

the British women's services. It became clear that the European theater must depend upon recruiters in the United States for its supply of Wacs.¹⁸

There followed what was, over the next months, to be a continuing skirmish over the numbers and skills of Wacs who could be sent overseas. The War Department noted that, to meet the theater's heavy demands for skilled typists and stenographers, not only would the entire recruiting intake be required, but it would be necessary for stations in the United States to resort to the embarrassing expedient of using male typists to replace Wacs "for combat" instead of vice versa. The theater in reply urged that they be so embarrassed. In its opinion, overseas areas, being obliged to support and supply troops under difficulties, required the best workers for each type of duty; the argument was that one Wac typist could replace two men while eating only half as much.¹⁹

At the moment part of the dispute was resolved in the theater's favor by General Arnold of the Army Air Forces, who secured permission to cut loose the Air Forces quota from the rest of the theater's, and to supply all the Wacs that General Spaatz requested, provided that only AAF stations were called upon to supply them. In February of 1944 the War Department therefore approved a new quota for the theater, 4,448 Wacs for the Air Forces and 1,727 for all other commands, a total of 6,215 for the theater.²⁰

Requests from the Services of Supply in Europe were slower to come in. It was not until just before D Day that the SOS requested several large groups, so hastily that some, especially telephone operators, had to be provided with air priority.²¹

Under the new quota, WAC shipments were at once resumed and, during the first half of 1944, arrived in the theater almost

faster than they could be accommodated at reception facilities. Just before D Day, theater WAC strength had reached 3,687. At this time the War Department was again forced to shut off the supply, pleading heavy shipments to the Pacific. In spite of theater protests, no further quota increase was to be granted for some months.²²

By D Day, Wacs were assigned to Headquarters, Supreme Allied Expeditionary Force; Headquarters, ETO; to the Allied Expeditionary Force; and to other theater organizations. Within the Air Forces, they were in Headquarters, U.S. Strategic Air Forces; Headquarters, Eighth Air Force; Headquarters, Ninth Air Force; Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Air Forces; Headquarters, VIII Fighter Command; Headquarters, IX Bomber Command; I, II, III Bomber Divisions; and the 2d, 14th, 20th, and 96th Combat Wings. There were also numerous independent organizations that used almost a thousand Wacs in Europe, including the Air Transport Command and the Office of Strategic Services.²³

Before D Day, initial job assignment in some of these organizations suffered from the fact that only the Air Forces in Eng-

¹⁸ (1) ETO WAC Hist, p. 9. (2) ETO Bd Rpt, Vol. I, p. 27. (3) Ltr WAC Stf Dir to Dir WAC, 7 Aug 44. WDWAC 352 British Stf College.

¹⁹ (1) Cbl E-31714, Eisenhower to WD; (2) Cbl WAR 49888, 13 Jun 44; (3) Ltr, WAC Stf Dir ETO to Dir WAC, 24 Jun 44. WDWAC 320.2 ETO.

²⁰ ETO Bd Rpt; differs slightly from Ltr, TAG to CG ETO, 10 Mar 43, sub: Quota of WAC Pers for ETO. AG 320.2 WAC (2-18-44) PO-M-A, in SPWA 320.2 (1944).

²¹ Sources cited n. 2.

²² Sources cited n. 19. These say strength was almost 6,000; later TAG figures give 3,687. See Table 7, Appendix A.

²³ Later mentioned: U.S. Gp Contl Council, 12th Army Gp, First AB Army, and MIS. ETO Bd Rpt; also ETO WAC Hist, p. 19. Independent orgns: ACT, OSS, O of Mil Attaché, Governments in Exile, Br O of JAG MIRS, AACs, U.S. Strategic Bomb Surv.