

TRANSLATION

NEWSPAPER: Luxemburger Wort
DATE: 30 Sep 2011
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HEADLINE: **“They will remain guests for eternity”.**
High-ranking visitor at the Ceba Memorial honors the ordinary GI in Clerf. LTG Mark P. Hertling, CG, US Forces in Europe (sic), honored the fallen soldiers of the Ardennes Offensive.

Only four days before the national commemorative ceremonies for the “Journée de commémoration nationale”, LTG Mark P. Hertling, the commanding general of US Forces in Europe (sic), visited the well-known memorial honoring the simple GI in Clerf. This was a very honorable occasion for Camille P. Kohn, president of the “Cercle d'études sur la bataille des Ardennes (Ceba) [study group on the battle of the Ardennes] and members of the Clerf community to again express the gratitude to the American liberators of WWII in a very moving ceremony.

“This ordinary soldier stands here for his more than 5,000 fallen comrades at the military cemetery in Hamm, for the tens of thousands of young men who had to move through countries totally foreign to them to stop a murderous war they had not started in order to bring us peace, liberty and democracy. What can the people of Luxembourg do in return?” This was the central question of Ceba manager Ern. Kohn, speaking in front of the GI memorial in Clerf on Wednesday.

The president of Ceba, Camille P. Kohn, provided the answer with impressive words: “Maintaining the eternal gratitude and remembrance of the US liberators even if there is no headstone large enough, no flower beautiful enough and no reception amicable enough to adequately express the gratitude”. When German troops appeared from nowhere on 16 December 1944 in Luxembourg and turned the Ardennes during five weeks into a slaughterhouse, it seemed almost as if they were unstoppable, according to Kohn.

The fact that it wasn't so is owed to the young US soldiers, tens of thousands of which have remained amidst us, in the shadows of our forests, grave after grave under a sea of white marble crosses. “They will remain our guests for eternity”, said Camille P. Kohn, who, on behalf of Ceba, reassured the United States to keep the memory of those US soldiers alive.

The mayor of Clerf, Yves Arend, renewed that promise as well. For the post war generation, to which he belongs as well, it is difficult to fathom the horror of the Ardennes Offensive and the Nazi terror. He is well aware that he would not be able to speak freely in a free Clerf on such a beautiful fall evening if it had not been for the GIs back then helping the people of Luxembourg who were not able to help themselves.

LTG Mark P. Hertling was very much touched and thankful for the commemorative ceremony in front of the GI memorial in Clerf, which, like so many other memorials at former battle grounds, radiates a very moving quietness and beauty. The fact that he as the commanding general of the US Forces in Europe (sic) came to Clerf like an ordinary soldier is cause for reflecting anew the ideals these young soldiers fought for back then and that one must not forget those ideals, also in view of the current missions of the US Army.

“During the liberation of Europe, the US Army never fought to conquer countries but simply for a peaceful place to bury their dead”, said LTG Hertling. It is therefore of immense importance to the US Forces that Ceba continues to honor the fallen GIs of WWII with numerous memorials and plaques all over Luxembourg and he is grateful for that.

On behalf of the US Forces in Europe (sic) and expressing his gratitude, LTG Mark P. Hertling presented Camille P. Kohn with a plaque before the moving ceremony concluded with a wreath laying and the singing of both national anthems.

Picture Caption:

With deep gratitude for maintaining the remembrance of the US Soldiers of WWII, LTG Mark P. Hertling presented a plaque to Camille P. Kohn, president of Ceba.