

thy C. Stratton of the SPARS, Director Ruth Streeter of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve, and representatives of the WAVES, ATS, and Canadian WAC.²⁷

Also included, both for rehabilitation of students and for their use in teaching their units, was instruction by the college faculty in women's sports, as well as in a posture clinic, and in the organization of games, square dancing, and group singing.

The most important visiting experts, however, were believed by the commandant to be the students themselves, experienced troop officers. Therefore, group conferences and forums followed each lecture and emphasized the sharing of practical experiences.

In a conference on Morale, specific devices were discussed—crafts and home-making classes, cheerful date rooms, women's sports tournaments, future wardrobe planning. In Public Relations, commanders related ways in which they had encouraged co-operation with local churches, newspapers, women's clubs, and civic groups so as to secure pleasant relations and recreational opportunities for the women. In Discipline, actual problem cases and most effective methods were discussed, as well as successful means of preparing courts-and-boards cases concerning women who injured company morale and reputation. The conference on helpful administrative devices discussed such matters as the best means of coping with the heterogeneity peculiar to WAC companies: how to arrange sleeping quarters for workers on different shifts, as well as barracks duties, training and meals. A dozen conferences of this nature left few original devices and discoveries unshared by the group.

Because officers from many different commands were included, the school of-

fered no "approved solution" to any problem, but merely allowed women to observe the best solutions that fellow students had been able to achieve under varying command situations. Visiting psychiatrists pronounced the conferences "group therapy" as well as instruction. Commanders who, at isolated stations, had long borne in silence the responsibility for their women's lives and behavior now discovered dozens of individuals with identical experiences. Even after classwork, there was a torrent of extracurricular conversation, which filled every spare minute and lasted well into the night, and which Colonel Rice viewed with extreme approval as being more important than the course of study.

Many commanders were found to have labored under a weight of guilt and depression in the belief that certain problems were limited to their own companies, and were amazed and exhilarated to discover that identical problems had been met by every other commander and by Navy and British services. The only complaint was that this release and reassurance had come too late for many. One student wrote, "If only I could have talked about these things before my nerves were shot instead of after!" Others speculated bitterly on enlisted women whose lives or moral standards might have been saved had such shared information been available earlier to enable the commander to handle their cases more wisely.

Evaluation of Refresher Training

The effectiveness of the School for WAC Personnel Administration in combating troop fatigue was commended by most of

²⁷ For course of study, see files cited n. 23.