

In countering the various charges, it proved easily possible to discuss those of the Director's previous recommendations that the Army Service Forces had disapproved. The Director, perceiving this opening, at once drove straight through with two memoranda and ten appendices.¹⁸ These consisted of important parts of her own program, previously suppressed by the Army Service Forces, for improving the WAC's situation. This was the first opportunity to bring most of these proposals to the attention of the Chief of Staff.

When the Chief of Staff's final verdict was rendered, more of the Director's proposals concerning major issues had been approved in two weeks than had previously been done in the past two years in the Army Service Forces. The proposals were concerned chiefly with soldier attitude, public relations, and the uniform.

Corrective Action by the Chief of Staff

The first two issues, soldier opinion and public attitude, Colonel Hobby unhesitatingly named as the basic difficulty of the WAC program. Dismissing all lesser theories, which attributed recruiting difficulties to ignorance, WAVES prestige, the uniform, the failure to grant direct commissions, poor jobs, the desire for shorter enlistments, and other petty causes, she said flatly, "The two greatest deterrents to WAC recruiting are the attitude of soldiers toward women in the military service and the apathy of unmarried non-working women."¹⁹

General Marshall saw for the first time some of the slander campaign material, including literature which soldiers had mimeographed and circulated to almost every Army installation at home and abroad.²⁰ He saw a sample of the many

letters, with which the WAC files were now bulging, from Wacs and eligible women.²¹ He also saw cartoons from soldier publications all over the nation.²² The most unexpected exhibits were certain anti-WAC statements made by high-ranking Army officers, all except one of whom were combat officers without experience in WAC employment. These Colonel Hobby revealed by name only after being twice expressly commanded to do so.²³ One general remarked, in a national magazine, "Fortunately I've no experience with that particular species [Wacs] and what's more I don't want any of them around here."²⁴ The Director commented, "The attitude of the officers and enlisted men in the field will never change to the degree desired as long as key personnel, whose expressions can be assumed to reflect the War Department attitude, make statements such as these."²⁵

To remedy the Army attitude, Colonel Hobby proposed a campaign of re-education similar to that which General Bowley had proposed twenty years before. She asked that the Army attempt to change the soldiers' attitude by including material on the Corps' usefulness in the Army orientation course, by which other soldier attitudes were successfully influenced. She asked that available films on the WAC be shown in this course, and a new film

¹⁸ Memo cited n. 12(2). Each Tab was a separate signed memorandum so that recommendations could be acted upon separately.

¹⁹ Rpt cited n. 16(1).

²⁰ Memo cited n. 12(2), Exhibit I: "Characteristics, functioning, care, and preservation of the WAC, M-1 (model 1942-43)."

²¹ *Ibid.*, Tab D.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*, Tab C.

²⁴ Maj. Gen. Lewis H. Brereton in *Liberty*, October 9, 1943.

²⁵ *Ibid.*