

tion, the four enlisted women's services of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard had in fact for most of the war acted in a unified manner insofar as their directors were able to achieve it. A telephone conversation between Colonel Hobby and Capt. Mildred McAfee of the WAVES gave some indication that they were at times in advance of their parent services in this respect:

Capt. McAfee: This is certainly something that had better be joint.

Col. Hobby: It would be terrible if it were any other way. . . . I wonder if it might not be well if we got together informally and agreed to something before we brought the men in?

Capt. McAfee: I think that's a smart thought.²⁶

Nevertheless, the chief of the Bureau of Naval Personnel admitted that the Joint Policy Committee of the Women's Reserves, a subcommittee of the Joint Army-Navy Personnel Board, did not work as well as the women desired because of the "stubborn autonomy" of the parent services.²⁷

Unhappily for women's efforts in this respect, the trend of the parent services was towards greater compartmentalization rather than unification. With the "unification" of the Air Forces, the Air Wacs became the WAF, with their own distinctive uniform, and headed by a director in the rank of colonel. The trend was increased by the determination of the Medical Department to achieve autonomy in its women's corps. In addition to the Army Nurse Corps, the Medical Department secured legislation for the separate Women's Medical Specialist Corps, composed of female officers commissioned as dietitians, physiotherapists, and other medical specialists. This corps, although

small, had equal status with the Army Nurse Corps and WAC, and was also headed by a colonel.

There seemed to be no very good reason, if this trend continued, why separate women's corps would not be formed by all the arms and services—a Women's Transportation Corps, Women's Quartermaster Corps, or Women's Signal Corps—each with its own director and its own regulations and policies. In fact, upon the analogy of the Medical Department, there seemed no reason why a service such as the Quartermaster Corps should not have two or more independent women's corps, such as the Women's Food Management Corps and the Women's Supply Corps. However, the recommendations of all women advisers were against such development of special corps for women and in favor of full integration into existing Army groups.

The Question of Conscripting Women

Although some Army leaders, like General Eisenhower, expressed the view that total mobilization would be required in future emergencies, none became more specific on the implied necessity for drafting womanpower. Testimony before Congress made quite clear that the Army did not consider the establishment of a peacetime women's corps to have any necessary connection with drafting women, which would be a matter for future and separate consideration by Congress in time of mobilization.

The precedent of British and other services indicated that, when and if such a proposal reached a legislative body, it

²⁶ Tp Conv, Col Hobby and Capt McAfee, 5 Mar 45. G-1 312-312.9, Drawer 6, DRB AGO.

²⁷ WAVES Hist.