Afghanistan Through the Eyes of a French Infrantryman « Don't Get Me Started... »](#) Says:  
[November 25th, 2008 at 8:02](#)

[...] LINK: <http://serendipity.ruwenzori.net/index.php/2008/09/21/american-troops-in-afghanistan-through-the-eye...> [...]


122.  [Hudson New York](#) Says:  
[November 25th, 2008 at 12:15](#)

#### **American Troops Through French Eyes...**

Tr: Jean-Marc Liotier

Here is the original French, and here is my translation :

“We have shared our daily life with two US units for quite a while - they are the first and fourth companies of a prestigious infantry battalion whose name I will ...

123.  [CPT\(R\) R.D. VanOrsdale](#) Says:  
[November 25th, 2008 at 17:58](#)

I was a US Army Officer on liaison assignment with the French Army, (4eme Regt de Hussards) back in 1980. The soldiers of my Regiment Francais were all extremely motivated and very good soldiers - from Officer ranks to NCOs to draftee soldiers. I remain very proud of my “adoption” by the regiment. They taught me some things and I taught them some things. French politicians and news media are like the US politicians and news media. If you REALLY want to learn what the truth is, just like in America, you should talk with the ones who are “where the rubber meets the road.”

RD VanOrsdale  
Captain, USA, Ret (dsbl)

124.  [Susan](#) Says:  
[November 25th, 2008 at 18:10](#)


Thank you.

125.  [John M.](#) Says:

[November 25th, 2008 at 19:25](#)

This kinda choked me up. Thanks. I need that every once in a while.

I wish this word could get back to the French people in general. Not very long ago over wine in Cologne, a young German told me how grateful he was for everything that the U.S. was doing in the world, but that he couldn't say it very loudly because he didn't want anyone to know how he felt because how they might react. I wondered just how many Europeans feel that way, yielding to peer group pressure, as people do everywhere, I suppose. Still, we face a common foe and Europe is at a more immediate risk.

126.  [Russ. Just Russ.](#) Says:  
[November 25th, 2008 at 20:27](#)

#### **Through an ally's eyes...**

Very interesting item about US troops, as seen by one of the French troops serving alongside them in Afghanistan: A Nos Freres d'Armes Americains. OK, OK, you might not actually read French. My apologies.\* An English translation is here: American...

127.  [Ma Sands](#) Says:  
[November 25th, 2008 at 22:16](#)

There truly IS a silent majority, I betcha.....or if not a majority, at least those who would've been worthy of Gideon's 300..... :)

128.  [Scout](#) Says:  
[November 26th, 2008 at 0:04](#)


I worked with the French Army many years ago and I have a great respect for them. The problems between Americans and Frenchmen are caused not by the men of those countries, but by the media.

There is very little reality in the world today, just perception that is doled out by people who never leave their glass cubicles in the news buildings they work in. If we could hang every reporter and media person on the planet in one day, the world would tilt back into it's correct rotation instantly.

Every sad thing that has happened in the world has been played out for maximum spin by the journalists of the world. Every evil and foul subject has been glamorized by the media and given maximum time on air. Every beautiful event, every story of human courage, has been shoved into a closet. When there only 24 hours in a day, and they control what the world sees and hears, we are a lost people.


As a soldier, you never fight for a flag or a political party or idea, you fight for the guy in the hole next to you. You risk your life and willingly expose yourself to enemy fire not for any bumpersticker phrase, but for your buddies, because you know when it is you laying in the road, they are going to come for you, no matter what.

Please let us find some way to free ourselves from the grasp of the media and their shallow, simple, all the news all the time, view of the world.

129.  [Richard Besser](#) Says:  
[November 26th, 2008 at 0:28](#)

France and America have stood together throughout the years. May we continue to stand shoulder to shoulder into the future.

Thank you for your kind words. I was very touched by them. I will soon have at least two grandsons in the US military.

130.  [Paul Henry Eche](#) Says:  
[November 26th, 2008 at 0:32](#)

As a Frenchman and a former soldier, allow me, you Americans, to tell you why you are wrong:

You believe we hate you when, in fact, we like you as (bothering!) brothers, we admire you (our only cowardise is not to admit it fully!) and we are deeply, even my generation (born in 1968), grateful for your magnificent behaviour, not only in 1944 but all this years of the Cold War and even after...


I had the privilege to meet some of your Marines: you call them "Rednecks", I call them "Gentlemen Warriors": always this cultural misunderstanding!!!

