



MAJ. JESSIE P. RICE

into war work, with the choice of job left to the individual. Otherwise, the Army pointed out, many unemployed women in labor-short areas would never be reached, since they would not take factory jobs and could not be offered Army jobs.¹¹

As the War Manpower Commission refused action, the armed forces in August appealed the issue to the nation's highest manpower authority—Justice James F. Byrnes, the Director of War Mobilization. On 12 August 1943, the Director of War Mobilization informed the contenders that the WMC was forbidden to interfere in national recruiting campaigns even in labor-short areas. Its list of thirty-five essential industries was rejected in favor of the Army's shorter one of eight. The Army was in turn directed not to conduct any "intensive local campaigns" in Class I and II areas without clearance with the

WMC.¹² It was only with this reassurance that the Army approved funds for the advertisements already selected, and for a new recruiting campaign to be co-ordinated with them. The campaign, unlike the advertisements, was shaped about the patriotic motif that the Director preferred.

The All-States Plan

Both the idea and the energy for the new campaign were supplied by a newcomer to WAC Headquarters, Capt. Jessie P. Rice of the Third Service Command, who was reassigned to the Director's Office in the summer. Captain Rice—a major in late August—was a woman of 42, described by reporters as "cheery, no-nonsense," and by all who knew her as "dynamic." She brought to the problem what proved an appropriate background—that of an industrial sales manager, history teacher, sports reporter, and native of a small Georgia town; she had also had a year's field experience as Staff Director, Third Service Command. For the next twenty months, first as head of WAC Recruiting and then as Deputy Director, she was to be, next to Colonel Hobby, the chief author of WAC policy. She was later credited by Director Hobby with, quite literally, saving the WAC from public defeat on two different occasions, of which the first was the present critical period. In her approach to the current problem, as to all later ones, staff members noted a rare combination of common-sense practicality with unabashed idealism

¹¹ Memo, JND for Gen Somervell, 12 Jul 43. SPAP, in SPWA 341 (1943).

¹² (1) Memo, USW to Dir OWM, 21 Jul 43. WDGAP 320.2, in SPWA 341 (1943). (2) Memo, SW for CG ASF, 3 Aug 43. Same file. (3) Ltr, Dir OWM to SW, SN, WMC, OWI, 12 Aug 43. SPWA 000.77 (6-4-43), 1943.