



“Soldier, You Are Not In This Army to Think” By Mel Kramer

When I was in the army about 3 weeks , Lt. Sanchez held a class on tactics and problems. The enemy had the high ground and were shooting down on us. Who had a solution? I raised my hand and said, "Sir, I think I would.....". He stopped me cold, and yelled at me, "Soldier, you are not in this army to think. You either do or don't do, but if you stop to think you will be killed." I was both hurt and angry, but I never forgot what he told me.

Many months later, in Belgium, the war almost came to a halt due to bad weather. It had been raining steadily for five days without a letup. Half of Belgium was under a mud alert. Where we were, the mud was higher than ankle deep. To keep us from going crazy, the top brass erected two giant movie tents. At one tent, was Rita Hayworth in a movie, and the line to get into that tent was so long that I could not see the end. The other tent had the Jolsen story. I got on that line because I did not think I would get in to see Rita.

All of a sudden, someone way back hollered "plane!". About half of us dived off the line into the mud, without thinking. The rest of the people stood there thinking about the situation. A German plane swooped over the movie line and strafed the lines of the people still standing and thinking. About half a dozen people were wounded and a dozen were killed. As I got up from the mud, I said a silent "thank you" to Lt. Sanchez.