

listed women and only three officers, the number commonly assigned to a unit one fourth that size in the United States. Inspectors recommended more, since work was heavy, but more were not assigned, although ten other WAC officers at the same base were assigned operational duties. The GHQ detachment for a time had only one officer for 386 women; eventually one more was added. The huge AFWESPAC battalion of some 3,000 women never had more than seven officers, even when it was scattered over three widely separated stations with the commanding officer alone in Manila attempting to prepare for reception of the women. In all, only 15 percent of the WAC officers in the Pacific were assigned to WAC administration, as against 32 percent in the European theater. There was only one troop or staff officer for approximately 100 women, as against the one per 20 believed suitable in the United States.¹⁶⁶

Command of Enlisted Women by Male Officers

In several detachments, although WAC officers of proven ability were in charge, they were considered to have no powers other than those of providing food and housing, command and discipline being the prerogative of male commanders to whose units or offices the women were assigned. The situation was parallel to that of enlisted men assigned to one command and merely attached for quarters and rations to another. Even the ordinary Army unit, formally activated and with its own grades, encountered some friction between commander and section chief over such matters as promotions. Most WAC units in the area, with a few exceptions such as those in the Air Forces, were even more vulnerable, being gradeless and without "assigned" personnel other than cadre.

Noting that the command of enlisted women by male officers was in her opinion contrary to War Department regulations, Colonel Brown soon after her arrival recommended publication of a clarification such as that used in the European theater and in the Army Air Forces in the United States, to the effect that the WAC commander had full disciplinary powers even though her unit was gradeless or not activated. When this was refused, she attempted to send a letter through channels to the War Department, asking clarification of its ruling under the circumstances, and stating that she considered the current system "dangerous" in view of certain factors involved in the command of enlisted women by male officers. This letter was stopped by USAFFE on the grounds "that it did not pertain to the health, well-being, or morale of women," and Colonel Brown was informed by Maj. Gen. Charles P. Stivers, "Matters of assignment of Wacs, determination of this headquarters."¹⁶⁷

Discipline in the GHQ USAFFE WAC detachment eventually reached a crisis. The WAC commanding officer, although responsible for almost 400 enlisted women, had no "assigned" personnel except one assistant, and had in the detachment not only Wacs working for GHQ but personnel assigned to nine other separate detachments as well as to Air Evaluation Board and Philippine Base Section.¹⁶⁸ After women guilty of disciplinary offenses in

¹⁶⁶ (1) Memo, WAC Stf Dir FEAF for CG FEAF, sub: Inspection of WAC Det FEASC, 4-6 Feb 45. WDWAC 319.1 Pacific. (2) Folder, 5200th WAC Bn, cx-447. (3) AFPAC Reply. Griffith Account gives 5 percent of officers on WAC administration, 95 percent elsewhere.

¹⁶⁷ (1) WAC Sec USAFFE Hist Rpts, particularly Dec 44 and Jan 45. (2) Check Sheets in same folder, particularly Check Note to CofS USAFFE, 2 Feb 45, re Stivers decision. (3) Colonel Brown's marginal note on draft of chapter. OCMH.

¹⁶⁸ Folder, 5200th WAC Bn, cx-447.