

WESSEN

SCENE 3

(The U.S. Army Office Headquarters, in New York City. Lieutenant WESSEN sits at a desk. Lieutenant RISER holds a stack of dossiers.)

RISER

Five thousand applicants?! We only need a hundred girls.

WESSEN

So now we separate the wheat from the chaff. Or the "oui" from the "non," if you will.

RISER

I won't.

WESSEN

We're arranging interviews around the country. The best will be sent here to New York.

RISER

French teachers... secretaries... Most of these women have never run a switchboard!

WESSEN

Ah, but telephone work can be learned in a matter of weeks. French cannot.

RISER

So we're going to have French teachers in the army?

WESSEN

Why not? The language skills are crucial to the job, Lieutenant Riser.

RISER

Have you ever been under fire, Wessen?

WESSEN

Well, I'm a reservist, so I haven't had the occasion to—

RISER

Neither had Miss DeVigny.

WESSEN

Who?

RISER

My high school French teacher – lovely woman... But I'll always remember the day someone hit her in the back of the head with a spitball and she ran out of the room in tears. So if I'm on the front lines and my life depends on whether a call gets through, I don't want Miss DeVigny handling the call. Do you understand?

WESSEN

You don't want French teachers...?

RISER

I want soldiers.

#3 WE AREN'T IN THE ARMY

GRACE

IF YOU'RE A MAN AND YOU WANT TO JOIN THE ARMY
THEY'LL TAKE YOU

SUZANNE

IF YOU'RE A MAN, AND YOU'D REALLY RATHER NOT JOIN
THEY MIGHT MAKE YOU

GRACE

IF YOU'RE A MAN WHO'S NERVOUS
ABOUT SELECTIVE SERVICE
EV'RY DAY YOU PRAY, "DON'T PICK ME!"

SUZANNE

BUT LET A FEMALE SIGN UP
THE BRASS'LL TELL HER, "LINE UP"

BOTH

AND SHE WILL SEE HOW SELECTIVE THE SERVICE CAN BE...

*(BERTHA, HELEN, and LOUISE join GRACE
and SUZANNE.)*

GIRLS

WE SENT THEM LETTERS OF REFERENCE
FILLED OUT EV'RY FORM THEY COULD WANT
WE SHOWED INCREDIBLE DEFERENCE
SAT THROUGH THEIR INTERROGATION, NONCHALANT
THEY DID THEIR DARNEDEST TO SHAKE US UP
NONE OF THAT COULD MAKE US UPSET
WE'VE BEEN PRESSED, AND ASSESSED