

For a time there was consideration of removing these powers from WAAC Headquarters and delegating them to the regional directors or even to the company commanders, since for Army men powers such as discharge were already held at the station level. However, for men the correct procedures were set forth in detail in Army Regulations, thus insuring uniform action and individual justice Army-wide.

Because of the Waacs' civilian status, these Army Regulations could not always be applied, particularly in matters of discipline—in which court-martial was not possible except overseas—and of discharge—since certain types of discharge could be given only by courts-martial. Neither was it possible to make the first WAAC Regulations as full as Army Regulations, which had been built up over a period of years.

The first WAAC Regulations were therefore marked Tentative and were scheduled for amplification as soon as experience permitted. To permit such amplification, it was directed that all discharge cases and other personnel actions be sent to WAAC Headquarters for decision, until a sufficient body of experience existed to permit publication of detailed regulations. Until this time, Mrs. Hobby noted that it would be unsafe to allow action at the station level, since one woman officer would be made both accuser and judge, contrary to the American system.⁶⁰

In the exercise of its command prerogatives, WAAC Headquarters proposed to be extremely cautious. It was directed that women be sent only to stations where housing and other arrangements had been checked upon by Colonel Tasker or another staff member; that no unit of less than fifty women be assigned, in order that supply and inspection would not be

unduly difficult; and that no enlisted woman be sent to any station unless a WAAC officer was located there.⁶¹

By April several agencies had already begun to question this system. G-3 Division, which had previously approved the regulations, now declared in conference that Army commanders should have complete control of WAAC units on their stations, transferring them in the United States or overseas without informing the Director, and discharging, disciplining, or promoting, presumably under Army Regulations, since no other detailed ones existed. Also, G-3 proposed that the command of a company be divided among the different Army section chiefs for whom the women worked, rather than vested in the WAAC company commander.⁶²

The Signal Corps concurred, fearing that the Director might use her command powers arbitrarily to remove women from vital communications work; it was asserted that the British Signal Corps had experienced many difficulties in employing servicewomen who were *with* and not *in* the Army. Air Forces representatives supported these views and also objected to the Corps' location in the Services of Supply.⁶³ If command authority was given to them, the Signal Corps proposed to place women at once in mixed tactical groups overseas, without a WAAC company com-

⁶⁰ These principles were incorporated in all subsequent WAAC Regulations. First ref to them seems to be Memo, Tasker for Dir WAAC, 21 May 42. Tasker Staybacks.

⁶¹ (1) Senate Com on Mil Affairs, 77th Cong, 2d sess, *Hearings on HR 6293*, 1 and 4 May 42. (2) *Congressional Record*, Vol. 88, No. 81, p. 3821.

⁶² Memo, G-3 for G-1, atchd to Memo, G-1 for Mil Pers Div SOS, G-3, G-4, WAAC, TAG, Coffin, JAG, SG, 29 Apr 42. WDGAP 320 WAAC (4-29-42).

⁶³ Memo, SigC for Dir Pers SOS, 4 Jun 42. G-1/15839-10 (7-8-42) WAAC. (2) Memo cited n. 60.