

that the WAC did not have the public standing of the WAVES; that three out of four women said they would choose the WAVES in preference to the WAC; that the public thought Waves got better treatment, more suitable jobs, more attractive uniforms; and that the WAVES had commissioned more outstanding women educators, whereas the WAC had not offered direct commissions to prominent women. Mr. Meek recommended that publicity tie-ins with high-ranking officers be used, that more prominent women be directly commissioned, and that society news pages then publicize the backgrounds of these new WAC leaders.

General Marshall called Director Hobby to his office on 15 March 1944 and, over Mr. Meek's objections, handed her the surveys and directed her to study these charges and prepare recommendations. This she did, first in a preliminary report and then in a confidential staff study which, because of its outcome, was to rank as perhaps the most important WAC policy paper of the Corps' career.¹⁶

The charges in the Meek Report proved, in themselves, unfounded and easy to counter. The only new survey of "public" opinion for which it contained documented statistics proved to consist chiefly of interviews with 111 college girls, 94 of them from Vassar, and with several prominent women, including women's magazine editors.¹⁷ By contrast, the Young & Rubicam campaign had been based on a confidential Gallup survey of a scientifically chosen national sample of 1431 eligible women and 1415 parents of eligibles.

The two surveys often differed. Meek stated that the public was unaware of the urgency of the Army's need for Wacs; Gallup found that a record 85 percent said they were aware of it, and when

asked "Which women's service is in the greatest need of more women?" 58 percent said the WAC, only 14 percent the WAVES. The WAC advertising under Young & Rubicam thus appeared to have been more effective than was alleged. Meek stated that the public liked the WAVES better than the WAC, and that 66 percent of eligible women said they would choose the WAVES as against 20 percent the WAC; Gallup's non-Vassar eligibles answered: War work—51 percent, WAC—12 percent, WAVES—10 percent. The only statement which no one disputed was that about the uniform, for Gallup had always reported that only a few women preferred the WAC uniform.

Director Hobby was also able to prove that the WAC had, some months before, taken every action recommended by Mr. Meek except direct commissions and short-term enlistments: it had used publicity from every prominent person named, offered station assignment, used society pages, publicized overseas assignment as far as surveys showed desirable, obtained two Gallup and two scientific Army opinion surveys, mailed literature to parents, and so on. None of these steps had ended the Corps' problems or come near its basic difficulties.

¹⁶ (1) Preliminary Rpt, Dir WAC for CofS, 16 Mar 44, sub: WAC Rctg. WDWAC 341, in CofS 324.5 WAC. (2) Memo cited n. 12(2).

¹⁷ Following sources were listed in Meek Report: (1) 20 interviews with prominent persons, including ranking officers in the WAVES and Women Marines. (2) Unidentified surveys made by American Institute of Public Opinion and *Fortune* Magazine, Feb-Oct 43; statistics, dates, and scope not given. (3) Some 1,208 persons (473 young women, 377 young men, 358 parents) "interviewed in a national survey" in November 1943; surveying agency or method of selection not given. (4) Questionnaire to 240 staff members of *McCalls*, *Time*, and *Reader's Digest* and "advertising personnel." (5) "College Survey" of 94 students of Vassar and 17 from Sarah Lawrence.