

clothing, she asked that no further Class B clothing be issued to new recruits, and that women already in the field be given one new skirt and jacket if their entire issue had been secondhand. This proposal was also rejected by Requirements Division, ASF, insofar as it concerned women already in the field, but it was agreed that new recruits should be issued one new skirt and one new jacket.<sup>36</sup>

A third proposal from the Director concerned an off-duty dress similar to those already authorized for the Army Nurse Corps and Army physical therapy aides. Before the conversion, Waacs had been able to discard ill-fitting or mismatched uniforms in favor of civilian clothing on off-duty occasions or when on leave, but this was no longer possible under Army status. Even had the tailored uniforms been adequate, there appeared, in the opinion of all women's services, to exist some universal psychological need of servicewomen for feminine-type attire for social occasions. The WAVES, SPARS, and Women Marines therefore authorized dress uniforms for both officers and enlisted women, while Army and Navy nurses had dress uniforms, plus summer and winter off-duty dresses in a simple shirtwaist style.

In consideration of the expense involved, the Director did not ask for the issue of such items for Wacs, but only that women be authorized to buy an approved model if they wished. She added, "It is considered by this office that a provision for an off-duty dress is necessary as a matter of well-being." However, Army Service Forces disapproved this request, stating that the WAC was not analogous to the Army Nurse Corps and that enlisted men were not allowed to buy off-duty dresses. Although Director Hobby addressed this

request to the General Staff by authority of Circular 289, as a matter of well-being, General Somervell's office returned it disapproved without allowing it to reach the War Department.<sup>37</sup>

As one alternative, the Director asked that The Quartermaster General consider a different fabric for the stiff and heavy summer uniform, one that would eliminate wrinkling and improve the fit. In January of 1944 the Quartermaster reported no solution and recommended that "the importance of the problem be considered insufficient to warrant a change in the fabric of the summer uniform." The retention of the men's-weight 8.2-ounce khaki was approved by the ASF and by G-4.

Likewise bypassed was the Director's attempt, concurred in by The Quartermaster General, to add more color to the uniform by the addition of an inexpensive yellow cotton scarf and gloves, similar in effect to the Women Marines' red scarf and the Navy women's blue or white shirts.

A sixth proposal, which also met defeat, was that of redesigning the WAC jacket, summer and winter, since nothing had yet been done to correct the inadvertent error of the Philadelphia Depot in respacing the jacket buttons. The Quartermaster General concurred, recommending that three buttons be used in future procurement instead of four. However, ASF's Director of Matériel refused to allow the Quartermaster to undertake developing a new design.

A seventh refusal was that of the Director's renewed request for a garrison cap

<sup>36</sup> Memo, Dir WAC for Contl Div ASF, 11 Feb 44, with atchd. SPWA 421 sec 2 (1942).

<sup>37</sup> (1) Memo, Dir WAC for G-1 through ASF, 16 Feb 44; (2) Memo, ACofS ASF for Dir WAC, 25 Feb 44. SPWA 421 (5-16-42) sec 2 (1942).