

mind is very low and their health below par.”¹⁸⁵ Immediate action was precipitated when similar reports reached Congress and resulted in Congressional demands for an explanation. At this, General George Marshall requested of General MacArthur a full confidential report of the condition of Wacs in his command.¹⁸⁶

The reply to this inquiry proved unsatisfactory to the War Department; it consisted chiefly of a copy of a press release made by Colonel Brown, who was then in the United States checking supplies, plus the 1944 statistics on evacuation, which indicated that Wacs were in good health. The War Department immediately demanded a second report, stating sharply, “A release for publicity purposes made here in the War Department is not considered adequate as a confidential report to the War Department. . . ,” and adding that other statements were “very general in content and the code indicates that it was prepared by G-1 and not by the WAC Staff Director’s office or the Inspector General.”¹⁸⁷

A more detailed reply was then prepared in the WAC Section of AFPAC, but was considerably censored by G-1 Division, so that the version which reached the War Department was rather short. The staff director noted:

G-1 here decided to scrap my report. . . . They had some Major who has not long been in the theater do the principal amount of work on the one that was sent. So far, I have not been able to get a copy of their finished product.¹⁸⁸

The theater-approved version gave only two adverse items: (1) the failure of Christmas presents to arrive on time, and (2) the death of eight of the Wacs in a plane crash.¹⁸⁹

As a result, before illness finally forced

Colonel Hobby’s resignation in the summer of 1945, several decisions were reached by the Army’s highest authorities, with her concurrence. One was a general decision to return all Wacs from all overseas theaters as soon after the end of hostilities as they became eligible for discharge, and not to send replacements. This measure would have been required in any event to permit demobilization of the Corps as required by the current legislation. To cover the period before demobilization, a second plan was prepared, which would have permitted voluntary rotation of Wacs after 12 months in the Southwest Pacific, and mandatory rotation after 18 months. These decisions effectively prevented WAC employment in the Army of Occupation in Japan. It was the theater’s verdict that it would not be worthwhile to prepare housing and move the units to Japan in view of the few remaining weeks. A computation of point scores for discharge eligibility showed that by the end of 1945 all but 500 of the Pacific’s Wacs would be eligible for return under the Army’s Adjusted Service Rating System, and that even these 500 would be eligible in a few more months.¹⁹⁰

The War Department also refused to allow the Pacific theater to keep dis-

¹⁸⁵ Memo, Lt Col Helen H. Woods, Deputy Dir WAC, for G-1, 10 Oct 45. WDWAC 330.11. She refers to returning Wacs of previous months.

¹⁸⁶ Ltr cited n. 184(1). Inclosure 1 is Congressional request.

¹⁸⁷ D/F cited n. 61. Incls show: Congressional Inquiry, 18 May 45; first request to Pacific, 26 May 45; interim Ltr to Congress from CofS, 8 Aug 45; first SWPA Rpt, 21 Aug 45, rejected for reasons given above.

¹⁸⁸ Ltr, WAC Stf Dir AFPAC to Col Boyce, 28 Dec 45. WDWAC 320.

¹⁸⁹ Rpt cited n. 1(3). All supporting documents were omitted in theater version.

¹⁹⁰ (1) See Ch. XXXVI, below. (2) Memo, KKJ (Maj Katherine Johnson, Exec WAC) for Dir WAC, 11 Jun 45, sub: Rpt of Action 6-11 Jun 45. WDWAC 319.1. (3) Boyce Rpt, draft version.