How does overseas combat deployment influence the propensity for the formation of revolutionary vanguards and political change at home? In this paper, part of our larger book project "War and Freedoms", we examine the effect of deployment in the American Revolution on French veterans' propensity to mobilize politically in 1789-92. Consistent with contemporary accounts, we find no evidence that French regiments sent to America were selected for military service, based upon soldiers' heights or age, regimental prestige or other factors. However, French bailliages with higher shares of American veterans in their military recruitment were 6-7 percentage points more likely to experience peasant rebellions in 1789-90. They were more likely to submit official grievances that were 'strongly democratic', expressing support equality of rights and taxation, freedom of the press and loyalty to both their nation and economic group. They were more likely to form political clubs from 1790 onwards and Jacobin clubs during the moderate period (1790-92). American veterans in the Estates- General were also more likely to support constitutionalism and be politically moderate. In contrast, military recruitment per se does not have these effects. Instead, we interpret these effects as reflecting the effect of exposure to combat in the American Revolution on both the organizational capacity and ideology of those that returned.