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ARMY AIR FORCES HISTORICAL STUDIES: No. 55

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**WOMEN PILOTS**  
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Women Pilots with the AAF, 1941-1944

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ARMY AIR FORCES HISTORICAL STUDIES: NO. 55

WOMEN PILOTS WITH THE AAF, 1941-1944

AAF Historical Office  
Headquarters, Army Air Forces  
March 1946

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23 May 1943

Col. Boatner in Gen. Baker's office called and dictated the following message to me:

"I discussed with Gen. Baker the sections of the History of the Wasps on pages 50, 51, 52 or thereabouts, which recount administrative controversies between Miss Cocaran and her headquarters. General Baker stated that although a controversy concerning policy is essential in a history, petty administrative controversies would seem to him to serve no useful purpose. He stated that he will not order you to take those parts out of the history and if you feel very strongly about it he would be led to talk with you about it. The history is in my office and can be obtained tomorrow. I will not be in myself."

ADDRESS REPLY TO  
COMMANDING GENERAL, ARMY AIR FORCES  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



ATTENTION

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY AIR FORCES  
WASHINGTON

24 May 1946

MEMORANDUM FOR COL. PAUL

The passage in AAF Historical Study No. 55 which discusses controversies begins with page 44 and extends throughout the remainder of Chapter III. I gather that, within this discussion of controversies, exception is taken to a report of a confused administrative situation pertaining to women pilots at Camp Davis in October 1943. More specifically, this section deals with (1) low morale, (2) failure of the Ferrying Division to report certain accidents properly, (3) lack of coordination in transferring women pilots from the Ferrying Division to Camp Davis, and (4) the reported failure of the Director of Women Pilots to observe military channels in her inspection visits.

The four administrative difficulties listed above are only a few of those discussed in Chapter III beginning with page 44. In the opinion of the writer, such difficulties connected with the training and utilization of women pilots arose largely from a tendency on the part of Headquarters, AAF, to encroach upon the command prerogatives of the Ferrying Division so far as the use of women pilots was concerned. The four administrative difficulties to which exception was taken illustrate the bad results of this basic conflict no less importantly than other difficulties cited elsewhere in Chapter III, and in their cumulative effect could not be considered "petty." Among the other difficulties was the criticism of the quality of WASP training voiced by the Ferrying Division (see pp. 57 ff).

The discussion of the four administrative difficulties (pp. 50-53) considered above could not, then, be deleted from the study with any show of consistency unless the entire discussion of the basic controversy of which the writer found evidence in the WASP program were also to be deleted. This would involve removing virtually all of Chapter III, pages 44-77, and drastically modifying the concluding chapter and other portions of the study. This change would amount to a suppression of the truth, as the writer saw it.

*Robert W. Ackerman*  
ROBERT W. ACKERMAN  
Captain, AC

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## FOREWORD

The Army Air Corps considered the possibility of using women pilots as early as June 1940, but it was not until September 1942 that their service began. The program came to an end in December 1944, by which time there was no longer a shortage of male pilots. This study describes the adoption of the program, the training of women pilots, the uses made of them, and the attempt to incorporate them into the Army. In connection with these topics, consideration is given to the administration of the program—including the differing ideas about how many women pilots there should be, how they should be organized, and how they should be directed.

Detailed treatment of most of the subjects discussed in the study may be found in the histories of the program for women pilots submitted by various commands and air forces, and their subordinate organizations, in the continental United States. These histories are on file in the Archives of the AAF Historical Office.

The study was prepared by CWO J. Merton England. Some of the research, however, was done by Dr. Martha E. Layman, Dr. Chase C. Mooney, and Mr. Joseph Reither, and Dr. Layman also wrote the greater part of Chapter IV, "The Movement for Militarization." In addition, the author drew freely (without benefit of quotation marks) from the histories prepared in the historical sections of the Air Transport Command, the Training Command, and the continental air forces.

Some changes were made after consideration of comments from those who reviewed the history. These comments are included in the Appendix.

Readers familiar with the subject matter are invited to furnish the AAF Historical Office with criticisms, additional facts, and suggestions. For this purpose, perforated sheets have been inserted at the back of the study.

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## Chapter I

## INSTITUTION OF THE PROGRAM

The Army Air Corps began to expand rapidly in 1939, and in that year war broke out in Europe. As the likelihood that the United States would become a participant in war increased, goals for trained pilots and other aircrew members were pushed constantly higher. However, despite the greater requirements imposed by each new expansion program, up to the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor there were few serious difficulties in the procurement of adequate numbers of men suitable and eager for training. After that event, much higher objectives were set, and competition with other services became much more stringent as the available national manpower contracted sharply.

To fill the need for ever greater numbers of trained personnel, the AAF resorted to various expedients. The general effect of these was to increase the sources from which potential pilot material might be obtained. For example, the interpretation of physical standards was eased, enlisted men were accepted for pilot training, and the requirement of two years of college education was abandoned.<sup>1</sup>

In view of the constant search for new sources for pilot personnel, it is perhaps surprising that plans to use women pilots were not put into effect before the summer of 1942. The answer probably lies in a combination

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1. See AAF Historical Studies: No. 2, Initial Selection of Candidates for Pilot, Bombardier, and Navigator Training; No. 7, Legislation Relating to the Army Air Forces Training Program, 1939-1943; No. 15, Procurement of Aircrew Trainees.

of circumstances: focusing of attention on combat pilots; doubt as to the potentialities of women as pilots of military aircraft; and awareness of the fact that there were only a few women with any considerable amount of flying experience.

Proposals for the use of women pilots by the Army had been advanced several years before the decision was finally made to use them. As early as September 1939, Miss Jacqueline Cochran, who had just been awarded the Aviatrice trophy by the International League of Aviators for the third successive year, outlined to Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt her ideas on the need for planning to use American women flyers in a national emergency. "In the field of aviation," she wrote, "the real 'bottle neck' in the long run is likely to be trained pilots." Women could be used effectively in "all sorts of helpful back of the lines work," as, for instance, in flying ambulance planes, courier planes, and commercial and transport planes, thereby releasing male pilots for combat duty.

This requires organization and not at the time of emergency but in advance. We have about 650 licensed women pilots in this country. Most of them would be of little use today, but most of them could be of great use a few months hence if properly trained and organized. And if they had some official standing or patriotic objective (rather than just fly around an airport occasionally for fun) there would be thousands more women pilots than there are now.

Miss Cochran noted that Germany, Russia, England, and France had already begun to use women pilots in their air forces. As for the United States, she did not believe that it was "public opinion that must be touched, but rather official Washington," particularly Army or Navy officials.<sup>2</sup>

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2. A copy of this letter was forwarded to the War Department. Jacqueline Cochran to Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, 28 Sep. 1939, in AAG 231.21, Women Pilots IV, P. 7.

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Although expressed in general terms, Miss Cochran's proposal contained the essential elements of the program which was later put into effect: an official organization of a rather large number of women pilots; a training program for them; and a variety of uses to which they would be adapted by the armed services to release men for combat.

Another type of program was suggested to the Air Corps several months later by another prominent aviatrix, Mrs. Nancy H. Love. In a letter to Lt. Col. Robert Olds, an officer in the Plans Division of the Office of the Chief of the Air Corps, she stated:<sup>3</sup>

I've been able to find forty-nine qualified women pilots I can rate as excellent material. . . . There are probably at least fifteen more of these whom I don't know about and so haven't starred. I really think this list is up to handling pretty complicated stuff. Most of them have in the neighborhood of a thousand hours or more-- mostly more, and have flown a great many types of ships.

Envisioned here was the use of a small number of exceptionally well qualified women pilots who apparently would need only a minimum amount of training.

The Plans Division in June 1940 was considering "a plan of using approximately 100 women pilots as co-pilots in transport squadrons and for ferrying single engine aircraft thereby releasing a number of pilots for the GHQ Air Force." It proposed that the Air Corps give them short refresher courses, and after necessary legislation had been obtained, commission them as second lieutenants in the Air Corps Reserve. The Chief of the Air Corps, Maj. Gen. H. H. Arnold, turned down the proposal but

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3. Nancy H. Love to Lt. Col. Robert Olds, 21 May 1940, quoted in "History of Women Pilots in the Air Transport Command" <sup>Women Pilots in the ATC</sup>, 3. Mrs. Love was the wife of Robert M. Love, then president of the Intercity Airlines, Inc., of Boston, later Deputy Chief of Staff of the Air Transport Command.

