

ASF, from August 1942 to the current date, all disapproved.

The Chief of Staff's problem in determining needed action was not greatly clarified by Congressional attitude toward the matter. Unfavorable publicity originating in Congress continued throughout the spring of 1944. In one case a Representative from New York released to the press a letter to Colonel Hobby—which she had not yet received—headlined LACK-CLUSTER WAC UNIFORMS HELD FACTOR IN RECRUITING LAG. The Congressman alleged that the uniform lacked “military pertness,” and should be “piquant yet dignified, stern yet charming,” and more “coruscant.” He urged that New York stylists be allowed to redesign the entire uniform, which they had assured him they would, and as for the cost, he stated:

From a strictly military and economic point of view, it may be argued that there is a stock pile of half a million old WAAC uniforms. What of it? They should be used for junk. They are utterly valueless. . . . It is worth putting this stock pile on the scrap heap if you can appreciably recruit your full quota of Wacs.⁴³

The language of such press releases contrasted considerably with that of a private letter, entitled “Senate Investigation of the WAC,” which was shortly received from the Truman Committee, more properly known as the Special Committee Investigating the National Defense Program. This committee displayed particular interest in the stockpiles of unused material procured in the days of hoped-for expansion of the WAAC, and requested justification of the Army's action in the “reduction in WAC enlistment program,” which had caused such surpluses. While the War Department was easily able to convince the committee that it had not deliberately

cut down WAC enlistments, it was obvious that remedial action could not include any move to discard stockpiles of unsatisfactory uniforms.⁴⁴ Therefore, General Marshall's decisions were necessarily those which could be put into effect without much financial expenditure.

Chief of Staff's Approvals

Among the first of the Director's proposals approved by General Marshall was that of a chamois-colored cotton scarf and gloves, both actually less expensive than the leather gloves alone, but adding a becoming color to both summer and winter uniforms. The official “chamois” color was actually a pale yellow.

Possibly even more popular with the women was the new garrison cap, similar to the men's but designed to fit over women's longer haircuts. For this item, the ASF withdrew its disapproval before General Marshall directed adoption.⁴⁵ Although costing only about 39 cents in the summer version, the cap was so becoming, and so essential for many types of duties and for overseas stations, that the WAVES and women Marines shortly adopted a cap of almost identical cut. The combination of new and becoming cap, scarf, and gloves was found to add considerably to

⁴³ (1) *Washington Post*, April 22, 1944. (2) Ltr, Rep. Emanuel Celler (N.Y.) to Dir WAC, 21 Apr 44; this reached her after the news release; (3) Ltr, Dir WAC to Rep. Celler, 29 Apr 44. WDWAC 421.

⁴⁴ Army reply made clear that the estimated WAC strength used in procurement had never been more than 162,000. (1) Ltr, Chief Counsel, Senate Sp Com Investigating Natl Def Program, to Sp Asst to SW, 16 Jun 44, R-616-S; (2) Memo, Sp Asst to SW for CG ASF, 17 Jun 44; (3) Memo, Dep Dir Pers ASF for Dir WAC, 19 Jun 44. SPAP (6-17-44); (4) Memo, Dep Dir WAC for Dir Pers ASF, 21 Jun 44. WDWAC 319.1. (5) D/F, Dir Pers ASF for CofS, G-1, S/W, 11 Jul 44. SPWA 320.2, in SPAP 319.1 (7-11-44).

⁴⁵ Memo cited n. 38(4).