Glad to see us friends again....

Au nom de Dieu, vive la Coloniale !

Semper Fidelis.

Sgt Eche, 2eme RIMa (ret)

131.  *Paul Henry Eche* Says:  
[November 26th, 2008 at 0:41](#)

My mistake!!

The Marines are of course "the Leather Necks"

Maudite mémoire!

132.  *dan* Says:  
[November 26th, 2008 at 2:16](#)


just want to say thank you to this soldier for his kind words about the USA's fighting men and women.

it is nice to hear such kind words, especially when so much international coverage of the USA is so negative.


i do wonder how much of this filters back to the french public... or even the american public for that matter. it does not appear that postive stories the USA ever get any bandwidth... it's all "abu ghraib" this and "guantanamo" that...

133.  *Merci, Mon Ami, Merci / Constant Conservative* Says:  
[November 26th, 2008 at 3:10](#)

[...] I am often saddened by the France of today. So it is with joy I bring these thoughts from a French military man who is currently serving alongside US forces in Afghanistan (HT: Anchoress): We have shared our daily life with two US units for quite a while - they are the [...]

134.  *» Les Américains émus par le témoignage d'un soldat Français en Afghanistan - Le Comptoir de Sinhaladweepa* Says:  
[November 26th, 2008 at 15:40](#)

[...] pas manqué de transformer en tensions populaires. J'ai donc immédiatement produite une traduction en anglais de l'article français. Je me doutais aussi que cette traduction trouverait son public aux Etats Unis et ailleurs, mais je [...]

135.  *Watcher of Weasels » Thanksgiving Watch* Says:  
[November 26th, 2008 at 16:07](#)

[...] Submitted By: The Glittering Eye - Serendipitous altruism - American troops in Afghanistan through the eyes of a French OMLT infantryman [...]

136.  *Dick Sweere* Says:  
[November 27th, 2008 at 3:32](#)

A person in the service understands what it means by being a team player. If not, it might cost his own or buddies life. There is a bond no one not in service will ever understand.

The American forces are among the best in the world, due to intense training.

137.  [Cheat Seeking Missiles » Feeling Thankful For Wednesday Reading](#) Says:  
[November 27th, 2008 at 7:41](#)


[...] Submitted By: The Glittering Eye - Serendipitous altruism - American troops in Afghanistan through the eyes of a French OMLT infantryman [...]

138.  ASE Says:  
[November 27th, 2008 at 8:46](#)

Interesting view.

My question, however, to the author is: why are there not more folks like you at home? Also, why are there not more in public office?

My comment to the author is: I have met people of small stature who were strong willed and quite resolute of purpose; I believe this to be the deciding factor in getting the mission accomplished.

139.  COL Shawn Welch Says:  
[November 27th, 2008 at 16:51](#)

Thank you for your tribute to the American Soldier. I am deeply moved and humbled. God bless and keep you safe so you may rejoin your loved ones.

140.  Old Major Says:  
[November 28th, 2008 at 2:04](#)


Thanks

141.  Bill Says:  
[November 28th, 2008 at 2:05](#)

A word of Thanks for our great INFANTRY Soldiers!!

142.  gmarker Says:  
[November 28th, 2008 at 4:31](#)

This shows just how much the United States and France have in common. In either country the soldiers represent the true character and sense of honor of the common man. Their goal is to advance the cause of freedom and are willing to sacrifice their very life to do so. On the other hand, the politicians of both countries generally represent only their own selfish and misguided ambitions. I'll cast my lot with the soldier any day.

143.  [gerald wisner](#) Says:  
[November 28th, 2008 at 15:11](#)

From an old Air Force vet. from the mid-fifties.....THANK YOU!!  
Gerald Wisner

144.  [gerald wisner](#) Says:  
[November 28th, 2008 at 15:15](#)

Additional comment from Gerald Wisner,  
GOD BLESS OUR WONDERFUL TROOPS!


145.  GEORGE SCHMITT Says:

[November 28th, 2008 at 16:29](#)

I READ THE STORY AND ALL I HAVE TO SAY IS GOD BLESS ALL THE TROOPS FROM ALL COUNTRIES WHO ARE IN THE WAR ON TERROR.HOLD YOUR HEAD HIGH AS I DO A PROUD AMERICAN!!!!!!!!!!!!

