

hours than enlisted men performing similar skilled duties."¹³⁹ Also, women's time-consuming chores such as laundry were usually not done during the mealtime breaks but after hours, by their own preference.¹⁴⁰

Inspectors were unable to determine whether adverse effects were due to lesser endurance than men in the same offices, or to the women's tendency to put in overtime. In any case, even without overtime, the hours of work were longer than those used successfully with civilian women in either the United States or Britain.

Among reported instances, the greatest damage to health occurred among the Hollandia Wacs in General McMullen's Far East Air Service Command. These stood reveille every morning at 0530, walked back and forth some distance to work three times a day in all weather, worked an official minimum of ten hours a day, until ten o'clock at night, seven days a week, with only Sunday afternoons off, these being reportedly spent standing in line to get to laundry facilities. After less than a year of this schedule, the medical loss rate in the FEASC WAC detachment jumped alarmingly, from 3 per month in January of 1945 to 30 per month in June.

The Air Surgeon reported that "an increasing number of cases are on record for nervousness and exhaustion," and recommended that personnel be given one full day off per week to relieve "nervous tension." The June rate, if continued, would total more than 62 percent medical evacuation per year, an unprecedented loss even for combat troops. The staff director for FEAF supported the Air Surgeon's recommendation, noting that offices were not really busy; it was believed that the day off could profitably be applied to all personnel to avoid discrimination in favor of women. However, Gen-

eral McMullen rejected the request for Sunday mornings off, and informed the surgeon, "Medical records do not indicate any situation . . . to cause me serious concern."¹⁴¹

Discipline and Morals

In the minds of some observers a question arose as to whether the medical loss rate could have been affected by the type of moral disintegration popularly supposed to afflict men and women in the tropics. However, if such disintegration took place, it was more subtle than could be measured statistically, and did not consist of the gross sexual immorality about which most rumors centered. On the contrary, the pregnancy rate for the Wacs' chief period of service in the Pacific was, like that of other overseas theaters, less than one half the world-wide WAC rate, which was itself low by civilian standards. During the period after the arrival in Manila, with the relaxation of previous restrictions on marriage, the WAC pregnancy rate rose considerably, but was still less than the world-wide rate, and about the same as that for nurses in the Pacific. Of the theater's 5,500 Wacs, only 111 were reported returned home pregnant, with an estimated half of these being married women. However, in spite of the frequent restriction to compounds, the Pacific Wacs' rate was considerably higher than that of the European theater, which placed no special restrictions on women.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Hist Rpt, May 45. Folder II, WAC Det FEASC.

¹⁴⁰ Interv with Maj Charlee L. Kelly, 28 Jul 47.

¹⁴¹ Memo, WAC Stf Dir FEAF for CG FEAF through CG FEASC, 19 Jun 45, with Rpt of Surg and Ind, CG FEASC to CG FEAF, 22 Jul 45. AG 333.1. Correspondence folder, WAC Det FEAF, Drawer X-25096. See also Ltr cited n. 86.

¹⁴² For world-wide rates, see Ch. XXXI, below. For SWPA rates, see Craighill SWPA Rpt.