

their well-being and not a government department."²⁴

The fact that certain duties could not be delegated to any other existing agency was also well known to experienced WAC staff officers. After months of effort to rid the office of the load, the second Director WAC likewise noted that it was impossible to do so. Not only was the Director's Office, a policy agency, unable to refer certain letters to operating agencies, but they continued to refer to her for reply many inquiries which had been addressed to them.²⁵ Colonel Boyce summarized the experience of years as:

All efforts to route these inquiries to other divisions or agencies for original handling result in return to the Office of the Director, WAC for a statement of policy, for information seemingly not available elsewhere, or in some cases in second letters condemning the Army for "buck passing." No amount of effort ever succeeded in eliminating this load of work from the Office of the Director, WAC.²⁶

The actually intolerable nature of the situation was masked for a time by the concentrated activity of the Director's staff, which until well into 1945 worked 12-, 14-, and 16-hour days of 7-day weeks. At this time, upon Colonel Rice's departure to other duties, three officers were eventually necessary to replace her. In the interim, only the weight of collected carbon copies in the files made credible the

fact that any one individual could dictate and sign in one day as many pieces of correspondence as did the Deputy Director. Her only apparent rebellion was a brief scribble on one particularly insulting letter of complaint, "I guess we shan't live long enough for this to stop."²⁷

At the same time, the Director's major official duty—her policy responsibilities to the War Department—had not ceased to be fulfilled, even though staff studies were generally written by Colonel Rice in the late evening hours after visitors and conferees had been cleared from her office. These policy solutions, which came freely after the office's removal from the ASF, constituted in some respects the real history of the wartime Women's Army Corps, and its legacy to the future. Although any one of the major policy fields would require a separate chapter, if not a volume, for proper discussion, the problems arising within them did not occur separately, but were handled simultaneously with each other and with outside liaison duties during the last eighteen months of the war.

²⁴ *Conditions in the Three Women's Services.*

²⁵ For example: (1) D/F, TAG to Dir WAC, 8 Feb 44, sub: Request for Info re WAC. SPWA 095. (2) Ltr, Mrs. M. V. Moore to TAG, 1 Feb 44, asking for a copy of WAC regulations; TAG sent this to Dir WAC.

²⁶ Draft, WAC Hist, 14 Nov 45. WDWAC 314.7.

²⁷ Undated handwritten note to Executive WAC in Colonel Rice's easily identifiable handwriting. WDWAC 421.