

all recruits. This the War Department refused to do, since the increase would have meant a reduction in the shipments to other commands which had earlier demonstrated faith in Wacs and had made their housing plans accordingly.⁸

In July, the Army Ground Forces appealed again to the General Staff for a "more equitable distribution," asking that it be given almost all of the general assignment recruits, which were then being divided among the three major commands. This was opposed by other commands and by The Adjutant General, who pointed out that it would penalize the AAF and ASF, which had sent out recruiting teams when the AGF had not. However, it was agreed to grant the AGF a special favor, in recognition of its manpower shortages; it might recruit for job and branch in all service commands, whether it had a station there or not.⁹ AGF now at last assigned small numbers of its own personnel to obtain recruits, and sent out station teams under the station-and-job recruiting system. The teams did not prove particularly adept at selection, and the desired type of recruit was not always obtained until after the station-assignment plan was ended.

As AGF personnel shortages continued, the War Department was finally obliged to increase its quota from 3,690 to 7,500, thus giving it a larger share of incoming recruits.¹⁰ In early 1945 it was necessary to give AGF a further concession: that of dropping the previous system of apportionment of recruits, and acceding to the Ground Forces' request not only for top priority on WAC recruits but for the first choice on the scarce clerical skills. By this means, stenographers, typists, and clerks were diverted from other commands and sent to fill the AGF quota.

At the time of the Ground Forces' greatest crisis, the Battle of the Bulge, AGF WAC units were ordered withdrawn from its less active stations, such as those of the Antiaircraft Command, and rushed to stations where a heavy load was expected, particularly to combat infantry replacement training installations.¹¹

Wacs also were relied upon in the great overseas replacement depot at Fort Meade, where it was stated that the women now "formed the backbone of the administrative organization of the installation, particularly since enlisted men in the headquarters were comparatively new because of the enforced rotation policies for men established by the War Department." Immediately after V-E Day, the women at Fort Meade were hastily transferred across the country to Replacement Depot 4 at Camp Adair, Oregon, to meet the expected heavy shipments to the Pacific. When V-J Day halted the expected rush of replacements westward and the west coast depot was inactivated, the Wacs were promptly shipped back to Replacement Depot 1, now at Camp Pickett, upon the insistence of the commanding officer of that installation.

At about this time the last major headquarters refusing to use Wacs—Army Ground Forces headquarters in Wash-

⁸ D/F, G-1 for TAG through CofS, 31 May 44. See Incl and M/R. CofS 324.5 WAC.

⁹ Memo, ASF for TAG, 11 Jul 44. SPGAC 341 Gen (7-11-44)-69. History of proposal summarized here, and disapproved by SW, in SPAP 341 WAAC (2-26-43).

¹⁰ AGF WAC Hist, Vol. I, pp. 42-46, gives history of allotments.

¹¹ By May of 1945, 42 percent of AGF Wacs were in Infantry installations, 21 percent at Overseas Replacement Depots, and 30 percent divided among Armored, Field Artillery, Cavalry, and Tank Destroyer Training installations.