146.  [Watcher of Weasels](#) » [Giving Thanks for the Watchers of Weasels](#) Says:  
[November 28th, 2008 at 18:03](#)

[...] First place with 2 2/3 points! - Serendituous Altruism - American troops in Afghanistan through the eyes of a French OMLT infantryman [...]


147.  [The Colossus of Rhodexy](#) Says:  
[November 28th, 2008 at 20:28](#)

#### Watcher's Council results...


Unbelievable. Guess who won? First place in the Council category was The Colossus of Rhodexy with Culture of Whine (a rant). First place in the non-Council category was Serendituous Altruism with American troops in Afghanistan through the eyes of a.....

148.  [Cheat Seeking Missiles](#) » [Watcher's Winners - Thanksgiving Week](#) Says:  
[November 28th, 2008 at 21:55](#)

[...] tie). A post I didn't vote for, but one that I scored highly, Serendituous Altruism's American troops in Afghanistan through the eyes of a French OMLT infantryman, came in [...]

149.  [MAJ Dale Wilson, Ph.D. \(Ret.\)](#) Says:  
[November 29th, 2008 at 2:48](#)

In many ways, this generation of warriors is better than my own. I saw action as an enlisted infantryman in Vietnam and went on to become an armor officer, eventually retiring in 1991. One thing annoys me, however: Our soldiers are MEN, not boys. Whether they're 18 or 28 or, well, you get the drift. Just as there are no atheists in foxholes, you'll find no boys in the ranks of our combat forces!

150.  [Brad in Leesville Louisiana](#) Says:  
[November 29th, 2008 at 5:47](#)

What a gift to see ourselves as others see us

151.  [The Glittering Eye](#) » [Blog Archive](#) » [The Council Has Spoken!](#) Says:  
[November 29th, 2008 at 16:37](#)

[...] winning non-Council post was Serendituous Altruism's post, "American troops in Afghanistan through the eyes of a French OMLT infantryman", a [...]

152.  [Bella](#) Says:  
[November 29th, 2008 at 19:08](#)

To the French author of the original post, there are stories about the bravery of the French armed forces as well. I read so many military blogs, I cannot remember just now the places where I have read about it, but know that our armed forces give credit where credit is due, and the French are not excluded. If I can find where I have read about you and your countrymen fighting the war on terror, I will post it.

153.  [snake](#) Says:  
[November 30th, 2008 at 0:48](#)

Thank you for posting this, both the original author and the translator. I would like to believe, that regardless of the anyone's political view, the troops who's lives are on the line receive the full support of their countrymen. All we really want is for them to be home safe and sound with their families especially at this time of year.


154.  *Michel* Says:  
[November 30th, 2008 at 22:05](#)

to,"me2 Says"

Tu as l'esprit bien tortueux.....Ou tu ne nous aimes pas.  
C'est un compliment, des plus élogieux et des plus sincères, tout simplement!

155.  *The Razor » Blog Archive » The Council Has Spoken: November 28, 2008* Says:  
[December 1st, 2008 at 4:27](#)

[...] Serendituous Altruism - American troops in Afghanistan through the eyes of a French OMLT infantryman [...]

156.  *Narayan Sengupta* Says:  
[December 1st, 2008 at 15:35](#)

I have to echo the positive comments on the relations between our two countries.

We organized a celebration/commemoration of the USAS (United States Air Service, now the United States Air Force) in France in 1918. Our commemoration was on July 14, 2008 - the 90th Anniversary of the tragic death of Quentin Roosevelt, Teddy's youngest son and one of the pilots of the 95th Aero Squadron.

We had about 70 to 100 French people in attendance for the 3.5 hour event and we were welcomed and greeted so warmly. People came up to us and hugged us and embraced us though we weren't in France in 1918 (of course). There were lots of American flags, etc.

More here in case anyone is interested:

[http://www.usaww1.com/American\\_wwi\\_air\\_force\\_photos.php4](http://www.usaww1.com/American_wwi_air_force_photos.php4)

Vive les Etats Unis! Vive la France! A l'amitie eternelle entre les deux pays.