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suggested that women flyers, if used as co-pilots in commercial airliners, would release male pilots for Army service.<sup>4</sup>

About a year later more serious attention was given to the use of women pilots. This resulted largely from the flight of a Lockheed Hudson bomber to England, in which Miss Cochran participated. Before she left, the New York Times reported that she intended to study the part women in England were playing in ferrying and other aerial activity with consideration of possible similar work by women in the United States.<sup>5</sup> When she returned in July, Miss Cochran was reported as saying she "expected to write a report for whatever American governmental agency was interested in her observations of the work of fifty women pilots of the Air Transport Auxiliary in Britain and her recommendations for adapting their system to the needs of this country's national defense program."<sup>6</sup> Invited to Hyde Park for a luncheon with President and Mrs. Roosevelt, she related her experiences, and it was suggested that she "go over to the AAF and determine if women pilots could not be usefully employed here."<sup>7</sup> Miss Cochran states that she was told "that arrangements would be made to receive her." A few days later she called on Robert A. Lovett, the Assistant Secretary of War for Air.<sup>8</sup> "By direction of the President," General Arnold,

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4. R&R, Plans Div. to Exec., OCAC, 24 June 1940, and attached memo slip, BKY /Brig. Gen. B. K. Yount/ to Col. S., cited in ibid., 4.
  5. New York Times, 17 June 1941.
  6. Ibid., 2 July 1941.
  7. The words are Miss Cochran's. Jacqueline Cochran, "Comments of Director of Women Pilots with Respect to the Historical Report of Ferrying Division of Air Transport Command concerning WASP in Said Division" /"Comments"/, 58, in AFSSHO files. Mrs. Roosevelt's column, "My Day," of 3 July 1941, stated: "Miss Jacqueline Cochran is lunching with us today and I am most anxious to hear the report of her trip, about which I shall tell you more in a future column." Washington Daily News, 3 July 1941.
  8. Cochran, "Comments," 58.

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Miss Cochran, and Colonel Olds, who was now in command of the Air Corps Ferrying Command, met in Mr. Lovett's office to consider "the possibilities of utilizing women pilots to ferry primary, basic and advanced trainers from factories to Air Corps stations, thus releasing combat pilots for more important duty." Miss Cochran was assigned to Colonel Olds' office to survey the situation so that a plan could be presented to General Arnold and Mr. Lovett for further consideration. Colonel Olds reported to the Chief of the Air Corps on 25 July 1941 that no publicity had been given out although there had been "innumerable requests" from reporters, who knew the purpose of Miss Cochran's visit to Washington.<sup>9</sup>

Apparently a basic difference of opinion early developed between Miss Cochran and Colonel Olds, stemming from the two concepts indicated earlier of the desired size of the organization and the method of organizing it. At the time she was engaged on the survey Miss Cochran clearly set forth her views and those of Colonel Olds, as she understood them:<sup>10</sup>

I think the essence of any difference we may have on the subject of the method of organizing the women (and I don't know that we have any) is that you are thinking in terms of present movement of equipment, which of course is important, and I am thinking of shaping up a women's pilot organization for its future usefulness in time of war with present ferrying as an initial, although important, incident. To me there is an important difference from the standpoint of morale and effectiveness and official and public reaction and final results between (a) a group of women pilots hired primarily for their ability and doing pretty much as they please, while not in actual ferry work and (b) a group of women pilots selected from the standpoint of background and personal qualities as well as flying ability organized on a patriotic war effort basis and under strict routine

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9. Ibid.; Col. Robert Olds to Lt. Col. Lucius D. Clay, 23 July 1941, in ATC 231.21, W. P.; R&R, No. 2, ACFC to C/AC, 25 July 1941, in CG's File, ATC.
10. J. Cochran to Col. Olds, 21 July 1941, quoted in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 8.

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and regulation at all times. It is in effect the same difference as between a group of air corps pilots ferrying aircraft and the group of Atfero pilots living on a hit-or-miss unregulated basis up in Montreal. I don't mean to infer this lack of organization is not all right for men under the circumstances, but for women it might throw a cloud of doubt on what they could do in a well organized military unit.

The viewpoint of Colonel Olds is apparently represented in a letter to an official of the CAA asking permission for Miss Cochran to examine the agency's files of flying and medical records. Miss Cochran was described as a "tactical consultant" assisting him in "collecting necessary data on which to base recommendations to Mr. Lovett and General Arnold relative to the feasibility of forming a corps of women pilots to ferry military training type aircraft in the continental United States to relieve combat pilots for essential gunnery and bombing training." Although information was being gathered on all women pilots, he wrote, "We are particularly interested in the records of approximately one hundred pilots who have had in excess of five hundred hours flying experience."<sup>11</sup>

The survey entailed both a search through CAA files and the sending of a questionnaire to a considerable number of women flyers.<sup>12</sup> On 1 August 1941 the findings and recommendations were presented to General Arnold. The projected delivery of about 12,000 primary, basic, and advanced training planes from factories to various destinations in the United States before December 1942 would require the services of about 200 pilots. Use of pilots trained for combat appeared to be "uneconomical." "There appears to be no valid reason," Colonel Olds wrote, "why American women pilots

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11. Col. Olds to Lt. Col. Lucius D. Clay, 23 July 1941, in ATC 231.21, W. P.
  12. Mimeographed questionnaire and typed draft of a letter, ACFC to all women holders of licenses, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 7.

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cannot be employed successfully by the Air Corps Ferrying Command to deliver training type aircraft from the factory to destination, thus relieving Air Corps combat pilots from such duties." The data which had been assembled showed that there were 50 women pilots with more than 500 flying hours (30 above 1,000), 83 others with more than 200, and about 2,000 more with some pilot experience but generally less than 200 hours. Many of the last group, it was stated, "would require very little transition training to qualify for the ferrying of primary training type airplanes." The memorandum proposed a 90-day service test in which approximately 50 women pilots with more than 500 hours of flying time would "be employed as civilians by the Air Corps Ferrying Command to determine the capabilities of these pilots on this type of work." If the test proved satisfactory, "the required number of women pilots" should be commissioned in the Air Corps Specialist Reserve. It was proposed that "during the service test period and possibly thereafter" Miss Cochran "be retained as Chief of the Women Pilots Section of the Air Corps Ferrying Command and that all women pilots operate under her direct administrative jurisdiction subject to policies initiated by the Commander, Air Corps Ferrying Command."<sup>13</sup>

It is interesting to note that shortly after the plan had been sent to General Arnold, Mrs. Roosevelt's column, "My Day," commented: "I have been hearing lately how much women pilots are doing in England. . . . I wonder if, in this country, in the CAA courses or in the services, we have begun to train women so they may perform such duties. It would seem

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13. Unsigned copy of memo for C/AAF, prepared by Col. Olds, 1 Aug. 1941, in ATC 321.9.

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to be wise to give women pilots this opportunity, since we know they have been so useful in other countries."<sup>14</sup>

On 25 August 1941 General Arnold disapproved the project:<sup>15</sup>

The use of women pilots serves no military purpose in a country which has adequate manpower at this time. The use of male pilots gives valuable training to a reserve for military purposes.

The use of women pilots presents a difficult situation as to housing and messing of personnel at Air Corps Stations. The use of male pilots presents no such problem.

Records of the Administrator of Civil Aeronautics of the Department of Commerce indicate 78,063 male and 2,733 women are licensed as pilots in the United States. These figures exclude the males employed as airline pilots. Of these there are 12,429 men and only 154 women holding commercial licenses.

No complete record is presented as to the number of male pilots who are employed in necessary defense activities, which makes them unavailable for duty as contemplated.

In view of the very small number of women pilots and the large number of male pilots available; the obvious military advantage of training in all ways as many male pilots as possible, and the serious problems presented by the use of women pilots, the above recommendations cannot at this time be favorably considered.

Although General Arnold rejected the immediate plan, it seems from the above statement that he foresaw the possibility of a shortage of manpower at a

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14. Washington Daily News, 5 Aug. 1941.

