

interviewed later, commented, "No one seemed to know what he was doing." One of the ablest of the early staff members, Colonel Tasker, who had been replaced as Executive by Colonel Catron, now gave up in despair and transferred to the General Staff in spite of Director Hobby's protest that "his knowledge concerning the creation and growth of this activity is such that his reassignment would be a very real loss."⁵⁶ Similarly, First Officer Helen Woods, the first woman to serve as Acting Director, applied for transfer to a regional directorship as far from Washington as possible.⁵⁷

By the end of the year it was obvious that the October office reorganization directed by General Somervell's inspectors was a failure, and Colonel Catron again reorganized the headquarters. Previous divisions were abolished and two new main halves were set up—Operating and Planning. It was thus hoped that the daily crises and emergencies of operation could be kept from disturbing the calmer atmosphere necessary to finely calculated schemes and schedules, while at the same time action on urgent field needs would not be delayed because staff members were busy preparing estimates for the General Staff. The Planning Service was headed for a few weeks by Colonel Tasker and later by a new arrival, Lt. Col. Robert F. Branch; the Operating Service was headed by another new arrival, Col. Howard F. Clark, a regular Army officer of many years' experience. For the more technical aspects of personnel planning and statistics, a civilian woman consultant, Miss B. Eugenia Lies, was also employed. The employment of a civilian appeared to be the Director's first move to overcome the rigid channelization which

prevented her contact with junior staff members, since Miss Lies was given authority to ignore all office channels in securing information for the Director.⁵⁸

This reorganization also was a failure almost from the beginning. Colonel Branch soon recommended that his large Planning Service be dissolved, saying, "It is a good deal like having a Diesel engine connected with a sewing machine."⁵⁹ With Planning and Operating Divisions both the same size and considering the same subjects, it proved virtually impossible for planners not to operate, or for operators not to plan; overlapping and disagreement resulted. Also, as Colonel Branch pointed out, it was useless for the WAAC to make any plans at all in the face of its dependence on other un-co-operative or dilatory agencies. He said:

The opportunity scarcely exists for original or creative planning, since the problems of the Corps have been principally composed of situations after the fact. Action is therefore remedial in nature and choices are limited. Congressional action, War Department policy, and the attitude of other agencies are limitations which, regardless of their propriety or necessity, reduce the scope of planning work.⁶⁰

Many badly needed improvements, which were never made or which were delayed, were ordered by Director Hobby during this period. Finer adjustments and accurate research were to be impossible until

⁵⁶ Personnel Abstracts. WAC files, OCMH.

⁵⁷ AAF Western Flying Tng Comd, Santa Ana, Calif.

⁵⁸ Memo, Plng Serv for Dir WAAC, 18 Mar 43, sub: Progress Rpt, 16 Feb-15 Mar 43. SPWA 319.1.

⁵⁹ Memo, Chief, WAAC Plng Serv, for Dir WAAC, 10 Apr 43. SPWA 020.

⁶⁰ Memo, Chief, WAAC Plng Serv for Dir WAAC, 15 Apr 43, sub: Progress Rpt, 16 Mar-15 Apr 43. SPWA 600.914.