Narayan

157.  *Joycee* Says:  
[December 1st, 2008 at 20:06](#)

It is about time someone posts information of the real story of what is happening overseas. I agree with #15 (can't remember the name) 100%. The American people are only getting information our media wants them to have. I thank a Soldier and Vet every chance I have. Thank you for my Freedom and ridding this world of the terrorist, Saddam. May God Bless

158.  *Ma Sands* Says:  
[December 1st, 2008 at 20:12](#)

Joycee, I thank YOU, for the blessing you have just given me: I am an old newspaperwoman, and know well that, when one person states they are doing such a thing as you just said you do to soldiers and veterans, the same has to be being done by many others! Bless you! :)


159.  *Joycee* Says:  
[December 1st, 2008 at 20:14](#)

I went back to check it was #13, v says: I agree 100%. Me and Me2 just showed their cowardness. Bet they never served!

Shame on you or are you one of THEM!!

160.  *Ann McNeil* Says:  
[December 1st, 2008 at 22:05](#)


Thank you for sharing your impressions of our countrymen with us. I am so very proud of everyone out there and it is so good to hear such praise from another country.

161.  *Mark Lent* Says:  
[December 2nd, 2008 at 20:33](#)


Very proud of the depiction of US soldiers conducting multi-national operations with our French allies under austere conditions in Afghanistan. Continued security cooperation and the enhanced combined efforts of allies against terrorist organizations will be required to successfully bring security where it is required.

162.  *Cecil* Says:  
[December 3rd, 2008 at 1:09](#)

Many thanks for your kind words and keen assessment of our brave fighting men and women around the World who stand guard over our welfare.

163.  *A letter « Chris's Tour* Says:  
[December 3rd, 2008 at 12:07](#)

[...] [...]

164.  *David Defelice* Says:  
[December 3rd, 2008 at 19:16](#)

As and American Officer, and although these views are my own, it is the Brotherhood of Arms and the respect that most US service members have for our allies and coalition partners that easily allow us to assist in anyway possible. Having worked with Allies and Coalition partners for the past 6 years, I can honestly say that there is nothing that I nor my commrades would not do for them, that we would do for ourselves. It is this cooperation that is needed to be successful in defeating the threats to our freedoms and cherished way of life.

165.  *Lee Aldridge* Says:  
[December 3rd, 2008 at 19:42](#)

This article doesn't surprise me at all. As a prior USAF Attache in Paris during Operation Desert Storm, I can tell you that the bonds between the French military and the US military are very strong. Yes, there are French soldiers who dislike Americans just as there are American soldiers who dislike the French. There are senior French generals who openly criticize the US in public because it's the politically correct thing to do. But privately they are very pro-US almost to a fault. Americans can rest assured that when the bullets start flying, we are indeed a Band of Brothers! I wish every American could read this article. Thanks for making it available.

166.  *A Perception of American Soldiers « Innocent Bystanders* Says:  
[December 3rd, 2008 at 22:41](#)

[...] A Perception of American Soldiers December 3, 2008 Posted by composmentis in News. [trackback](#) This is pretty cool.  
 [...]

167.  *Mere Rhetoric* Says:  
[December 4th, 2008 at 20:00](#)


**Watchers Council Results: Incompetence In Education, Foreign Policy, Economics. But Especially Education.**

**(Plus: Uber-Competent Right Truth Joins Watchers Council)...**

I'm so far behind on Watchers Council business that I'm getting lapped by a week. Before anything else though - I'd be remiss in not alerting you to the announcement that Debbie Hamilton of Right Truth is the newest.....

168.  *Jon Drake* Says:  
[December 4th, 2008 at 20:54](#)

As an American Military Officer this reflects the culture of the military as a profession of arms. This type of post should make the newspapers, however the media and the public prefer to hear all of the 'bad' things. Having served with the French as well as other coalition partners, the comradery between the Soldiers, regardless of nationality, is the fuel that drives him towards mission accomplishment. For those that never serve, I am sorry that you will never experience this type of dedication to a cause larger than yourself.  
Continued performance towards mission accomplishment is what will end the GWOT.

169.  *Rhymes With Right* Says:  
[December 5th, 2008 at 3:31](#)

**Watcher's Council Results...**

I've been remiss in posting winners from teh Watcher's Council, so here are the last two weeks' results. November 28, 2008 Winning Council Submissions First place with 2 2/3 points! - The Colossus of Rhodey - Culture of Whine (a.....

170.  *Steve* Says:  
[December 5th, 2008 at 18:52](#)

Very moving, thank you. It has the absolute ring of truth to me as I worked with French infantrymen in the late 80's--outstanding troops that I would have been proud to share a foxhole with.

171.  *Gary* Says:  
[December 6th, 2008 at 1:49](#)


Moving...reassuring...thank you, very much.

