

the "adoption" of British war orphans; visits of Wacs to Paris cathedrals; the story of the responsible work done by Wacs at the Postdam Conference and the Nuernberg trials. Stories were placed in *Yank*, *Life*, *Vogue*, and many others; newsreel coverage was obtained; Wacs were pictured with Generals Eisenhower, Smith, Doolittle, Eaker, Lt. Gen. John C. H. Lee, and others.⁸³ To promote GI-WAC friendship, much was made of the naming of a bomber the "Pallas Athene-GI Jane" and a locomotive the "WAC Blazer." By the machinations of the WAC Public Relations Officer, Wacs were slipped into Berlin ahead of other women to achieve a noteworthy "first."⁸⁴

The size of the theater nevertheless made it necessary for the WAC Public Relations Officer to decentralize control of releases to various lower echelons not having Wacs on their public relations staffs. The unfavorable stories that slipped by male public relations officers were all of one type: derogatory comments about Wacs by the soldiers, which reporters seemed to take especial pains to evoke. The WAC Public Relations Officer admitted that one of her "chief headaches" was "the antagonism between the Army male and the Army female." As a result, there were frequent releases such as one from Eighth Air Force headquarters, which consistently refused to accept a Wac public relations officer, "Soldiers Prefer English Girls to Wacs."⁸⁵

The worst releases of this type came toward the end of hostilities, when Field Marshal Sir Bernard L. Montgomery's headquarters released a statement that numbers of the WAC and ATS would be sent into Germany to prevent soldiers from fraternizing with German women. The women's duties, said the story, were

to act as dance partners, to chat, and to drink tea.⁸⁶ This appeared in *Stars and Stripes*, in the *London Daily Mail*, and in the *New York Times*. The story was widely reprinted in the United States; some writers and one radio religious hour stated that Wacs were being transferred to camps where men visited German brothels too often, and that the brothels were now being filled by Wacs.⁸⁷

In the United States, the National Federation of Press Women asked that the War Department take a definite stand against this type of overseas "propaganda," but the head of the War Department Bureau of Public Relations took no action because, as he informed Director Hobby, "I think the statement [from Montgomery's headquarters] was well meant, even if poorly advised . . . I smell the needling by correspondents."⁸⁸ This type of release continued, fostered somewhat by soldier letters in the European theater *Stars and Stripes*, which in August of 1945 printed what United Press reporters called "a blizzard of bitter letters" from soldiers; this was also picked up in the United States.⁸⁹

⁸³ Ltr, PRO ETO Hq to Dir WAC, 30 May 44. WDWAC 320.2.

⁸⁴ ETO Press Releases 8296, 29 Jan 44, and 9747, 16 Nov 44. ETO Adm 365 WAC, DRB AGO.

⁸⁵ Eighth AF Hq Release, *Des Moines Register*, January 20, 1944. Also: (1) Memo, Dir WAC for CG AAF, 2 Feb 44, and reply, 21 Feb 44, from CofAS, Gen Giles, citing cbls. SPWA 001.-N. (2) *Chicago World Herald*, August 21, 1945, UP release, "Soldiers Lambaste Wacs."

⁸⁶ *New York Times*, December 5, 1944, by *Times* correspondent with British Second Army.

⁸⁷ (1) Ltr, Dr. K. Frances Scott to Dir WAC, 14 Jan 45, and atchd file. WDWAC 330.14. (2) *New York Journal-American*, December 8, 1944.

⁸⁸ Ltr, Natl Fed of Press Women to Dir Hobby, 16 Dec 44, and Inds. WDWAC 080.

⁸⁹ *Chicago World Herald*, August 21, 1945, UP release.