15. Memo for the record by H.H.A., 25 Aug. 1941, on last page of memo for C/AAF by C/AC, 5 Aug. 1941, quoted in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 10. Miss Cochran states that "because of the basic difference between Colonel Olds" and herself, he never showed her the final communication he prepared; nor, she writes, did she see General Arnold's memorandum turning down the project. "She was told by Colonel Olds that the proposition had been turned down by General Arnold. Because of this, she closed her office with the Ferry Command but, because she wanted to know how this might affect the use of women pilots at some future date, within a matter of a few days she sought an appointment with General Arnold. . . . He then told the writer that for the time being there was a surplus of pilots in terms of planes rather than vice versa and therefore the time had not yet arrived to use women pilots but that the day would in all probability come; that when women pilots were used his ideas and those of the writer concerning their employment, supervision, and semi-military discipline were completely in accord and he would expect the writer to return to the job and head up such a project when it matured." Cochran, "Comments," 59-60.

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later time and that circumstances might be altered so that the use of women pilots might become necessary.<sup>16</sup>

Soon after the plan advanced by the Ferrying Command had been rejected, British Air Commission officials contacted Miss Cochran and asked her to recruit American women flyers and take them to England to serve with the Air Transport Auxiliary. General Arnold, she states, had recommended her to the British, and he suggested to her that she accept the position if it were offered, since it would be an aid to an ally in the war effort and would enable her to gain "experience against the time women pilots might be brought into service with the U. S. Army Air Forces."<sup>17</sup> The offer was made and she accepted. The British understood that she might be asked to return to the United States to set up and "supervise training centres for American women pilots," and they agreed to release her for such a purpose.<sup>18</sup>

Sometime after the British had approached Miss Cochran, she wrote an "Urgent and Important" letter to General Arnold stating that "General Olds

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16. Note the use of "at this time" in both the opening and closing sentences. Also, early in November it was stated that General Arnold had recently written to a congressman: ". . . it may now be said that a study . . . has resulted in a decision, precluding for the present /underscoring added/ any likelihood of employing female pilots in the ferrying service." Routing slip, ACFC to Exec., 5 Nov. 1941, quoted in "Women Pilots in the ATC."
17. Cochran, "Comments," 60-61; Cochran, Report on Women Pilot Program, 2. In the "Comments" (p. 61), Miss Cochran omits the qualifying "might," and writes: ". . . against the time of start of a women pilot program at home, and that he /General Arnold/ would notify the writer /Miss Cochran/ when the time arrived to return home." In a carbon of the working copy of the Report the statement reads: ". . . against the time when women pilots would be brought into service with the U. S. Army Air Forces," but inked-in corrections change "when" to "if" and "would" to "should." (Working copy in AFSSHO files.)
18. Letter quoted in Cochran, "Comments," 61-62. The date of the letter is not indicated.

told me today (Sunday) that he is planning on hiring women pilots for his Ferry Command almost immediately. His plan, as outlined to me is not only bad in my opinion from the organizational standpoint, and contrary to what you told me Friday, but is in direct conflict, in fact, with the plan of a women's unit for England. In addition, it would wash me out of the supervision of the women flyers here rather than the contrary, as we contemplated."<sup>19</sup> She stated that General Olds was planning to hire women on the same basis as male pilots, without any particular organization. "This," she said, "will bring disrepute on the services before very long, and injure the interests of women flyers themselves. Here, just as in England, a woman in charge of the women is essential." General Olds' plan was to pay women pilots \$360 a month "with even the prospect of a commission."

Miss Cochran continued:<sup>20</sup>

I cannot approach the women to go to England on the basis that for some months to come, at least, there will be no opportunity to serve here in the air, and then have the General Olds plan develop.

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19. This would seem to indicate that General Arnold had decided that the women would be used in the United States at some later date.
20. J. Cochran to Gen. Arnold, n. d., filed with R&R, C/AAF to ACFC, 19 Jan. 1942, in ATC 321.9. W. P. Olds' nomination to brigadier general was received by the Senate on 14 January 1942, and was confirmed on 19 January. Cong. Rec., 77 Cong., 2 Sess., 349 (14 Jan. 1942), 464 (19 Jan. 1942). The letter was evidently written on 18 January. Miss Cochran's "Comments" (p. 63), however, state: "The statement by Colonel Olds /under scoring added/ to the writer that he planned to hire women pilots was made not in January 1942 as stated /in a history of women pilots in the Ferrying Division, ATC/ but within a matter of days after the arrangement for recruiting American women pilots for English service had been orally made at a much earlier date with the British . . . and consequently very shortly after the talk with General Arnold by the writer, in which he stated there would be no women hired, at least for many months to come, and that the women should go to England." The "Comments" were not written until the summer of 1945. Possibly the passage of time had caused confusion in memory of the events.

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It's terribly confusing to have you say that women won't be needed or used here for many months to come, and have General Olds tell me the next day that there is a shortage of pilots and he is going to use women as a consequence; and that while his plan for an organization of women was turned down he has not been stopped from hiring individual women pilots, and proposes to do so unless stopped immediately.

General Olds says he will see you about this before Monday noon. I want you to have my views prior to such a conference.

His plan should be put on ice for at least the next six months, or my program for England should be stopped. The arrangement with the British should be completed today.

I will check your office for word Monday afternoon, and will be available all day in case you wish to talk to me. . . .

On 19 January--the next day after the letter was written, apparently-- General Arnold forwarded Miss Cochran's note to General Olds and advised him: "In connection with the attached letter, as per instructions you received from me this date, you will make no plans or open negotiations for hiring women pilots until Miss Jacqueline Cochran has completed her present agreement with the British authorities and has returned to the United States."<sup>21</sup>

Indications were that the prospect of women pilots being used in the United States was at least delayed for several months.<sup>22</sup> Miss Cochran, who had already begun to recruit and select pilots to take to England,

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21. R&R, C/AAF to ACFC, 19 Jan. 1942, in ATC 231.21, W. P. The statement "as per instructions you received from me this date" indicates a likelihood that General Olds had a conference with General Arnold on Monday, in line with the statement in Miss Cochran's letter to General Arnold.
22. The New York Times of 24 January 1942 quoted Miss Cochran as saying: "It is apparent that at least for months to come there will be no place for women in affiliation with our fighting air force." By this time, however, she evidently had some assurance that they would be used later, for she stated: "By going to Great Britain now the group of American women pilots can help our ally in a needed way and be organized and trained as a nucleus for a similar American Air Transport Auxiliary when the need for such an organization shall arise." Cf. n. 17, above.

continued this activity. Those chosen, 25 in all, went to England in groups in the spring of 1942.<sup>23</sup>

Within a few months proposals were again made to use women pilots for the ferrying of aircraft. These originated within the Domestic Wing of the Ferrying Command. Mrs. Nancy H. Love, who as early as May 1940 had suggested to Colonel Olds that experienced women flyers might be used to ferry trainer planes, was in the summer of 1942 employed by the Domestic Wing as an operations assistant.<sup>24</sup> The Domestic Wing (soon to be renamed the Ferrying Division) was undergoing a great expansion in order to keep up with the ever increasing plane production of American factories.<sup>25</sup> To assist in the ferrying job, and to determine the general feasibility of using women pilots, Mrs. Love believed that experienced women pilots could be used effectively, and she proposed that a group of highly qualified women flyers be recruited. The Domestic Wing turned down the idea, but Ferrying Command Headquarters supported it.<sup>26</sup> On 11 June 1942 the Ferrying Command informed Headquarters, AAF: "It is desired to use commissioned officers of the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps WAAC for the ferrying of airplanes under this command, to replace and supplement male pilots insofar as qualified women may be available."<sup>27</sup>

A week later the Domestic Wing submitted a plan for the use of women

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23. Report on Women Pilot Program, 2-3; Cochran, "Comments," 61.  
 24. Brig. Gen. Bob E. Nowland to AG, 22 Dec. 1944, in ATC 201, Nancy Love; "Women Pilots in the ATC," 12-13.  
 25. See AAF Historical Studies: No. 33, Administrative History of the Ferrying Command, 29 May 1941-30 June 1942, Chap. III.  
 26. "Women Pilots in the ATC," 13-14, citing conversations between Mrs. Love and Capt. W. J. Marx; interview with Lt. Col. James I. Teague by Capt. W. J. Marx, 24 July 1944, in Historical Files, Hq FERD; informal conversation with various FERD staff officers.  
 27. R&R, ACFC to AFAAP, 11 June 1942, quoted in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 14.