172.  *French Soldier Describes Those That 'Assault in Stride' « Zipline Conservative* Says:  
[December 6th, 2008 at 5:15](#)

[...] <http://serendipity.ruwenzori.net/index.php/2008/09/21/american-troops-in-afghanistan-through-the-eye...> [...]

173.  *James* Says:  
[December 6th, 2008 at 9:56](#)

If the MSM had used this instead of the avalanche of stories about Palin's wardrobe the world would be a better place.

174.  *FormerHostage* Says:  
[December 6th, 2008 at 20:49](#)

"Our frames are amusingly skinny to them..."

Just remember an old 'merican saying:  
"It ain't the size of the dog in the fight, but the size of the fight in the dog."

175.  *Brian* Says:  
[December 6th, 2008 at 20:56](#)

I've traveled to France many times and love the country. The conceptions Americans have of the French and their country are often incorrect.

Not once has anyone there been rude to me or my family. Be respectful and polite to them and they will be the same way to you.

Americans and the French have so much more in common than we do differences. We need to stand together against the totalitarians.

176.  *Evie Greene* Says:  
[December 6th, 2008 at 22:23](#)

Thank you. It is comforting to know this came from a Frenchman. God bless our troops. God Bless America.

177.  *PJ* Says:  
[December 7th, 2008 at 6:25](#)

Thank you to "French autor"—you are a bit like de Toqueville, no?— and to all our allies who serve with our wonderful men and women of the military. I was just in Paris and found the French warm and friendly, like long lost cousins.

178.  *Bob Mac* Says:  
[December 7th, 2008 at 6:30](#)


As a former member of that Division who were so couragous at Bastogne, what you describe was the normal way of life in the field.  
Off duty we tended to get in trouble or just raise hell.

179.  *GRC* Says:  
[December 7th, 2008 at 17:29](#)

One thing I've taken away from trips to Europe is that there are just as many friends of America there as there are enemies of America. I remember quite vividly being in Frankfurt in 2003 when anti-Iraq war sentiment was particularly high, expecting hostility from the people I met, and being surprised by their outgoing, friendly conversation. It's a real shame that noisier critics distort our view of Europe - there are still good people there.

180.  *Ken Leep* Says:  
[December 8th, 2008 at 2:22](#)

Someone in this line mentioned Lafayette. This past year I read "Adopted Son" by David Clary. Great read, and I know I am even more convinced that if it had not been for the French, and one in particular, perhaps none of us would know the freedom that we now enjoy. The truth does come through from time to time.

181.  *An old US Vet* Says:  
[December 9th, 2008 at 3:27](#)

To the Frenchman who wrote this piece, just three simple words that can never do him justice: Peace. Love. Thanks.

182.  *French autor* Says:  
[December 9th, 2008 at 20:57](#)

to you all,  
I'm very moved by your words, and I thank you all. Your guys are always in the mud over there, it is cool for me to know that you support your troops. But you know, don't thanks me, thanks them all, it is because of their attitude if I wrote those lines. Your words are very honorary, to much for me at all. Thanks

183.  *Sweet Jesus* Says:  
[December 14th, 2008 at 4:10](#)
- Some facts: [http://wais.stanford.edu/ztopics/week020105/france\\_050201\\_civilianskilledinwwII.htm](http://wais.stanford.edu/ztopics/week020105/france_050201_civilianskilledinwwII.htm)
- Your ignorance is mind-blowing though. American propaganda has worked well on french too as you can see. But you have to realise here that it is only one man talking, who's by the way in the tiny tiny french army, so why don't you cut the crap with the "french people are so nice", "they love us" huh ? He's as brainwashed as you that's all.
- Vive the neo-colonization right ? :D
- America, Fuck Y... You.
184.  *manty01actual* Says:  
[December 14th, 2008 at 13:21](#)
- Thanks for standing in the line with our guys and gal's Sons of Cherbourg. Liberty, in it's most francais way, is truly the future of our species. With words like these, anything is possible. Keep them coming.....the world needs to see more of this.
185.  *Afghan & Military Blog » Blog Archive » In his own words* Says:  
[December 18th, 2008 at 23:50](#)
- [...] <http://serendipity.ruwenzori.net/index.php/2008/09/21/american-troops-in-afghanistan-through-the-eye...> [...]
186.  *dougard* Says:  
[December 19th, 2008 at 19:08](#)
- that was great, thank you
187.  *Bill Vann* Says:  
[December 30th, 2008 at 5:00](#)
- What impressive positive input from another unsuspected position.
- Thank you for seeing and sharing our remarkable troops.
188.  *Gerald F. Merna* Says:  
[December 31st, 2008 at 7:39](#)
- Why can't we just pay attention to what this French warrior said and forget all the politics, ignorance, insults and other garbage. This Man spoke from his heart. He was honest and eloquent, and I for one believe he speaks for many others. God Bless Him and his appreciation for our American fighting men and women. Some day we will all understand. Mustang Marine, Korea and Vietnam.  
 SemperFi
189.  *laura white* Says:  
[January 2nd, 2009 at 3:32](#)
- Thank You for the article. Its always good to see the reality that is there rather than the media barrage of 24/7 junk. If '09 brings us anything as a race, let it be a better view of the good that is in our basic humanity. If that alone could be seen- maybe less conflict- or conflict over sooner. God bless our Troops. Oh, the article is now cut/ pasted as a forward that is circulated. That alone means it will be seen by thousands- only without the link here. It's taken on a new life. Laura
190.  *ladycaviar* Says:

