

water and to press it by sleeping on it or by hanging it up very wet. WAC cooks eventually cleared the debris from the WAC mess hall, overhauled the stoves, and soon had a mess which, their historian reported, "had a steady stream of daily business calls from officers who usually arrived just before dinner."

The women later obtained two washing machines, electric lights, and electric irons. In a few more months the Wacs had such luxuries as a recreation hall, a softball team, and a jukebox. They also persuaded the nurses to move their hair-dressing shop so that Wacs could share it, since they could not use the men's barber-shop. A Wac was put into the post exchange to order items women needed.

In spite of initial adjustments, only one woman in the detachment showed complete "inability to adjust to a tropical environment," and had to be returned to Australia. The unit grew in size, and was soon bypassed by Wacs moving north.

Headquarters Rendered Mobile

Meanwhile, with the aid of two more large shipments of WAC personnel, the various headquarters in Australia had succeeded in making themselves mobile. On 26 June 1944, the second WAC contingent landed in Brisbane—357 enlisted women and 28 officers—which was again divided, with USAFFE headquarters receiving about 99, the Port Moresby detachment 68, and the remainder going to Headquarters, USASOS. Included among the various skills were 75 clerks, 65 stenographers, and 52 typists. On 10 July a third contingent landed at Brisbane—8 officers and 371 enlisted women—again in chiefly clerical skills, and again divided among USAFFE in Australia, USAFFE

in Port Moresby, and USASOS in Australia. In addition, 84 women of this last group were given to the newly formed Headquarters, Far East Air Forces (FEAF), which had not filed its own formal requisitions until July and thus had not received any on the scheduled date for movement in August.⁴⁰

A matter which unit organization did not reveal was that not only USAFFE, USASOS, and FEAF, but also GHQ, were employing Wacs. By August of 1944, shortly before the jump-off from Australia, GHQ had borrowed 74 Wacs from USAFFE and 31 from USASOS—a total of 105, with 150 more on requisition. Colonel Brown recommended that these women be organized into their own detachment when numbers warranted, and assigned to GHQ, as were enlisted men, and Dutch, Australian, and British women. This request was refused, since it was the Supreme Allied Commander's desire that American women not be assigned to GHQ, but attached for duty from some lower administrative echelon. Of these 105 women, 56 worked in GHQ's Signal Intelligence Division, 28 as telephone operators, 10 with the Chief Regulating Officer, and lesser numbers in other offices.⁴¹

Scarcely any one policy, supply situation, or personnel practice was common to all of these groups—GHQ, USAFFE, USASOS, and FEAF—even when they shared one camp. Because of the poor communications and local differences in climate and facilities, it was USAFFE's practice to promulgate only broad instructions and to leave the subordinate com-

⁴⁰ (1) Folders 203.2, 2d Contingent, and 203.3, 3d Contingent. (2) List of shipments, AFPAC Reply.

⁴¹ Correspondence folder, 5205th WAC Det, Drawer X-29853.