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pilots to Brig. Gen. Harold L. George, who had been appointed Commanding General of the Ferrying Command on 1 April. Requirements for acceptance would be: 500 hours of logged and certified flying time; age within the limits 21-35; and a high school education. Applicants should apply directly to the commanding officer of the 2d Ferrying Group to have their records checked and to be given a flight test. The names of qualified applicants should be reported to Mrs. Oveta C. Hobby of the WAAC who should take action to have them commissioned second lieutenants. They would be assigned to the 2d Ferrying Group and receive 30 to 45 days of instruction in military organization, technical orders on the types of planes they were to ferry, ferry routes, etc. Deliveries of planes should be only domestic and only of primary trainer and liaison aircraft. The first unit--the only one contemplated for the remainder of the year--should consist of 25 women pilots organized into a ferrying squadron.<sup>28</sup> The commanding officer of the 2d Ferrying Group recommended that the squadron consist of 50 women and that Mrs. Love be appointed a first lieutenant and assigned as operations officer of the unit. "As this is more or less an experiment," he stated, "I believe that a more thorough trial can be made with 50 women pilots instead of 25." The date of activation could be as early as 15 July.<sup>29</sup>

These recommendations were passed on to General George with an additional argument in favor of a unit of 50 women: it was said that

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28. Memo for ACFC by CO FERD, 18 June 1942, cited in ibid. "The original draft of this memo," the source states, is in Mrs. Love's handwriting.
29. Lt. Col. Robert H. Baker to Col. William H. Tunner, 20 June 1943, cited in ibid.

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Mrs. Hobby believed a unit of 50 women to be standard.<sup>30</sup> This indicates that Mrs. Hobby may have been consulted on the possibility of commissioning the pilots.

Difficulties developed, which caused plans to commission women pilots in the WAAC to be abandoned. These were explained by General Arnold in a letter to Congressman W. R. Poague on 13 July 1942:<sup>31</sup>

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that the Air Transport Command . . . is giving consideration to the use of women fliers as ferrying pilots and is attempting to carry out a program of this nature in cooperation with the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps. Unfortunately, there are certain technical difficulties to this program due to the deficiencies of the existing legislation under which the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps operates. There is at present no authority for the commissioning of flying officers in the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, nor is there any authority for flying pay. I understand that an amendment is now being drafted for submission to the Congress to rectify these and other deficiencies. When and if the amendment is adopted it seems probable that a place will be found for women fliers to the extent that they are available and qualified.

Concurrently, the Air Transport Command (redesignated from Ferrying Command on 20 June) was changing its plans to provide for hiring women as Civil Service employees. This proposal was made to General Arnold on 18 July, and it was stated that the organization should be for "determining the suitability of utilizing women pilots in the delivery of military aircraft." Mrs. Love was suggested for director of the unit. The title "Womens' Auxiliary Ferrying Troop," which would possess some popular appeal

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30. Memo for ATC by CO FERD, 20 June 1943, cited in *ibid.*

31. General Arnold to W. R. Poague, 13 July 1942, in ATC 231.21, W. P. Congressman Poague had written to Mrs. Hobby about the possibilities of the Army using women flyers and had inclosed a resolution adopted by women flyers from eight states on 30 May 1942 urging the government to utilize their services, "thereby releasing many valuable men pilots for active duty." *Ibid.*; Mrs. Polk Shelton to W. R. Poague (copy), 23 June 1942, in ATC 231.21, W. P.

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when abbreviated as "WAPTS," was advanced. "If you approve this," General George wrote, "we will go ahead at once with the organization although you intimated, when we discussed this about three weeks ago, that you wanted to mention the matter to the President thinking that he would like to announce the formation of a Womens' Pilot Corps for use in the domestic ferrying of aircraft."<sup>32</sup> In reply, General Arnold stated:<sup>33</sup>

In connection with the attached, prior to doing anything further along this line, it is desired that you confer with the CAA and with Major Johnson of the Civilian Air Patrol with a view of securing every possible qualified pilot from that source.

After exhausting that supply, then reopen this proposition. Give me an outline of the number of women pilots you expect to get and require to carry out your mission.

More than a month later Mrs. Roosevelt, in her daily column, again revived the subject of using women pilots. She wrote that she had received a letter "from a gentleman who is very much exercised because our women pilots are not being utilized in the war effort." In England, she said, they were ferrying aircraft and "freeing innumerable men for combat service." She saw no reason why they should not be used in the United States in the Civil Air Patrol and in the "Ferrying Command." If the war continued long enough and American women flyers were patient, they probably would be used eventually. "However, there is just a chance that this is not a time when women should be patient." Women pilots were "a weapon waiting to be used." Mrs. Roosevelt apparently agreed with her correspondent that women should undertake a campaign to see that the 3,500 American women flyers be given a chance to contribute to the war effort before it was too late.<sup>34</sup>

32. Memo for CG AAF by ATC, 17 July 1942, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 20-21; R&R, ATC to CG AAF, 18 July 1942, quoted in *ibid.* Evidently General George had informed General Arnold late in June of the plans being made.

33. R&R, CG AAF to ATC, 20 July 1942, quoted in *ibid.*

34. washington Daily News, 1 Sep. 1942.

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A day or two later, General Arnold decided at a conference of members of the Air Staff and the "type directors" that "women pilots would be used to the maximum in the ferrying of light trainer planes from the factory to the schools," and he directed that A-1 "work out the details in connection with this project with General George."<sup>35</sup> On 3 September, General George, repeating his earlier suggestions, recommended to General Arnold that a group of women pilots be organized to determine the suitability of women pilots for the delivery of military aircraft, and stated that activities could be started within 24 hours.<sup>36</sup> Two days later Brig. Gen. L. S. Kuter, Deputy Chief of Air Staff, authorized immediate action and the beginning of recruiting within 24 hours.<sup>37</sup>

Standards established by the ATC were similar to those outlined in the June plan. They required that an acceptable applicant must be a citizen of the United States with a high school education, be between 21 and 35 years of age, hold a commercial pilot's license, and have 500 hours certified flying time as pilot and a CAA rating for 200 horsepower. Salary was to be \$250 a month, and the women were to live in a dormitory and have the normal privileges of officers. Applicants were to be given a flight check. Those accepted were to be sent to school for 30-40 days to learn

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35. Memo for C/AS by Col. A. L. Moore, 3 Sep. 1942, in AAG 337F, Conferences. General Arnold states that "My Day had nothing to do with the decision. The development was all part of a regular plan." Answers to questions on use of women pilots, attached to memo for Maj. H. J. Bingham by Col. Fred M. Dean, 12 Nov. 1945, in AFSHO files.
36. Memo for CG AAF by ATC, 3 Sep. 1942, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 22.
37. R&R, AFDAS to AFAAP, 5 Sep. 1942, cited in *ibid.*, 22. The reply to the R&R (No. 2, AFAAP to AFDAS, 7 Sep. 1942, cited in *ibid.*) stated that the director of the women pilots had been appointed on 5 September and that procurement had started immediately.

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about military organization, technical orders on the planes to be ferried, routes, operations procedures, etc.<sup>38</sup>

On 10 September a War Department press release announced that an experimental unit--the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS)--was to be established by the ATC. The squadron was to be made up of about 50 women. The New York Times on the next day announced that Mrs. Love had been appointed commander of the unit.<sup>39</sup>

Miss Cochran states that meanwhile, in the summer of 1942, General Arnold saw her while he was in England and advised her "that the time was approaching for the activation of a women pilot program at home and that she should therefore close out her work in England and return home to take over this new phase."<sup>40</sup> She arrived in the United States on 10 September, just after the announcement that the WAFS was to be organized.

The following day [11 September], the writer [Miss Cochran] called on General Arnold by appointment and he told her he had given instructions to prepare and submit plans for use of women pilots but that he had not seen the plan that had apparently been activated and that the announcement had been made without his knowledge and was not in accordance with his own intentions. He then called General George and Colonel C. R. Smith to his office and told them the same thing and that the project should be revised and that they should work it out with the writer for she knew his views.<sup>41</sup>

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38. Memo for CG AAF by ATC, 3 Sep. 1942, cited in ibid., 22-23.

39. New York Times, 11 Sep. 1942.

40. Cochran, "Comments," 64. General Arnold states: "I suggested that she return and left the time to her but suggested that she not wait too long." Answers to questions on use of women pilots, attached to memo for Maj. H. J. Bingham by Col. Fred M. Dean, 12 Nov. 1945.

