

plied to off-duty association of personnel of opposite sex, which Colonel Boyce called "the second strongest adverse factor in WAC morale." The Office of the Director, as well as Colonel Bandel in the Air Forces, continued to recommend that the only restriction be "the simple rule followed in most business offices"—that supervisors not date employees. Colonel Boyce also suggested that "an All-Ranks Club be established as an Army-wide custom, thus solving the problem for male Army personnel, Army Nurse Corps, and WAC officers and enlisted." The Medical Department's General Menninger endorsed this as a very practical recommendation and advised that the War Department publish a policy asserting that the laws of natural selection should govern off-duty associations between male and female personnel.

Even in the few cases, such as that in the European theater, where WAC advisers favored application of the caste system to social engagements, all without exception agreed that some Army-wide policy should be published, comparable to the Navy's publication. Colonel Boyce noted that "the absence of any announced policy by the War Department led to inevitable and unfortunate inequality in handling this problem . . . whatever is decided as the policy, it should be announced at the War Department level."⁷

While it appeared that the problem would be less evident among peacetime personnel, who enlisted in full knowledge of the system, wartime WAC leaders were unanimous that it would be unwise ever again to attempt to form a large women's corps, particularly if women were drafted, without such an announced policy. Army men were ordinarily surprised to find this problem given such a high place in the list,

yet all recorded comments of enlisted women were to the effect that "the whole experience was degrading and humiliating . . . I would not re-enlist for any amount of money unless the caste system is abolished in its entirety."⁸ Regardless of conflicting explanations of why this attitude should be held so strongly by American women, the fact was that it did exist, to a degree that could not safely be discounted.

Housing

In the matter of housing, all WAC authorities agreed with Colonel Hobby's final report, which noted the need for a distinction between housing for transient troops and that for permanent employees. Colonel Boyce's final statement on the matter added that, if the War Department wished to attract a Corps of women of high ability, it would be obliged to provide "suitable living standards . . . a greater degree of privacy than the open barracks of the past war, and . . . heating systems which would not necessitate the stoking of coal stoves by women." Colonel Craighill's medical reports invariably attributed tension and exhaustion among Wacs and nurses in large part to the lack of privacy. Colonel Bandel's final observation, concerning Air Force experience, was:

From the standpoint of hindsight . . . it would seem that one of the major aspects of the WAC program which might have been improved, in the initial planning stages, was the housing program. . . . Field experience indicated that drab or flimsy wartime hous-

⁷ (1) Summary cited n. 3. (2) AAF WAC Hist, p. 96.

⁸ Ltr, Mrs. J. S. to Dir WAC, 19 Mar 46. WDWAC 095. This is typical of thousands of similar letters discovered in WAC files of every command.