[January 3rd, 2009 at 21:26](#)

Merci.

I cried with pride.

191.  *Rabbit Says:*  
[January 15th, 2009 at 14:51](#)

Nice to know that we are still appreciated by a people whom we have considered allies for the entire time our nation has been in existence.

France and the US have come to one another's aid time and again.

Leave it to the grunts on the ground to keep this filial love alive!

Semper Fi!

192.  *Dave Whelan Says:*  
[February 14th, 2009 at 16:45](#)

It is nice to read something positive once in awhile. It speaks well of our young men and women and the way that they act professionally when necessary but hold to their own individual beliefs at the same time.

193.  *Frog Lips Says:*  
[February 15th, 2009 at 3:14](#)

Non mes couilles, et l'article en Français SVP? ollllaaaa il faudrait y aller molo sur la propagande. On se la joue comme dans les films, t'es pas a hollywood mon mec. We French people we don't dislike America. America dislike us. Our president Sarkozy, a Jew, is own by your CIA and the neocons that got you guys into Iraq. What a deepshit he is and he wont get reelected. Beside that, we don't mind facing death with our Americans partners, but America has to get on the program and quit having propaganda units in France and Europe. We are not fooled, you guys like the limes and get in our Europeans business all the Freeking time. Do you read yank! Screw Kosovo and the freeking likes. Mind your freeking business you got 1929 revisited on your lap at home. Do you read? Over. Quit putting your nose in our back yard, we would be muuuuuuuch better friends. You know what we think of your freedom fries.....we don't even claim them as ours, you dumb truck! Put this in your head also NATO = North Atlantic Terrorist Organization, when I think you wanted to use the equipment to kick the crap out of pour Saddam. What about the torture chambers in Europe. Get the FUCK out. You help us, sure. We Have paid back all our WAR debt what else do you want. Our women, over my dead buddy, pal! what about you guys supplying weapons to the FLN (Algeria's war)to kill French soldiers. Fuck no, you want to force us to take rag head country Turkey in the EU. Or you out of you freeking mind Yank? Mind your own fucking business and we we help you like brother. Have you forgotten that France is your oldest ally? Not freeking Britain! But, you always side on the limes side. Why, since WWII do you always stab us in the Back? Why yank? Remember this, quit backing the French left America! get your PSYOP out of my country FRANCE, yes do you read? Over. America be for once on France's side and do not ask if France is on your side. France since the birth of America has been on your side and you have been great to us, yes you have. Why since then haven't you want to be on France side. Why do you want to steal France influence in Africa? Why do you send us all those Muslims camel jockeys. The next war will be in France, You have made us a country of rag heads fucking camel jockeys. Yes my brothers, we will fight with you, your war here in Afghanistan, proudly and no questions ask. Please brothers quit making France an Arab country, help us stop the Arab invasion of France with your SPYOPs so far turned against, we hold the same values and we once were Christians, you are turning us into Muslims. Why are your SPYOPs doing that to us, do you hate us that much? wanting France ruined by Muslims. Why, why are you doing that to us America, why? You are going to need our cash to get out of your mess, we will provide it to you, just 2 things brother, 1)stay out of Europe's business and you will always find us standing next to you 2) help us stop and reverse the flow of Muslims into our country. Come on Obama be the man you can be! Help us reunite our forces, America needs it, France needs it, Europe needs it, the world needs it! we will fight Iran with you, just don't expect us to fully rejoin NATO, we need our independence as brothers must self respect.