41. Cochran, "Comments," 64-65. General Arnold states that he did see General George's memorandum but does not remember whether General Kuter's authorization of immediate action on the proposal was made without his knowledge or against his wishes. With reference to the meeting, he states: "I called them all together and told them that I would not have two women's pilot organizations in the AAF--that they had to get together. It was a bigger proposition than flying for ATC." Answers to questions on use of women pilots in the AAF, attached to memo for Maj. H. J. Bingham by Col. Fred M. Dean, 12 Nov. 1945.

She also states that the ATC had not made "a careful check of the available women pilot material"; that only 28 women were obtained; "that if there were any need for women pilots at all the need was for more than 28 or even 50; and therefore that the most important immediate phase of a women pilot program was the training." But if the WAFS organization had been wiped out so soon after the public announcement, "complications unfavorable to the program" would have resulted. Therefore, Miss Cochran writes, she "recommended that the ferry squadron set up be left 'as is' but that the training program be started promptly."<sup>42</sup>

General George, on 12 September, summed up the situation as he saw it in a memorandum to General Arnold. "It is evident," he stated, "that there are two, and differing conceptions of the program to be undertaken in connection with the training and the subsequent utilization of women pilots by Army Air Forces. Which of these two projected plans is to be followed is a matter of AAF policy." The ATC had not intended to employ women pilots without 500 hours of flying time and commercial licenses. It did not have facilities for training large numbers. Miss Cochran, however, had indicated her belief in "a program for the training and utilization of women pilots on a much broader basis than at present contemplated by ATC," in fact, a program which would involve training and using substantially all of the approximately 3,000 women pilots in the country, "with later extension beyond that . . . group." Although he found no fault in the broader program and recognized "it probably will be required," General George declared "the establishment of extensive training facilities" would be necessary if the ATC were given the training

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42. Cochran, "Comments," 65.

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function. He held that "the utilization of women pilots should be divided into two classifications: 1. Enlistment and training; 2. Subsequent employment in ferrying operation." In line with this, he suggested that a "separate training establishment" be set up and the graduates turned over to the ATC. He further recommended that Miss Cochran "be considered to head and to supervise the enlistment and training features of the AAF program, to be known, perhaps, as 'Director of Women Pilots Training, AAF.'" Finally, instead of a single officer in charge of all women pilots in his command, the women, like male pilots, "will be organized into squadrons by ATC and will be assigned to sectors of ATC, to operate directly under present Sector Commanders of the Ferrying Division." It was planned to have about 50 women in each squadron, with Mrs. Love supervising the first squadron and other squadron leaders appointed as their units were activated.<sup>43</sup>

General Arnold forwarded this memorandum to the Chief of the Air Staff and asked that A-3 and the Director of Individual Training present a plan. General Arnold suggested that Miss Cochran "pick out say 500 of the best women fliers she can find in the United States." Some could be turned over directly to ATC; others would need further training for which "Miss Cochran should make arrangement with CPT." After CPT (Civilian Pilot Training) graduates had received considerable experience in ferrying basic trainers, some should prove satisfactory for advanced trainer work. Miss Cochran would direct the training program. When the graduates were ready for the ATC, "Transport Command can worry about them from that time on." General Arnold believed that this plan would "secure the most effective service

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43. Memo for Gen. Arnold by Gen. George, 12 Sep. 1942, copy in AFSHO files.

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of the women pilots in the United States, interfere the least with our training program, and replace male pilots to the maximum extent."<sup>44</sup>

In accordance with General Arnold's instructions, a plan was devised on 15 September at a conference which included Miss Cochran, Capt. James I. Teague of the Ferrying Division, and representatives of A-3, the Directorate of Individual Training, and CAA. Appointment of Miss Cochran as Director of Women's Flying Training was proposed. She should be attached to the office of the Director of Individual Training and should "supervise and coordinate the training of women pilots for assignment to the Air Transport Command." ATC's requirements were that each trainee "complete a 100 hour course of Civilian Pilot Training and have a minimum of 300 hours on completion of the course" (in other words, 200 hours before entrance); possess a "validated commercial license at the completion of the course, with limitations of not less than 200 HP"; and be an American citizen with a high school education.<sup>45</sup>

To meet these requirements, a four-month CPT course was proposed with 25 hours in 65 h.p. planes, 25 in 90 h.p., and 50 hours in 200 h.p. (minimum). In addition, there should be 15 hours of Link-trainer work, 25 hours of under-the-hood instruction, and 180 hours of ground school training. Applicants were to be chosen "from the estimated 3250 women pilots" in the country who were within the age limits, had at least 200 hours flying experience, and could pass a flight and written test and a physical examination to be set up by Miss Cochran and the Air Surgeon.

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44. R&R, Gen. Arnold to Maj. Gen. G. E. Stratemeyer, 13 Sep. 1942, quoted in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 54-55.

45. Memo for CG AAF by Col. L. S. Smith, 15 Sep. 1942, in 353.01, Directives, files of D/WP.

During the training period, the salary was to be \$150 a month; after assignment to the ATC, \$250. In line with General Arnold's suggestions of 13 September, "Training will be laid out for 500 women, if that number can be selected with proper qualifications." Finally, arrangements had already been made for 25 women to enter training on 15 October and 50 each succeeding month.<sup>46</sup>

The ATC representative at the conference had evidently pressed for high acceptance requirements. In reporting to his commanding officer, Captain Teague stated that he had urged a stipulation of 50 hours on 200 h.p. aircraft in the minimum acceptance requirement of 200 hours flying time. "This was about the only argument I lost. . . . Miss Cochran stated flatly and emphatically that this would almost automatically preclude her securing the services of more than a very few pilots. In lieu of this, we got the Link time and hood time in the training program."<sup>47</sup>

In reporting on the conference to General George, Col. William H. Turner of the Ferrying Division summarized the plan agreed upon. His last sentence, following directly--within the paragraph--upon the final one

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46. Ibid. The plan was approved by General Stratemeyer for General Arnold on 16 September. Handwritten comment, ibid.

47. Captain Teague also wrote that "Miss Cochran stated quite positively that our demands, even after we had lowered them were ridiculous. . . . She stated that she did not believe that she could secure more than one hundred fifty women in the country who could meet our qualifications, possible /sic/ two hundred." Memo for CG FERD by Asst. S-1, 16 Sep. 1942, quoted in "Women Pilots in the ATC." Miss Cochran, however, denies that she called the ATC requirements "ridiculous." She suggests a possibility that another statement she made was misinterpreted. "Miss Cochran stated that if cadets could be trained in this number of hours /about 225/ to do combat work, it was ridiculous to assume that girls could not be qualified in the same number of hours to ferry trainer planes under daylight, non-instrument conditions." Cochran, "Comments," 13-14.

summarizing the agreement, is a significant obiter dictum:<sup>48</sup>

[Graduates] will be employed at Headquarters, 2nd Ferrying Group, Ferrying Division, ATC, . . . only if they meet the basic requirements for the position of women civilian pilots (including physical examination and flight test) and not because they have graduated from the course outlined above.

Whether this was considered a part of the agreement or as an indication of the Ferrying Division's intentions, the attitude expressed was later to cause difficulty. It would seem that General George's memorandum of 12 September and the decisions at the conference three days later constituted a commitment by the ATC to accept graduates of the GPT course.<sup>49</sup> Nevertheless, it is quite clear that the Ferrying Division was still thinking in terms of highly qualified, experienced women pilots and desired to keep control over them after they had been assigned.

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48. Memo for ATC by FEMD, 17 Sep. 1942, quoted in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 57.

49. "Women Pilots in the ATC," 58.

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## Chapter II

## THE TRAINING OF WOMEN PILOTS

Soon after the agreement had been reached on 15 September 1942, the Women's Flying Training Detachment (WFTD) was established in the Flying Training Command. Early in October the command was informed that by the end of 1943 it was expected to qualify "500 women pilots for ferrying duty within the Transport Command." ATC, the directive stated, was "responsible for the employment of women pilots." Enough instruction was to be given to enable the women to ferry primary trainer planes, although it was planned that they would subsequently progress to basic and advanced trainers as the need developed. Experienced personnel were to be chosen; but the prerequisite of 200 hours of flying time had already been abandoned, for the directive specified: "Insofar as possible the candidates will be selected from those who have acquired a minimum of 75 hours certified time. Limitations of hours will not be published. Individuals will be selected based upon their own qualifications." No attempt was to be made to establish ab initio training. Miss Cochran, who was named as the director of the training program, was to have her office at Flying Training Command Headquarters.<sup>1</sup>

The point upon which the ATC representative at the 15 September conference had been most insistent--200 hours flying time as a prerequisite

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1. Maj. Gen. G. E. Stratemyer to CG AFTTC, 7 Oct. 1942, App. 3, in "History of the Women Airforce Service Pilots Program and Activities in the AAF Training Command."

