

only by the high percentage of Wacs who had never been overseas and were eager to go, as against lesser percentages of men, and that "it was agreed that a two-year tour of duty for all was advisable, but present conditions would not permit it for men."³²

Shipment in T/O Units

It was Colonel Boyce's opinion that the system of shipment of Wacs as casuals had been hard on morale and should be abandoned in favor of shipment as Table of Organization units. When shipped as casuals for assignment to vacancies in men's groups, Wacs found others already promoted to the grades to which their skills would have entitled them, and were often given the least desirable or responsible duties, or malassigned to work that did not use their highest skills. In a T/O unit organized in the United States, women would be assigned in accordance with real skills and would receive the grade their position was allotted. Also, in such units the WAC company commander was recognized as being in command, and thus avoided possible disciplinary complications.

Unfortunately, as its sponsors recognized, the T/O proposal had serious limitations. It would be effective only if a women's force existed in the earliest days of a mobilization period, before most of the T/O units had been organized and shipped and the need became merely that for casuals as replacements. Even if employed so early, the plan would limit women to units in which they could perform all duties, such as signal or postal. In view of the near-disastrous experience with T/O units in the United States, it would be inapplicable to large-scale use of Wacs in theater headquarters and over-

head, and would prevent the overseas employment of women with unusual skills not included in a standard T/O. On the other hand, if the overseas program of the WAC remained, as in World War II, a minor part of its whole program, it appeared that serious problems of assignment would not be caused by use of the T/O system for all WAC overseas units wherever practicable.³³

Effectiveness of Shipment Program

While all evidence indicated that the program of overseas shipment of Wacs could have been more effective than it was, and while deficiencies were habitually distressing to WAC personnel, there was no indication that difficulties had been as serious as those encountered by the Army in selecting, training, and shipping male personnel, especially combat troops, whose problems were considerably multiplied. The chief peculiar difficulty remained that of sending overseas only women of highly selected moral character and stability, in which respect lapses were criticized by overseas theaters considerably more than similar lapses in shipment of men. In spite of occasional perfectionist complaints from overseas theaters, the final outcome of the WAC effort to put its best personnel overseas could only be evaluated as highly successful. On a statistical average, Wacs in all overseas theaters had been the best educated, the most intelligent, and the most highly skilled of the Corps.³⁴

³² Remarks of Dir WAC, Conf of Overseas Theater G-1's, 15 Oct 46. WDWAC 337 A-S.

³³ Rpt cited n. 31.

³⁴ All available reports indicate that at least 55 percent of all women shipped overseas were in AGCT Groups I and II. See Chs. XX-XXIII, above; also ETO Bd Rpt, p. 129. A list of the Overseas WAC Units as of June 1945 may be found in Directory of the AUS Outside Continental United States, AG 461 (6-1-45) OB-I-M pp. 269-270.