France loves America, like us, land of the free.

A Frenchman of the kind few are left.

194.  *Frog Lips Says:*  
[February 15th, 2009 at 3:15](#)


Non mes couilles, et l'article en Français SVP? ollllaaaa il faudrait y aller molo sur la propagande. On se la joue comme dans les films, t'es pas a hollywood mon mec. We French people we don't dislike America. America dislike us. Our president Sarkozy, a Jew, is own by your CIA and the neocons that got you guys into Iraq. What a deepshit he is and he wont get reelected. Beside that, we don't mind facing death with our Americans partners, but America has to get on the program and quit having propaganda units in France and Europe. We are not fooled, you guys like the limes and get in our Europeans business all the Freeking time. Do you read yank! Screw Kosovo and the freeking likes. Mind your freeking business you got 1929 revisited on your lap at home. Do you read? Over. Quit putting your nose in our back yard, we would be muuuuuuch better friends. You know what we think of your freedom fries.....we don't even claim them as ours, you dumb truck! Put this in your head also NATO = North Atlantic Terrorist Organization, when I think you wanted to use the equipment to kick the crap out of pour Saddam. What about the torture chambers in Europe. Get the FUCK out. You help us, sure. We Have paid back all our WAR debt what else do you want. Our women, over my dead buddy, pal! what about you guys supplying weapons to the FLN (Algeria's war)to kill French soldiers. Fuck no, you want to force us to take rag head country Turkey in the EU. Or you out of you freeking mind Yank? Mind your own fucking business and we help you like brother. Have you forgotten that France is your oldest ally? Not freeking Britain! But, you always side on the limes side. Why, since WWII do you always stab us in the Back? Why yank? Remember this, quit backing the French left America! get your PSYOP out of my country FRANCE, yes do you read? Over. America be for once on France's side and do not ask if France is on your side. France since the birth of America has been on your side and you have been great to us, yes you have. Why since then haven't you want to be on France side. Why do you want to steal France influence in Africa? Why do you send us all those Muslims camel jockeys. The next war will be in France, You have made us a country of rag heads fucking camel jockeys. Yes my brothers, we will fight with you, your war here in Afghanistan, proudly and no questions ask. Please brothers quit making France an Arab country, help us stop the Arab invasion of France with your SPYOPs so far turned against, we hold the same values and we once were Christians, you are turning us into Muslims. Why are your SPYOPs doing that to us, do you hate us that much? wanting France ruined by Muslims. Why, why are you doing that to us America, why? You are going to need our cash to get out of your mess, we will provide it to you, just 2 things brother, 1)stay out of Europe's business and you will always find us standing next to you 2) help us stop and reverse the flow of Muslims into our country. Come on Obama be the man you can be! Help us reunite our forces, America needs it, France needs it, Europe needs it, the world needs it! we will fight Iran with you, just don't expect us to fully rejoin NATO, we need our independence as brothers must self respect.

France loves America, like us, land of the free.

A Frenchman, of the kind few are left.

195.  *America Rules Says:*  
[February 17th, 2009 at 11:17](#)

Too late, France, we'll never forgive you for backstabbing us in front of the UN in 2003. We must get our pound of flesh and then some.

196.  *Jean-charles Says:*  
[February 19th, 2009 at 15:13](#)


Hi,

I'm in reserved ground army force of French army..( 503TH Regiment )

You seem all ( Americans) surprise that French can pay tribute to you and especially to your Soldiers.

It seem in French army, that soldiers French soldiers respect U.S more than you think, and from people side, I think too. I don't think that French are against to US, or only the extreme Right/Left wings in politics, maybe 5% of population?! But this is their opinions you are hearing the most...that's why it's bad for our relationships.

Jean-charles LOMBART

197.  *David Madison Says:*  
[February 19th, 2009 at 15:40](#)

I was born in Paris 55 years ago, but only stayed two weeks. My American parents were traveling, so I am a derivative American citizen.

I have never admired the French people, but it appears possible that I simply did not hear the right voices. If these French troops react this way to a professional a professional military unit, regardless their nationality, then perhaps they are much better than the credit I had given them.

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Notify me of followup comments via e-mail

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