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for acceptance--had been thrown overboard.<sup>2</sup> The lowered standard, however, is not particularly surprising. Miss Cochran had argued that actually there were not enough women pilots in the country to attain the goal of 500 unless the requirement were considerably lowered.<sup>3</sup> In fact, the 200-hour agreement seems to have been abandoned almost at once after the 15 September conference. Evelyn Peyton Gordon, in her column in the Washington Daily News of 25 September 1942, quoted Miss Cochran as saying:

Yes, I've been called back by Gen. Arnold to be the head of a women's air corps in this country. Our goal is 1500. Today there are not many women pilots who have 200 or more actual hours in the air. We'll take those first. Then in gradations, those who have less and less flying time. Older women will be instructors. I've had such success with my girls in England that I know it will work.

The decisions made at the conference apparently created an extremely difficult situation: 500 women pilots were to be trained, but only those with 200 hours of flying time could be chosen. The conference had attempted to make a compromise between two concepts which were irreconcilable.

Before training was begun, another significant change in the women pilot program emanated from Headquarters, AAF. The small-numbers concept was definitely discarded, and there was an indication that women pilots might be utilized for other duties in addition to ferrying aircraft. The prohibition against ab initio training was removed, since it was now

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2. Indeed, he indicates that he had argued for a 300-hour minimum requirement and that 200 hours was a compromise. Asst. S-1 to CO FERD, 15 Sep. 1942, quoted in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 57.
  3. Ibid.



contemplated that "women with no previous flying experience" might be trained. The Flying Training Command was informed:<sup>4</sup>

Contemplated expansion of the armed forces will tax the nation's manpower. Women must be used wherever it is practicable to do so. It is desired that you take immediate and positive action to augment to the maximum possible extent the training of women pilots. The Air Forces objective is to provide at the earliest possible date a sufficient number of women pilots to replace men in every noncombatant flying duty in which it is feasible to employ women. . . .

Courses of instruction should be designed to improve the ability of trained pilots as well as training for women with no previous flying experience.

A few days later General Arnold further emphasized the altered scope of the program: "We will soon have to take immediate and positive action to utilize women and overage and physically unfit men in every possible position throughout the Air Forces. We must accept this principle without reservation and that literally, 'the sky is the limit' in our objectives for effecting it." He asked for the immediate initiation of studies which would enable "the formulation of a complete plan as to what positions women may fill, the training necessary, procurement objectives, etc." Obviously General Arnold was thinking primarily of releasing combat pilots for overseas duty.<sup>5</sup>

The first class of women pilot trainees, numbering about 25,<sup>6</sup> was

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4. General Arnold to CG AFFTC, 3 Nov. 1942, in AAG 291.3A, Sex.
  5. R&R, Gen. Arnold to Gen. Stratemeyer, 6 Nov. 1942, in *ibid.* In reply to the 3 November directive, the Flying Training Command stated that civilian aircraft would be required for augmentation of the women pilots program. It asked for information on the availability of civilian aircraft so that it could formulate plans for expansion of the training. Brig. Gen. W. F. Kraus to AFRTT, 11 Nov. 1942, in *ibid.*
  6. "History of the Women Airforce Service Pilots Program and Activities in the AAF Training Command" *[AFTRC WASP History]* gives the number in one place as 25 (p. 19), 28 in another (p. 30), and as 29 in an appended flow chart (App. 6).

an experienced group whose flying time ranged from 200 to 762 hours and averaged 312.<sup>7</sup> They entered training at Houston, Texas, at the Howard Hughes Airport on 16 November 1942. The contractor was Aviation Enterprises, Ltd., and the school was under the jurisdiction of the Gulf Coast Training Center.<sup>8</sup> Facilities at Houston soon proved to be inadequate, and the training center headquarters finally recommended that either the training goal for 1943 be reduced from 500 to 396 or a new site be selected. Since by this time plans had been made to increase the 1943 production to 750 and the course was being lengthened, the bulk of the training was shifted to Avenger Field, Sweetwater, Texas, early in 1943. Training at Houston was gradually shut down.<sup>9</sup>

At first, the Flying Training Command planned to give nearly all instruction on civilian-type planes. Near the end of the course, however, there was to be transition to military aircraft.<sup>10</sup> By the end of 1942 there were 22 different kinds of civilian planes at Houston, many of them light and poorly equipped. The Gulf Coast Training Center concluded that it was "impossible to bring the women pilots to the full stage of proficiency required" in these planes and recommended that they be replaced with standard military planes.<sup>11</sup> Replacements for the civilian-type

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7. Ibid., 30.

8. Ibid., 19.

9. Ibid., 19-22, 26-29. Later the 1943 production goal was again lowered to about 500. Ibid., 22. For details on facilities, contractors, and complications involved in the move from Houston to Sweetwater, see "History of Central Flying Training Command, WASP Program" [CFTC WASP History], I, 22 ff.

10. Brig. Gen. A. F. Kraus to CG CGTC, 10 Nov. 1942, App. 4, in AFTRC WASP History.

11. CFTC History, 1943, V, 1002; CFTC WASP History, I, 63.

planes gradually filtered in, but it was not until April, when the school at Houston was about to be closed, that there were enough military aircraft to give instruction according to the curriculum. With the move to Sweetwater, more and better planes were available.<sup>12</sup>

The first program of instruction for women pilot trainees, as adopted on 10 November 1942, provided for a four-month course designed to qualify them "to ferry training type Army Aircraft." It included 115 hours of flying instruction ("except when credit for previous training is allowed"), 180 hours of ground instruction, and an hour a day of physical training for five days a week. In the flying phase, 25 hours were allotted to liaison-type planes, 75 to commercial-type aircraft (10 transition, 25 instrument, 10 night, and 30 navigation), and 15 to basic and advanced trainers. Twenty hours were to be given over to Link-trainer instruction. The academic phase was broken down as follows:<sup>13</sup>

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Navigation	35
Weather	50
Aircraft and engines	80
Communications	10
Procedures of Air Transport Command	5
Total	<u>180</u>

Almost immediately the academic program was questioned. On 14 November 1942 a new tentative ground-school breakdown was suggested which called for 315 hours of instruction.<sup>14</sup> Apparently the course actually used during this early period was flexible and was adjusted to the previous experience of the trainees.<sup>15</sup>

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- 12. AFTRC WASP History, 36.
  - 13. AFFTC, "Program of Instruction, Womens' Flying Training, Pilot Trainees," 10 Nov. 1942, App. 7, in ibid.
  - 14. CG CGTC to CG AFFTC, 14 Nov. 1942, cited in CFTR WASP History, I, 47-48.
  - 15. Ibid.; AFTRC WASP History, 30.

Early in 1943 the curriculum was revised. The course was lengthened to 22½ weeks with flying training divided into three phases---primary (50 hours), basic (70 hours), and advanced (50 hours). This was an increase of 55 hours over the flying program adopted in November. Ground school instruction was also increased significantly. The major subjects and hours were:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Mathematics	20
Physics	20
Navigation	50
Code practice	30
Aircraft and engines	60
Weather	50

In addition, 7 hours were to be given to orientation (military courtesies and customs, safeguarding military information, and War Department publications) and 10 to training in the maintenance of aeronautical equipment.<sup>16</sup>

It seems that the new curriculum was adopted as a result of a directive from Headquarters, AAF that trainees were to be qualified on primary, basic, and advanced (AT-6 and AT-7) trainers and were to meet service-pilot qualifications.<sup>17</sup>

Later modifications of the course in 1943 increased its length to 24 weeks and finally to 27 weeks. Flying training was stepped up to 180 hours and then to 210. Ground training by the end of the year had been increased to 476 hours (66, military; 309, academic; 10, aeronautical-equipment maintenance; 81, physical; 10, medical).<sup>18</sup> Some of the

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16. "Program of Instruction, Women's Pilot Training Course," 30 Jan. 1943, cited in CFTC WASP History, I, 48-49.

