

missioned in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, Army of the United States. A later version changed the proposed name to Women's Army Corps. No limitations were placed upon the Secretary of War's authority over the size of the Corps, rank, pay, or any other matter.³²

The War Department's official attitude toward the new bill was not at once made clear, but on 1 February the Secretary of War announced his support, stating: "Although in the past the War Department has not advocated the establishment of the Corps as a part of the Army, experience has proved that the present arrangement will not be satisfactory."³³ On 3 February General White of G-1 Division told a Senate committee:

We are now in the position of favoring that which we have heretofore in a sense opposed—not that we did not want it in the beginning. . . . We have more than 10,000 now actually organized into units and on duty in the field. . . . Wherever we have put them they have proved highly valuable.³⁴

However, General White informed the committee that in his opinion a WAAC unit would not be able to replace an equal number of men, stating concerning the replacement: "Well, I do not think it will run quite one for one. I have always estimated that three women would release two men."³⁵

By the date of the next hearings in early March, War Department support was considerably more enthusiastic. Reports from the first unit at Fort Sam Houston indicated that three women had replaced, not two men, but four. It was indicated that one woman could not replace one man in heavy work such as motor transport, but that women stenographers, typists, and switchboard operators could often replace two or more men apiece.

Equally good reports also began to arrive from the North African unit and the anti-aircraft experiment, accompanied by requisitions for more Waacs. Thereafter the War Department without hesitation directed every station receiving 150 Waacs to effect replacement of 150 enlisted men—a rate which was actually better than one for one, since part of the women had to be used for unit housekeeping and were not available to replace men.³⁶

In an effort to secure speedy enactment of military status for women, General Marshall informed Congress in early March:

In recent months great strides have been made in the organization. Sufficient numbers have now been trained, organized into appropriate units, and placed on duty in various activities to enable us to know that we are moving in the right direction. I am now certain that the women's organization will be of great value to the military service. . . .

It is evident also that the operation of the women's organization will be simplified and its efficiency vastly improved if it is made an actual component of the Army. The personnel of the Army have definite, defined duties, are subjected to prescribed disciplines, and have clear-cut relations to each other and to the civilian population. These have been found necessary to the effective functioning of military establishments the world over. They are equally important in the WAAC, which in its present half-civilian, half-military status will be seriously handicapped. . . .

Having the Corps with the Army, but not

³² (1) Weekly Rpt, WAAC Hq for CofAdm Serv, 10-16 Jan 43. SPWA 319.12 (11-9-42) sec 1. (2) Identical bills HR 1188, 14 Jan 43, and S 495, 21 Jan 43, and later version, HR 1751, 8 Feb 43; 78th Cong, 1st sess.

³³ Ltr to Hon. Robert Rice Reynolds; Chmn, Senate Com on Mil Affairs, 1 Feb 42.

³⁴ Senate Com on Mil Affairs, 78th Cong, 1st sess, *Hearings on S 495*, 3 Feb 43, p. 4.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ House Com on Mil Affairs, 78th Cong, 1st sess, *Hearings on S 495*, 9 Mar 43. Statement by Gen White.