

# THE TWITTERSPHERE REACTS TO AFGHANISTAN WAR LOGS REVELATIONS

LE 27 JUILLET 2010 FEDERICA COCCO

The release of confidential documents on the war in Afghanistan by Wikileaks agitated the Twittersphere yesterday.

It is a triumph for any particular cause to find itself trending on Twitter. Usually it's Justin Bieber, #howyouagangsta or a promoted blockbuster of some sort, but on July 26 freedom of information prevailed.

That day, it was the turn of **Wikileaks**, which released a highly anticipated report on the past 6 years of war in Afghanistan, releasing some 92,000 confidential embassy cable reports pertaining to the Allied Force's conduct on the region. It has been said to be **the biggest leak in intelligence history**.

Julian Assange – the website's founder and whistleblower paladin – had been threatening to open the US Army's very own Pandora's box since the video **"Collateral Murder"** was released on April 5. *"There is more to come"*, he specified. But what has been released so far has already caught a lot of attention.

The material was made public last night, as the traditional print media had already gone to press. Aside from the main news accomplices in this landmark delivery – namely The Guardian, The New York Times and Der Spiegel – the pulse was firstly recorded on Twitter.

It all started with **Wikileaks's own Twitter account** which was simultaneously joined by **the Guardian's own announcement** ("Massive leak of secret files exposes truth of **#Afghanistan** occupation **#warlogs**"), along with that of the New York Times and Der Spiegel.

**According to Tweetminster**, a website which focuses on tallying Twitter sentiments by tracking the volume of hash-tags and varying topics, there has been a dramatic increase in interest on Wikileaks (1,214 mentions as of midnight on July 27 – compare with 162 the day before.)

The #WarLogs hash tag also shot up on its first day, along with its associated terms: Afghanistan, leak, file, truth and occupation.

The general verdict, it is fair to say, is that the reception was extremely enthusiastic as the Twittersphere has deemed this event to be of historical relevance.

The Guardian's technology correspondent **Bobby Johnson** has tweeted:

Struggling to articulate my thoughts on the Wikileaks war logs. It's as if the culture that bred the Pirate Bay has grown up.

Il y a environ 10 heures via Twitter for iPhone



**bobbiejohnson**  
Bobbie Johnson

One would reach the conclusion in this case that the detractors don't belong to the 2.0 sphere but to a more traditional realm. A number of them have blamed Julian Assange of jeopardising national security and the strategic success of the conflict in Afghanistan by releasing this information though the **Pentagon has stated this is not true. The Department of Defense announced** that the "leaking of information" was taken "very seriously".

Another success is the clear sparking of a debate, which picked up on shortly after the official announcement.

## Wikileaks Julian assange is a brave guy. Leaked information indicates that Pakistan have been officially playing both sides in Afghanistan.

Il y a environ 9 heures via Twitter for iPhone



**dagnabbit\_**  
auburn

Another conclusion that one could draw is that the debate on Twitter – though staggeringly intense – is still inspired by traditional media. After all it was three traditional media outlets that first gained access to the material and allowed the microblogging site to discuss. Just like the old days, the old media is providing food for thought to the masses which have readily changed their diet and have learnt to digest it. Only difference being that the new kid on the block – Wikileaks – has unprecedented control over our “diet”.

The general verdict, it is fair to say, is that the reception was extremely enthusiastic as the Twittersphere has deemed this event to be of historical relevance. If you question the relevance of these findings, it's worth having a look at a **recent study by Harvard University and Northwestern University researchers which looks at 300 million tweets from September 2006 to August 2009** and manages to track a pattern in the overall sentiments expressed.

**NONAME**

le 4 janvier 2011 - 19:13 &bullet; SIGNALER UN ABUS - PERMALINK



*Juge d'instruction P. RAMAËL blanchie un commandant de Police en fonction à I.G.S. Gilles ALIROL des accusation de violation des articles 434-4 et 434-7-2 du Code Pénal.*

*Est-ce que cette information est intéressante pour OWNi ?*

VOUS AIMEZ



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VOUS N'AIMEZ PAS



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LUI RÉPONDRE

### 1 ping

Les tweets qui mentionnent The Twittersphere reacts to Afghanistan War logs revelations » Article » OWNi, Digital Journalism -- Topsy.com le 27 juillet 2010 - 12:20

*[...] Ce billet était mentionné sur Twitter par Nicolas Voisin et damien douani, Owni. Owni a dit: [#owni] The Twittersphere reacts to Afghanistan War logs revelations http://goo.gl/fb/zMc9I [...]*

[Twittools.tk](#) le 27 août 2010 - 18:06

### Twitter Match...

*I found your entry interesting do I've added a Trackback to it on my weblog :)*...