17. AFTRC Project Book, Women's Flying Training Program, 29 Jan. 1943, 13 Feb. 1943.

18. CFTC WASP History, 50-55.

significant innovations which came with the 27-week program, adopted in October 1943, were the concentration of instrument flying into one phase (intermediate); the elimination of twin-engine training, on the theory that a better pilot would be produced if the advanced phase were concentrated on the AT-6; the addition of ground school courses in instrument flying, communications, Pilot's Information File, and forms and procedures; and an increase in navigation (cross-country) training and concentration of this instruction in the advanced phase.<sup>19</sup> The emphasis on navigation was designed "to better qualify the women pilot graduates for duty with the Air Transport Command." Two cross-country flights, each of 1,000 miles, were to be made during the advanced stage, one in an AT-6, the other in a PT-17.<sup>20</sup> By the end of the year it was required that the cross-country flight in the AT-6 cover a distance of 2,000 miles.<sup>21</sup>

A comparison of the curriculum of 10 November 1942 with that in effect at the end of 1943 reveals several major evolutionary developments which stemmed, apparently, from a declining experience level of accepted applicants, dissatisfaction with the training program, and criticism of the proficiency of the graduates. The course was lengthened progressively, from four months to more than six; the number of hours devoted to flying was increased from 115 hours to 210; the academic program was increased from 180 hours to 309; and more than 60 hours of military instruction were added. In addition to quantitative changes in hours, there were

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19. Ibid., 53.

20. AFTRC Project Book, Women's Flying Training Program, 20 Oct. 1943.

21. TC Memo No. 50-6-1, 9 Dec. 1943.

also reorganizations of the work within each phase of training, and the course in effect at the end of 1943 provided a systematic plan for both flying and ground instruction.<sup>22</sup>

There were only a few curricular changes in 1944. In March it was decided to extend the course to 30 weeks, with 10 weeks allotted to each of the three phases.<sup>23</sup> About the same time there was an introduction of additional military training to qualify graduates as AAF officers, owing to "the likely passage by Congress of legislation militarizing the WASP [Women Airforce Service Pilots] organization."<sup>24</sup>

Despite the few alterations in the program of instruction in 1944, there was some dissatisfaction with the administration and conduct of training at Sweetwater, especially during the first half of the year. Special investigations in April revealed "mismanagement and lack of cooperation" at the station, improper duty assignments of military personnel, lax discipline on the flight line and in classrooms, insufficient flying, poor crash equipment and procedure, "a high accident rate," and graduation of students "without a single flight check by Army Personnel."<sup>25</sup> Late in June it was reported that coordination between the various phases of training needed to be improved. Early in July, however, and again in August, training was rated satisfactory, although there continued to be some dissatisfaction with ground school instruction.<sup>26</sup>

22. CFTC WASP History, I, 55-56.

23. Hq AFTRC, "Women Flying Training Flow Chart," 13 March 1944, cited in CFTC WASP History, I, 17; *ibid.*, 56.

24. AFTRC Project Book, Women's Flying Training Program, 13 March 1944. The increase in military training was a result of a directive from Headquarters, AAF, dated 6 March 1944. *Ibid.* The extension of military training from 66 to 137 hours, and an increase in medical training, from 10 to 23 hours, were set forth in TC Memo No. 50-6-2, 26 May 1944.

25. Reports of inspections quoted in CFTC WASP History, I, 66-67.

26. *Ibid.*, 70-76.

Shortly before the women's flying training program began, it was contemplated that women pilots would be used for other duties than ferrying. The Flying Training Command was requested to furnish a list of positions in which women pilots could be used.<sup>27</sup> The command did not have sufficient information at the time to draw up a complete list, but stated that those not needed for ferrying might be used as instructors in women's flying schools, primary pilot schools, elementary glider schools, and liaison pilot schools; as tow pilots in basic glider schools; as gunnery tow-target pilots; and as instrument flying instructors and Link-trainer operators.<sup>28</sup> But for many months the program was subject to fluctuating production requirements, difficulties in obtaining a satisfactory training site, a rising elimination rate as entrants' previous flying experience declined, and extensions in the length of the curriculum.<sup>29</sup> Not until the fall of 1943 were the decisions made to assign WASPs to the Training Command for operational duties and to initiate special training projects to increase the usefulness of women pilots, such as transition training to the C-60 and B-26. In 1944 other special training projects were started--B-26 co-pilot training, instrument flying training, and an officers' course at the AAF School of Applied Tactics, Orlando, Fla.<sup>30</sup>

Use of women as glider tow pilots was the intention behind the C-60 transition course. Although "every effort" was to be made to qualify

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27. R&R, Gen. Arnold to Gen. Stratemeier, 6 Nov. 1942, in AAG 291.3A, Sex; Gen. Arnold to CG AFFTC, 3 Nov. 1942, in *ibid.*  
 28. CG AFFTC to CG AAF, 21 Nov. 1942, cited in AFFTC WASP History, 39-40.  
 29. AFFTC WASP History, *passim*.  
 30. AFFTC WASP History, I, 92 ff.; AFFTC WASP History, 45-46.

the women pilots, proficiency standards were to be high enough "to leave no doubt that these women are capable of operating the equipment." In answer to a question as to whether the women were to be treated like other students or were to receive additional training if necessary to bring them up to standard, permission to give additional training was granted.

On the whole, results in the C-60 program seem to have been disappointing. Sixteen women pilots entered training, and 15 of them received an average of 96 hours of co-pilot time in the C-60 before entering the transition school. Seven of the 15 were eliminated, and two others were checked out but were "considered unsatisfactory for towing gliders." Although the other six were "considered minimum satisfactory for glider towing under ideal conditions," the commanding officer of the field stated, "We would be very hesitant to use any of these six women pilots in questionable weather." As contrasted with male pilots, he claimed, the progress of the women was "very slow," and they required "much more transition." The chief reason for their lesser abilities, he held, was lack of the "strength and stamina" needed for the exacting and fatiguing sort of work involved in glider towing with either the C-60 or A-25. He recommended that the eight who had been checked out be transferred to less strenuous work in which fewer landings were required. The seven eliminees should be made pilots of "lighter and less complex aircraft."<sup>31</sup> The Flying Evaluation Board recommended that no

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31. Col. Norman Olsen to CG CFTC, 11 Feb. 1944, quoted in CFTC WIASP History, I, 93-94.



more women be accepted as students for transition or tow in the C-60 airplane.<sup>32</sup>

Transition training in B-26 aircraft was termed "a reasonably successful experiment." Of the 57 students who reported, 29 were graduated. They were said to be enthusiastic and cooperative. In ground school they were conscientious students, and their average grades in this phase exceeded the "over-all average."<sup>33</sup>

B-26 co-pilot training, begun in August 1944, was of short duration. It was given at flexible gunnery schools in the Eastern and Western Flying Training Commands, and the commands were left free to determine the length of the course and the amount of flying time required. Women were to be used as co-pilots on tow-target missions. When they had demonstrated suitable proficiency, they were to be checked out as first pilots. Selection of women pilots for this training was difficult because of other quotas which had to be met for the course at Orlando and for the instrument course and because of the requirement that those selected for B-26 co-pilot instruction be at least five feet four inches tall, have had experience with twin-engine aircraft, and possess an instrument card. The course was

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32. Ibid., 95. Military aircraft, of course, are constructed for men, and in certain instances where women's leg length or generally inadequate stature make necessary the resort to various makeshift aids, the resulting uncomfortable posture may result in undue fatigue. Thus, some factors other than lack of strength and stamina may have caused occasional failure of women pilots to match the performance of male pilots in certain types of aircraft. Cf. "Medical Consideration of WASPs," prepared by Capt. Nels O. Monserud, 20-22. This report (filed in the Historical Unit, Office of the Air Surgeon) concluded: "A study of muscular strength and endurance may furnish necessary data to forecast the size and kind of airplane women could successfully fly."
33. Col. Charles B. Root and Maj. John D. Todd, quoted in CPTC WASP History, I, 96.

