

charge-eligibles who volunteered to remain. These were not many. Surveys before the defeat of Japan showed that 57 percent of WAC eligibles—80 percent of the AFWESPAC (formerly USASOS) group, 82 percent of FEAF—wanted to go home; by comparison, only 5 percent in Italy and 38 percent in England had expressed a desire to go home before the fighting ended.<sup>191</sup>

Extensions and exceptions were later to be given to the European and China theaters, so that their volunteer Wacs were not forced to return; no such extension was allowed the Pacific theater. Colonel Brown, herself a victim of amoebic dysentery that had already required hospitalization, believed an extension should have been granted, but was not called on to comment in the matter and did not return to the Pacific after demobilization began. She was awarded the Legion of Merit and a high efficiency rating personally signed by General MacArthur.

Lt. Col. Mera Galloway, formerly WAC Staff Director, Transportation Corps, was sent to the theater with the assigned mission "to close WAC History in the Southwest Pacific in an efficient and successful manner."<sup>192</sup> Colonel Boyce also arrived in the area as the closing-out began; until her report was received there remained the possibility that an extension of the return date of WAC volunteers would be granted.

Colonel Boyce was accompanied on her visits by the new staff director, by a War Department representative of G-3 Division, and by Dr. Marion Kenworthy, a prominent psychologist and member of the National Civilian Advisory Committee. The team talked individually with hundreds of enlisted women, and visited remaining WAC units on Hollandia, Biak, and Luzon.<sup>193</sup>

Their impression was not favorable. From Manila, Colonel Boyce cabled to the War Department: "I recommend all enlisted women in this theater be enroute USA for discharge or reassignment not later than 1 January 1946."<sup>194</sup> The medical loss rate had declined only slightly and Colonel Boyce, although a veteran of the North African crisis, was disturbed by the apparent poor health of members still on duty. Most were underweight, and all were highly fatigued. When the headquarters attempted to hold a parade formation in her honor, and delay resulted in an hour's wait, eight women fainted. Many were still working seven days a week with additional evening duty. Food was still poor, some quarters still unhealthy with beds standing in an inch of water, while few women yet had adequate clothing and footgear for protection against the daily rainstorms.

Colonel Boyce advised theater commanders that the women's condition required immediate action: less overtime office work, granting of quotas for rest areas, and more suitable clothing, such as that provided enlisted men for protection from the rain. Her advice was not accepted, although a service club and a rest camp were eventually opened to women a few weeks before they left. Colonel Boyce, after her encounter with theater authorities, wrote to Colonel Brown: "I want you to know that my observations in the theater simply confirmed the faith I have always had in your ability to perform

<sup>191</sup> "Readjustment Rating Scale Figures, Manila Area." In possession of Mary-Agnes Brown.

<sup>192</sup> Boyce Rpt, draft version.

<sup>193</sup> Ltr, Lt Col Mera Galloway Ferrin to OCMH, 22 May 51.

<sup>194</sup> Cbl, CinC AFPAC Comd, Manila, Boyce for WD, 27 Oct 45. C-19184, WDWAC 320.01.