

assigned to The Quartermaster General's Office, The Surgeon General, the Bureau of Public Relations, and dozens of other staff sections. It was doubtful whether, without such specialists and without any need to attract recruits, every command would provide as good care and attention to the peculiar needs of the minority as had been enforced in wartime.

Report of the Hoover Commission

This last possibility led directly to the most considered statement ever made by wartime WAC leaders as to the final issue at stake, and the possible dangers to be avoided, in the employment of woman-power by the armed forces. In mid-1948, former Director Hobby and other wartime women's leaders were called to testify before the Commission on the Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government, better known as the Hoover Commission. Since peacetime heads of the various women's corps were not so summoned, the committee report was not in every respect agreeable to them. It represented, however, Mrs. Hobby's only formal testimony of any sort upon the lessons of the wartime experiment.³³

Minor and preliminary comments of the report were not startling, being generally in line with accepted opinion. It was noted that in spite of advancements "the place of women in the armed services is not completely secure," and that since women's morale depended so largely upon public and soldier opinion, a special information program designed to improve this should continue to be provided. As for women's jobs, caution was given against "the tendency to use women in the services as additional personnel in jobs that could have been filled by civilian employees."

The opinion was expressed that women should never be assigned in units of less than 50, and preferably not smaller than 200 or 300—an increase over the previous wartime size, and one that seemed useful to insure economy in the necessary provisions for a minority.

However, the report's most important conclusion concerned the Corps' greatest single dilemma—the need for modification of some Army rules and procedures for fullest protection to women's well-being. In business and industry, standards of production and well-being had often been set up with consideration of the needs of both sexes, but all armed forces rules and operations had naturally for centuries been worked out for men only, and there was a tendency to look on any modifications as favoritism or special privilege. Modifications also might damage the morale of enlisted men, and could thus be approached, if at all, only with the greatest caution. On the other hand, the only other alternative was for the women to make the entire adjustment to men's standards of rougher dress, decreased modesty or need for privacy and cleanliness, more strenuous sports and recreational interests, a single standard of morality, and different opinions concerning drinking, sex, and conduct in general. While there was no doubt that in time women could and would successfully make this adjustment, the responsibility for such masculinization of the American woman was one for which wartime leaders did not care to assume responsibility. General Menninger noted that, from the psychiatric standpoint,

³³ Entire discussion from: Report of the Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government, November 15, 1948, Vol. III, Sec. XIV. OCMH.