

Director protested that WAC enlisted women were as well qualified as the civilians who would wear the officer uniform; that civilians should not receive officer privileges without accompanying military responsibilities and discipline; that the social association problem would be hopelessly complicated if civilians wore the WAC uniform; and that the practice "would react to the serious detriment of the morale of the enlisted women who have served the Army well and faithfully under the rigorous conditions of overseas life without [such] pay or privileges. . . ." ⁶⁶

The Director shortly succeeded in getting a directive to the European theater that civilians would get only the enlisted uniform, and this with the addition of conspicuous colored shoulder straps, sleeve braid, and cap crown, plus a blue hostess-librarian overcoat. The theater cabled back for a reconsideration of continued issue of the unchanged WAC uniform, which would considerably simplify its supply and storage problems. This was not granted, but hundreds of unmodified uniforms were already in the hands of civilians, and War Department attempts to get the directive enforced in the theater were never wholly successful. Colonel Wilson was not asked to comment; she noted, "The problem was of such a controversial nature that it was impossible for the WAC Staff Director to initiate a paper as a branch of G-1." ⁶⁷

With the posthostilities arrival of American civilian women, the Wacs' *esprit* vanished, as well as pride in Army status and uniform. The women talked of little else; the gist of their more printable comment was that they had been hooked as sentimental suckers by a government that penalized enlisted service and handsomely

rewarded those who stifled their patriotic fervor until the danger was over. The theater noted numerous "natural jealousies" that arose between the two groups. The Wacs' chief complaint was not the pay or officers' mess and quarters, but the uniform, and the fear that the Corps' hard-won reputation for neatness and good conduct was rapidly vanishing in the eyes of the occupied nations and the American soldiers alike as a result of the way in which their uniform was worn by civilian women untrained in military customs and unsupervised as to appearance or living habits.

In addition to the civilian employees in WAC uniform, there were women movie stars, newspaperwomen, Congresswomen, society women, and the entire casts of traveling shows such as *Panama Hattie*. Further indignation was provoked when these women, as well as USO workers and nurses, got priority on the scanty WAC maintenance stocks, resulting in shortages to enlisted women. Also, civilians could date officers and attend officers' social functions. They had different housing standards, less restrictions, no inspections, and no company punishment. Though holding jobs similar to enlisted women's, their top salary was \$745 a month as against the WAC maximum of \$138. ⁶⁸

⁶⁶ (1) Memo, Exec for Dir WAC, 24 Feb 44; (2) WD Cir 118, 22 Mar 44; (3) Memo, "KKJ" for Dir WAC, 26 Feb 45, WDWAC 319.1 Johnson (1945-46); (4) Memo, Dir WAC for Col Guenther, 1 Mar 45; (5) Memo, Dir WAC for G-1, 27 Mar 45; (6) Cbils CM-OUT 57510, WD to ETO, and CM-IN 26948, ETO to WD, 25 Mar 45. All in WDWAC 421.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* Quotation from ETO Bd Rpt, Vol. II, App. 7: Memo, WAC Stf Dir for G-1 SHAEF, 4 May 45.

⁶⁸ Min cited n. 55. ETO Bd Rpt, Vol. III, Apps. 71, 132, 134. Monthly salaries:

	Minimum	Maximum
U.S. civilian in ETO	\$220.00	\$745.00
Continental civilian	110.00	372.00
WAC	50.00	138.00