

she stated, have to face the fact that her husband could not be considered a dependent and thus could not live with her on a military post. If he was an Army man he could live on the post, if by chance the stations of husband and wife coincided, but questions would arise as to who took the social status and quarters of whom. In any case, if Wacs married, the loss from pregnancy would be high, or a woman bent on a career could not permit herself any children. Under the circumstances, while most Army career men lived normal lives with homes and families, it appeared that career women would be denied both.²³

WAC Effort To Hasten Demobilization

In September, Colonel Boyce left for the Pacific without having secured a decision on the Corps' future. In November, Acting Director Helen Woods made a final effort to secure total demobilization. In a memorandum for the new Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, General Paul, she recommended that the Corps' fourth birthday, 14 May 1946, be chosen for the closing date, and that the WAC go out proudly in a burst of ceremonies and with the public announcement that the War Department had requested Congress to bestow Reserve status on all women who had served honorably. By the Corps' fourth birthday, its strength would have been reduced to about 20,000 after which point, said Colonel Woods, it would be "unsound economically and administratively to keep the Corps in operation at a figure much below this."²⁴

Colonel Woods was later reinforced in her position by written memoranda from the Army Service Forces WAC Officer and the Army Ground Forces WAC Of-

ficer. The ASF WAC Officer, Colonel Goodwin, concurred in the choice of the WAC fourth anniversary as closing day, for WAC officers as well as enlisted women, since officers would not be vitally needed with the women gone. The AGF WAC Officer, Colonel Davis, likewise urged speedy demobilization, but preferred the thirteenth of June as the final deadline.²⁵

The Air WAC Officer, Colonel Bandel, had already taken a more practical step. Taking advantage of an obscure provision that gave the Air Forces the right to discharge its women as well as its men at its own rates, she persuaded her headquarters to release Air Forces Wacs as fast as it was releasing AAF men. This at once cut the critical score for Air Wacs from 34 to 18, and opened floodgates which by December had let out of the Army all but 10,000 of the AAF's 39,000 Wacs, and which threatened by the fourth anniversary to have settled the dispute, at least for the Air Forces, in a most effective manner.²⁶

At this point, Colonel Boyce abandoned her overseas tour and hurried home, recording the fact that

... information received by the Director WAC in a teletype conference with her office on Saturday, 10 November, indicated that plans and policies affecting the future of the Corps were being discussed, and she felt it

²³ AAF WAC Hist; also interv.

²⁴ Above and below from Memo, Dep Dir WAC for Gen Paul G-1, 8 Nov 45. WDWAC 370.01.

²⁵ Memo, ASF WAC Off for Dir WAC, 11 Dec 45, and Memo, AGF WAC Off for Dir WAC, 10 Dec 45. WDWAC 370.01.

²⁶ TAG Ltr to major comds, 24 Sep 45. AGPW-A-WDGAP 220.8 (9-22-45), in WDWAC 220.8. Also WDWAC 370.01, 1945-46, documents dated 13, 19, 20, and 26 Dec 45.