

publicity media were busy "trying to buy a ship or something," and WAAC recruiters were obliged to land without protection. Since there were not enough WAAC recruiters in the nation to conduct a door-to-door survey in a city of this size, the Cleveland Plan called for the use of any civilian agency that had many women members in a city-wide organization. The American Red Cross was deemed the oldest and best organized, but when asked to assist, its officials replied that the Red Cross was "interested only in essential war work"; later they added that their charter did not permit help. The Office of Civilian Defense (OCD) therefore volunteered to assist, although its Block Plan was newly organized and its leaders inexperienced.⁷³

The WAAC recruiters held meetings with the OCD sector leaders and supplied them with literature and questionnaires, which were passed on to block leaders. These leaders were not to attempt to enroll women, but only to locate eligibles. The final report stated that "block workers were most co-operative. Reports were that many women at home seemed to be waiting for someone to ask them to do something in the war effort. . . . The majority attitude represented complacency." These block leaders were soon able to furnish recruiters with the name and location of each eligible woman in the district.

WAAC enlisted women next went to work at a battery of telephones, trying to persuade each eligible to grant an interview to recruiting officers. These Waacs were especially trained by the Ohio Bell Telephone Company. They were instructed not to try to recruit, but merely to get an interview; when and if an interview was obtained, WAAC recruiters called on the prospect. The Realsilk Hosiery Company donated expert train-

ing in the technique of polite interviewing. All who still appeared eligible were urged to enlist, and those who seemed undecided were placed on a follow-up list.

The Cleveland Plan, supported by the nationwide publicity campaign, seemed the most intensive recruiting effort that it was possible for any organization to make. When the drive was finished and the score counted, it stood revealed as a miserable—almost an incredible—failure. The score was:⁷⁴

Families contacted	73,589
Questionnaires completed	36,151
Considered eligible from questionnaire	12,886
Found eligible on contact	8,253
Signed applications	427
Enrolled	168

To achieve even the mere 100,000 female recruits that the Army needed immediately, recruiters would, if this rate held true, have to contact 43,800,000 families, although the nation was estimated to have only about 37,000,000 families. Interviews and sales talks would have to be held with almost 8,000,000 eligibles before 100,000 could be recruited. There were probably not that many qualified women in the United States.⁷⁵

The Cleveland method, refined and improved by experience, was caught up and used all over the nation. Improvement in recruiting machinery continued. All summer the great radio and press campaign played upon the public. More and better-trained recruiters were thrown into

⁷³ This and the following are from a mimeographed booklet, WAAC Recruiting Plan, Cleveland, Ohio, June 1-10, 1943. SPWA 341.

⁷⁴ Memo, Asst Chief, WAC Rctg Serv, for Exec WAC, sub: Résumé of Rpt from 5th SvC, 4 Aug 43. SPWA 341 (1942).

⁷⁵ The Bureau of the Census in a Statistical Abstract estimated 37,100,000 families in 1944, in a civilian population of 126,606,000.