

WAAC training centers could not be so promoted, a circumstance that caused some discontent at the latter.

The new schools were shortly successful in removing a considerable load from the WAAC Training Command; on the other hand, inspectors soon noted a natural decrease in uniformity of operation, with some schools making no reports of personnel actions. There was also reported at some Army schools a growing need for a senior woman officer to correct a certain laxity of supervision of living conditions which was causing public comment unfavorable to recruiting.²⁰

In addition, three Army schools to train WAAC radio operators and mechanics were set up at civilian schools in Missouri, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. These had a capacity of about 300 each, and were under the jurisdiction of the Signal Corps.²¹ In February, the Army Air Forces admitted 50 Waacs to the twelve-week photographic laboratory technician course at Lowry Field, Colorado, and others to later classes.²²

From this time forward it became increasingly common to send Waacs to Army schools when their numbers did not justify separate schools for women. No particular difficulties were noted, and an ASF training inspector stated a few months later: "WAAC training, strangely enough, presents few problems. WAAC students at schools are eager to learn, and maintain discipline with less corrective action than men students in the same class."²³

Delegation of Command Authority

Before the increased numbers of trainees could reach the field, hasty administrative changes were necessary.

While the training system was in process of expansion, WAAC Headquarters therefore hurried to complete the delegation of its command authority to the field. It was realized that such decentralization was perhaps too early for full justice to individuals, since the scanty field experience to this date had not provided a basis upon which all types of Auxiliary regulations might be carefully formulated, and Army Regulations could not yet apply; nevertheless, the approaching expansion made the step necessary. Ready or not, it was obvious that in a Corps of 150,000 women WAAC Headquarters would no longer be able to process the thousands of individual transfers, discharges, and promotions. Already the length of time required to process discharge cases was such that, the field reported, "Many of these members are rapidly becoming mental cases due to the length of confinement awaiting authority for discharge."²⁴

It was desired to realign the WAAC organization in a way that would, as nearly as possible, parallel the command system for men and leave the Corps prepared for conversion to Army status, although, as the Director noted, planners were limited to doing "only those things which can be done legally" under existing legislation.²⁵

Delegation of command authority to the service command level had been under way for some time. Before the end of 1942

²⁰ Memo, CG WAAC Tng Comd for Dir WAAC, 24 May 43. SPWA 319.1.

²¹ WDBPR Press Release, 14 Apr 43.

²² WDBPR Press Release, 5 Feb 43.

²³ Min, Conf of CGs of SvCs, Chicago, Ill., 22-24 Jul 43.

²⁴ (1) Ltr, 1st Tng Cen to Dir WAAC, 28 Jan 43; (2) Ltr, WAAC Stf Dir 4th SvC to Dir WAAC, 18 Feb 43; (3) Ltr, TAG to Tng Cen Dirs, 27 Feb 43, SPX 291.9 WAAC PR-W. All in SPWA 300.3 (1-7-43) sec 1.

²⁵ Min, Stf Mtgs, WAAC Daily Journal, Vol. I.