

tor that in coping with current emergencies it was still "violating all the above" by writing and telephoning directly to Colonel Faith. Staff members warned her that she was now in the position, feared since passage of the Rogers bill, of bearing legal responsibility without authority; the Services of Supply had evidently removed not only policy but command powers, while leaving her legally designated as the women's commander.²⁷

New Expansion Plans

The WAAC staff's alarm over the Director's position was increased by the fact that, meanwhile, a series of directives from the General Staff had made the June expansion plans obsolete and posed problems of administration that would have been difficult to solve under even the clearest command system.

The first such directive called for overseas shipment. The Director had intended that no units be sent overseas for "the experimental period of a year," since supply and supervision would be proportionately more difficult overseas.²⁸ However, in August word was received from Europe that General Marshall, on tour, had promised an allotment of Waacs to General Eisenhower. The Joint Chiefs of Staff informed the Director briefly that "Eisenhower's headquarters is badly in need of clerical help and Waacs seem to be the best answer."²⁹ The Director at once dispatched Major Macy to England to discover how WAAC supply and its vague administration could be stretched so far. As the first few classes graduated at Des Moines, the training center was charged with organizing and equipping two overseas units, and much of the scarce winter equipment so far received was held for

their use in case the momentarily expected shipment call should come from the General Staff. The Director was informed that dozens more overseas units would be wanted shortly.³⁰

The problem of expansion overseas paled into insignificance when, on 15 September 1942, G-3 Division dropped a veritable blockbuster on WAAC Headquarters—a directive that immediate steps be taken to plan for an expansion of the Corps to a strength of well over a million members.

As the Chief of Staff had predicted a year earlier, the nation was now in the grip of a manpower shortage. Industry had already turned to womanpower as a supplement; in one aircraft company the employment of women had increased by 2,575 percent.³¹ Not to be left behind in the developing competition, G-3 Division stated:

1. Tentative mobilization plans projected through 1946 indicate a necessity for a materially increased use of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in the overall structure of the Army.

2. The widespread character of current and projected operations is well known. One major and very serious effect of such a scheme of operations has been to force the design of an Army in which the ratio of personnel in service and overhead installations to personnel in combat units is undesirably high. As the Army further increases in size, it is evident that unless this ratio is reduced, and unless sources other than the able-bodied manpower of this nation are used to provide

²⁷ (1) Min cited n. 10(1). (2) Memo, PRO for Dir WAAC, 9 Sep 42. SPWA 300.4.

²⁸ Memo, Tasker for Dir WAAC, 21 May 42. Tasker Staybacks.

²⁹ Memo, Secy JCS for Somervell, 3 Aug 42. Dir Adm Serv ASF, Sp Coll, DRB AGO.

³⁰ Memo, CofOps SOS for TAG, 20 Sep 42. SPOPU 320.2 (9-20-42).

³¹ "The Margin is Womanpower," *Fortune*, January 1943.