

attracting women who more properly should have used their skills in some other agency. It was also obvious that, without selective service, the Army would have difficulty in establishing firm and predictable schedules for the inflow of womanpower into basic and specialist training, and its allotment among various commands and overseas theaters.

Another likely advantage of such a selective service system would be the avoidance of recruiting commitments as to job or station, with resulting better morale among malassigned women. Classification surveyors noted that "the main problem in adjustment of women to the Army arose through conflict between the inductee's conception of the treatment to be accorded her and the actual Army situation."²⁹ From the viewpoint of mental health, General Menninger commented:

The whole problem of motivation for enlistment into the WAC raises the question of the disadvantages of voluntary enlistment for women . . . not alone for military duty but for assignment to civilian work. The British had fewer problems when they ceased to have a volunteer organization. . . .³⁰

On the other hand, a drafted corps of considerably larger size would also encounter problems unknown to the wartime WAC, and might be in danger of disappointing using agencies who expected it to meet the World War II level of performance. British precedent indicated that, to the exact extent that the Army was obliged by civilian manpower agencies to be unselective about its womanpower, it would meet increased problems of efficiency, health, discipline, illness and attrition rates, and morale.

For this reason, wartime WAC experts such as General White expressed a hope that it would never be necessary to draft

women, believing that the second or civilian-draft phase would be more advantageous in permitting selectivity. As an alarming precedent it was noted that, for men under Selective Service, Congress repeatedly forced cutting physical and mental standards below the limits proposed by the Army.³¹

In the opinion of some authorities, the second phase would also provide adequate numbers of women. The former Deputy Director, Colonel Rice, in a last interview before her death, informally expressed the idea that paper plans in World War II for use of a million or more women had been unrealistic, and that the wartime WAC had actually come close to the limits of efficient replacement. Instead, she believed that the next war's dangers would fall on the home front, and that the majority of women could most profitably be used in civil defense activities.³²

In addition, wartime WAC leaders pointed out that under a system of selective service for women, there would be increased opportunity for neglect of or damage to the needs of a minor group, which were easily overlooked in any case. Most improvements in the Corps in World War II, such as that in the uniform, in medical specialization, in measures to change public and soldier opinion, and in correction of unmilitary assignments, had been undertaken solely because, without them, it became increasingly difficult to get recruits. Without the pressure of public opinion and of womanpower shortages, it appeared unlikely that the skilled specialists of World War II would ever have been

²⁹ Rpt of Survey Team, Southern Area, 8 Nov 43, in Hist of O Dir Pers ASF. OCMH.

³⁰ Menninger, *Psychiatry in a Troubled World*, p. 108.

³¹ Interv, Oct 48.

³² *Ibid.*