

become a prey to the hazards of ocean transport or bombing."¹³

In addition to negating plans for overseas shipment, it appeared possible that continued Auxiliary status would cause a rift with the Army Air Forces, which had been expected to employ more than 500,000 of the projected million-plus Waacs. Shortly after the Director's return from Europe, representatives of the Air Forces informed her that they could not employ Waacs on an Auxiliary status and would prefer to seek legislation for their own corps. General Marshall temporarily squelched this effort with a note to the Air Forces on 27 November:

I believe Colonel Moore this morning took up with Mrs. Hobby the question of her attitude toward a separate women's organization for the Air Corps. I don't like the tone of this at all. I want to be told why they cannot train these women, why the present legal auxiliary status prevents such training.¹⁴

The attitude of the Signal Corps and other employing agencies continued to be very similar to that of the AAF.

It also began to appear that the Army would have difficulty in obtaining any large corps of women on an Auxiliary status in competition with the newly organized WAVES, who could offer women all military benefits—free mailing, government insurance, allotments to dependents, reinstatement rights to jobs, veterans' bonuses, and other advantages, none of which the Waacs were entitled to.

However, the granting of full Army status to women still appeared to many Army men as a drastic step, particularly in view of the fact that only a few units had as yet left the training centers. In late November it was finally decided to delay decision on both draft legislation and on Army status for the WAAC. The head of

the Army's Legislative and Liaison Division, Brig. Gen. Wilton B. Persons, advised the General Council to postpone consideration of further legislation of any sort "until the Waacs have taken the field and demonstrated their usability."¹⁵

A few days later, Director Hobby submitted a substitute proposal believed to be more palatable to Congress: that of merely registering women in order to obtain accurate knowledge of the manpower potential of the nation according to numbers, skills, and other data. This recommendation was also approved by General Somervell and sent to the Chief of Staff on the first anniversary of Pearl Harbor.¹⁶ However, it also was known to have small chance of immediate approval.

Proposals for Expansion on Auxiliary Status

There remained to planners the least desirable of the possible means of Corps expansion: to attempt to undertake G-3's directed program by voluntary recruiting and on an Auxiliary basis. A certain amount of action could be taken under existing legislation. It was therefore decided that, as a preliminary measure, the full 25,000 authorized by executive order should if possible be enrolled by the end of December 1942 instead of by the following June. Next, the Secretary of War petitioned the President to change the executive limitation from 25,000 to the full 150,000 authorized by Congress. The

¹³ Memo, CofS for G-1, 3 Dec 42. CofS 291.9 WAAC.

¹⁴ Memo, "G.C.M." for Gen Stratemyer, 27 Nov 42. WDCSA 291.9 (11-27-42). Reference is to Col. Aubrey Moore, head of AAF's Allocations and Programs Division.

¹⁵ Min, Gen Council, 23 Nov 42.

¹⁶ Memo, Dir WAAC for CG SOS, 26 Nov 42. SPWA 324.71 (11-26-42) D, and Ind. Folder, WAC Recruiting, ASF Sp Coll DRB AGO.