

candidates; she submitted only one name—Mrs. Hobby's. G-1 Division likewise submitted its own list of candidates to the Chief of Staff, and this included three names, headed by Mrs. Hobby's. Colonel Mudgett also approved of the recommendation, commenting later: "I have never known a finer executive, man or woman."²⁰

Biographical data compiled by G-1 added that Mrs. Oveta Culp Hobby was at this time 37 years old, the wife of former Governor William P. Hobby of Texas, and the mother of two children. She had served for several years as parliamentarian of the Texas legislature, and, after her marriage, as newspaper and radio executive, publisher, lawyer, writer, president of the Texas League of Women Voters, and civic worker in numerous state and city organizations of both men and women. As of this date she had been for almost a year the chief of the Bureau of Public Relations' Women's Interests Section, which she had initiated and organized.

For a number of reasons the War Department's final choice fell upon Mrs. Hobby. She had the advantage over all other recommended candidates of already being familiar with WAAC plans and with War Department organization. Officers of G-1 Division wrote: "She has ability, vision, and is broad-minded enough to assemble a staff of capable assistants around her. [She is] already known to most of the key people in government and War Department circles."²¹

All acquaintances noted her personal energy, magnetism, sincerity, and idealism, and observed that a very considerable diplomatic ability on all matters was combined with a certain stubborn determination in pursuing major issues. Another asset, from the Army viewpoint, was that

Mrs. Hobby was not a representative of any pressure group, as it was deemed essential that the Director owe allegiance only to the War Department. The Chief of Staff informed the Secretary of War that Mrs. Hobby was his choice for the position of Director solely because of her brilliant work in the Bureau of Public Relations and in negotiations for the WAAC bill, and that "I had never seen, or even heard of, Mrs. Hobby prior to this time, and she had no prior knowledge of the bill." He added:

In all of these duties she displayed sound judgment and carried out her mission in a manner to be expected of a highly trained staff officer. She has won the complete confidence of the members of the War Department Staff with whom she has come into contact, and she made a most favorable impression before the Committee of Congress.

. . . This Corps can be of great assistance to our military effort, and it can easily be a great embarrassment to the War Department. I therefore urge the appointment of Mrs. Hobby, with the request that the decision be made in advance of the completion of the legislation in order that the War Department can anticipate the burdens of organization so far as possible.²²

Mrs. Hobby was not considered disqualified by the fact that she had children, since women with children were to be accepted for immobile units like the Aircraft Warning Service, where they could live at home.²³

²⁰ (1) Memo, G-1 for CofS, 3 Feb 42, sub: Dir WAAC. G-1/15838. Three lists are Tables A, B, and C. (2) Ltr, Col Mudgett to author, 19 Aug 48. OCMH.

²¹ Memo, Chief, Misc Div G-1, for Gen Hilldring, 29 Jan 42, sub: Suggested Candidates for Position of Dir WAAC. Mudgett Staybacks.

²² Memo, CofS for SW, 18 Mar 42, sub: Chief of WAAC. WDCSA 291.9 (3-18-42).

²³ Interv with Mrs. Hobby, 29 Jun 48. Also see Ch. XXXV, below.