

salvage and supply, provision of one day off a week for kitchen police and orderlies, and an investigation of the chances of upgrading orderlies.²³

By the summer of 1944, even before the end of the Female Medical Technicians Campaign, the problem had become one of the Corps' most serious. For the few women who had come into the Medical Department before the campaign, the question was merely one of malassignment to a duty possibly above their strength. For those who had been promised assignment as medical and surgical technicians, the matter was the more urgent one of the Army's good faith. A more unfortunate situation, or one more provocative of resentment on all sides, had never before occurred in the Corps' history. To the hard-pressed hospital commander, charged with maintaining patient care, the insistence upon fulfillment of the written recruiting promises seemed an unwarranted infringement upon his command prerogatives in assigning duties to keep the hospital functioning. For the WAC Recruiting Service, it was pure disaster. No other Army command, however much it deplored the necessity of recruiting promises, had ever deliberately violated them, and the Recruiting Service saw the source of supply of Wacs for the entire Army threatened by the personnel practices of one agency.

Request for Survey

By early summer of 1944, with the Female Medical Technicians Campaign still continuing, the number of complaints reaching the Director's Office "from civilian and Congressional sources" was so

great that Deputy Director Rice asked the major commands for an investigation to determine the actual situation:

The few investigations conducted in response to some of these criticisms have substantiated the fact that conditions in these assignments are in many instances contrary to the well-being of women. Realizing the load on the hospitals . . . the Director WAC does not wish to recommend to the War Department that women not be utilized in this capacity, but because of conditions now alleged to exist in both time-length of daily scheduled duties (without commensurate time off) and in actual scrubbing work and other menial tasks, she feels that her responsibility for the well-being of women calls for study of such utilization.²⁴

A simultaneous move came from The Inspector General, who informed the Chief of Staff, ASF, that "possibly there is misassignment of WAC personnel," and asked a survey.²⁵

Reports of surveys, when received some months later, disclosed that the situation was in some respects worse than expected. In the Army Service Forces alone, over 1,200 enlisted women—about 5 percent of its total WAC strength—were found assigned as orderlies. Almost every station or general hospital was guilty in an appreciable number of cases. At one, ten technicians were used as orderlies, at another seven, at another six—in every case a percentage of the company large enough to cause comment. It was found that non-medical specialists were also being mal-

²³ (1) Memo, "JND" for Gen Somervell, 13 Jul 44. SPAP 341 WAAC (2-26-43). (2) Routing Slip, Dep Dir Pers ASF to Gen Somervell, 13 Jul 44. Folder, WAC Rctg, ASF Sp Coll DRB AGO.

²⁴ Memo, Lt Col Rice for CG AAF, AGF, and ASF, 29 Jun 44. WDWAC 720.

²⁵ Memo, Gen Styer, CofS ASF, for Dir Pers ASF, 6 Jul 44, with Memo, ASF WAC Off for Dir MPD ASF, 31 Jul 44. SPEX, in SPAP 220.3 WAC (7-28-43).