

to appreciate capabilities, and overstaffing during the period of orientation prior to the transfer of enlisted men replaced by Wacs."²⁶ General Stratmeyer took immediate and vigorous action to correct the situation.²⁷ As a result, the expected 30-day on-the-job training was reduced to 15 days.

A few months later General Stratmeyer directed his WAC staff director to make a survey of job utilization. It was found that, "with a very few exceptions, the qualifications of Wacs were being fully employed in jobs commensurate with their training and experience," and the exceptions were at once corrected. Some problems still remained. The offices were not exceptionally busy, at least not enough to satisfy the Wacs. Also, civilian competition was present from female citizens of Calcutta. The staff director remarked:

I believe that the biggest hindrance toward the proper utilization of WAC personnel in this Headquarters is the usage of inefficient civilian help. Because of their employment in the majority of stenographic positions, the Wac is compelled to watch someone else do a job which would ordinarily take her one-half of the time to complete.

Because of the constant attention to the matter of correct assignment, however, lack of work never became a morale problem. An Army observer confirmed this assertion about Wacs' high morale and its cause, stating that:

The women look well, work efficiently, are universally cheerful and seem almost without exception to feel that they are doing an important war job. . . . The WAC personnel are universally admired and respected by male officers and enlisted men here. They have made a definite contribution to the morale of the base and the efficiency of the headquarters here, and I believe that their excellent attitude reflects their pride in this fact.²⁸

General Stratmeyer, at the time of the separation of the China theater from the India-Burma, reported to Generals Stilwell and Arnold:

Experience of the past several months has proved any doubts concerning the propriety of the experiment to be false. It is with enthusiasm that this Headquarters reports the substantial overall improvement in efficiency as a result of the placement of Wacs. . . . Officers and enlisted women alike have quickly adjusted themselves to the climate, food, and the somewhat rugged living conditions. . . . Deportment is superior. Not one untoward incident has occurred as a result of their presence in this Headquarters. . . . This Headquarters recommends without hesitation to other Headquarters overseas the excellent benefits to be obtained through the placement of Wacs in theaters of operations.²⁹

The newly organized Services of Supply headquarters in Kunming, China, immediately petitioned the commander of the U.S. forces in the China theater, Lt. Gen. Albert C. Wedemeyer, for permission to bring in a WAC company almost identical with the Air Forces' company, saying:

It is virtually impossible to obtain competent civilian clerical employees in this theater. . . . Male enlisted personnel trained in typing and stenographic duties are not available in sufficient numbers. . . . Where the civilian employee is not a citizen of the United States, as is almost invariably the case in this theater, effective security is largely unknown.³⁰

²⁶ Ltr cited n. 6.

²⁷ D/F, Gen Stratmeyer to Col David Barret, 21 Sep 44. Folder IBT, CBI WAC files.

²⁸ (1) D/F, WAC Stf Dir to Orgn and Plng, 8 Nov 44, Comment I. Folder IBT, CBI WAC files. (2) Statement by Maj Philip Boyer, Jr., Actg PRO. Incl 2 to IBT WAC Survey.

²⁹ Ltr cited n. 6.

³⁰ Ltr, Hq SOS, USFCT, APO 627, to CG USFCT, APO 879, 26 Nov 44, sub: Establishment of WAC Co at SOS Hq, 13525-322. Folder 5, Hq SOS USFCT file, AG 322.