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abruptly terminated at the end of September 1944, and since quotas for assignment to the air forces were canceled about the same time, most of the women trained as co-pilots were returned to their original stations where, it seems, no further use of their specialized training was made.<sup>34</sup>

In July 1944 an instrument flying course was established at Sweetwater to qualify women pilots for an instrument rating and for Form 8 (White). After much discussion as to the nature of the course, as finally approved it provided for slightly over 51 hours of instrument flying, 54 hours of ground school instruction, and 15 hours of physical training over a period of five weeks. The BT-13 was used as the trainer airplane, though Miss Cochran had been anxious that the AT-6 be used. The course was given from 7 August until 24 November 1944, when it was discontinued because of the imminent deactivation of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) program. Of the 246 women who received the training, 232 successfully completed the course. The administration of the course was fraught with several difficulties. There were problems of meeting entrance quotas, complaints that some of the personnel of the instrument school at Bryan, Texas, exercised "too much jurisdiction," instructor problems, and in some instances low morale because many women pilots preferred to stay on active assignments rather than in training.<sup>35</sup>

34. CFTC WASP History, I, 98-101.

35. Ibid., 101-12; AFTRC WASP History, 48-49. It appears that one disgruntled WASP wrote to President Roosevelt complaining about the instrument course. Another wrote to counteract "several rash statements" made by this one of the women, "very much in the minority, who failed to realize . . . the wonderful opportunities that have been opened to our group." Dot Kielty to Stephan A. Earle [sic], Sec. to the President, 16 Nov. 1944, in files of D/P.

Another course for women pilots, given at the AAF School of Applied Tactics at Orlando, Fla., was instituted in the spring of 1944 in anticipation of the militarization of the WASP. Designed to give women pilots "such basic military training as army discipline, military courtesy and customs and the exercise of command" so that they could take care of duties as officers,<sup>36</sup> it was nevertheless continued for a while after the failure of the proposed legislation to militarize the organization. The decision to deactivate the WASP program, however, caused the termination of the course on 29 September 1944. During a period of about 5½ months, 460 WASPs were trained in such subjects as Army orientation, organization and administration of the War Department and the AAF, military courtesy, military law, supply, base and staff functions, aircraft recognition, safeguarding military information, chemical warfare, communications, weather, sanitation, first aid, employment of air power, etc.<sup>37</sup>

There were, of course, some difficulties in the administration of the training program for women pilots, but the procurement of an adequate number of acceptable candidates for training was not a problem. The decision to keep a minimum prerequisite of 35 hours of flying time excluded many applicants, but there were still more than were necessary.<sup>38</sup> In addition to numerous applications from women in the United States,

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36. Memo for CG AFTAG by Maj. Gen. H. A. Craig, 25 March 1944, in "The WASP Training Course at the AAF School of Applied Tactics, 19 April 1944-29 September 1944" [WASP Training at AFSAT], Appendix. This history treats the course at Orlando in considerable detail.
37. "WASP Training at AFSAT," passim.
38. For the procedures of recruitment and appointment and requirements for acceptance, see Report on Women Pilot Program, 4-6, 8-13; memo for Gen. McClelland by Col. L. W. Tindal, 5 Aug. 1943, in files of Exec., OC&R.

several hundred Canadian women and some from England and Brazil sought admission.<sup>39</sup> One Canadian woman wrote:<sup>40</sup>

Because we are fighting on the same side in this war rather than against each other, and because one more flier (be he Canuck or Yank) means one less German, I would like to ask you on bended knee if there will be any chance of accepting me at Sweetwater if I were to go ahead and complete my necessary hours. [She then had 25 hours of flying time.] . . .

P. S.—I am physically fit; have a college degree; can sing the Star Spangled Banner; have never been a natzi spy; and would gladly take out U. S. papers if only it were possible.

These applications were rejected.

The lower age limit for acceptance was reduced to 18½ years in August 1943, and most of the women admitted were under 27.<sup>41</sup> The younger women proved to be most satisfactory, Miss Cochran concluded. Of 1,066 trainees in 1944, as shown in the following table, graduations decreased and severances increased in direct proportion to increase in age:<sup>42</sup>

	<u>18-20</u>		<u>21-25</u>		<u>26-30</u>		<u>31-35</u>	
Began training		93		649		243		81
Eliminated, flying deficiency	20	22%	183	28%	102	42%	44	54%
Resigned	3	3%	63	10%	31	12%	11	14%
Medical discharge	2	2%	11	2%	11	5%	6	7%
Graduated	68	73%	392	60%	99	41%	20	25%

Such results as these caused Miss Cochran to recommend: "In any future women pilot program the upper age limit should be kept down to about 27 or 28 years for those to be assigned to regular flying duties."<sup>43</sup>

39. In the summer of 1943, Maj. Gen. B. M. Giles, Chief of Air Staff, was quoted in Canadian newspapers as issuing "a blanket invitation to air-minded Canadian girls to enlist in the U. S. Army Air Corps as ferry pilots." Clipping from a Canadian newspaper, [?] Sep. 1943; clipping from Regina Leader Post, 24 July 1943, in 312.1, Canadian Letters, Book II, files of D/WP.

40. Barbara Wadell to Miss Cochran, 9 Aug. 1943, in ibid.

41. Report on the Women Pilot Program, 10.

42. Ibid., 13-14.

43. Ibid., 14.

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## Chapter III

## UTILIZATION OF WOMEN PILOTS

The first use of women pilots by the AAF was in the ferrying of aircraft. The annals of their achievement in ferrying can be presented in short compass. Most of the flights were routine, and the record consists mainly of the number of planes of a particular type flown, the number of hours in the air, and the distance covered. But the administration of the women's ferrying activity, particularly as a part of a larger organization of women pilots, was characterized by controversies which require more space for explanation.

In the autumn of 1942 when the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS) was organized, ferrying had become a large business but its real expansion was just beginning. Bases were being developed and enlarged. Pioneering was still going on. The pilot's problem in returning to the home base after completion of a delivery was a serious one, since a special transport system had not yet been organized for this job. At this time, too, many pilot hours were wasted because of non-availability at the factories of aircraft ready for ferrying.<sup>1</sup>

In the first months of WAFS operations there were few formal directives governing their work. Most of the regulations applying to male pilots covered women as well. The 2d Ferrying Group, however, did specify that "the primary purpose of the WAFS is the delivery of training

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1. "Women Pilots in the ATC," Chap. V.

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type and liaison type aircraft within the continental limits of the United States and their activities will be confined to this directive until such time as they may be changed by higher Headquarters." The order was concerned primarily with the return of WAFS from ferry missions. Hitchhiking rides in Army planes were banned, and WAFS were to return to New Castle Army Air Base, Wilmington, Del, home base of the 2d Ferrying Group, by commercial carriers unless military aircraft were furnished by the 2d Ferrying Group specifically for the return trip. Even at the home base, WAFS were not "to solicit rides in bomber type aircraft either for local flying or for cross-country flying without specific authority in each case from the Group Commander."<sup>2</sup> In this and other early directives an attempt was made to reduce the contacts between WAFS and male pilots to a minimum. Apparently such orders were not based on lack of confidence in the moral strength of the young women but on the possibility that newspaper writers or back-fence gossips might bring criticism on the organization if there were a hint of scandalous relationships.<sup>3</sup>

Up to the end of 1942 WAFS ferried only primary trainers and liaison aircraft. In October they delivered 10 L-4B's over short distances. Ferrying time was only 39 hours, but they received 337 hours of flying training. In November, 30 L-4B's and 10 PT-19's were delivered; total flying time, ferrying and training, was 714 hours. During December, when the full complement of 25 WAFS was reached, they ferried 24 L-4B's,

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2. 2d Ferrying Gp. to WAFS, 12 Oct. 1942, cited in *ibid.*, 73.

3. "Women Pilots in the ATC," 74-75.

4 PT-19's, and 6 PT-17's; flying hours totaled 507.<sup>4</sup>

Mrs. Love and some of the other women pilots were dissatisfied because they were restricted at Wilmington to ferrying elementary types of planes. As the original squadron reached its total of 25 members, plans were made for forming other units under the 3d, 5th, and 6th Ferrying Groups, located near factories producing planes which WAFS were qualified to ferry. Mrs. Love elected to go with the cadre to the 5th Group at Dallas, where the next unit was to be organized and where there would be an opportunity to fly basic and advanced trainers. In January 1943 she ferried an AT-6, and the other WAFS at Dallas ferried nine basic trainers.<sup>5</sup> She was later transferred, at her request, to the WAFS unit established at Long Beach, Calif., where she had already checked out on a P-51 and had ferried a C-47, with Barbara Erickson as co-pilot, from there to Memphis. The C-47 flight represented an important step forward to the flying of a relatively heavy, twin-engine airplane over a considerable distance. About the same time, Mrs. Betty H. Gillies at Wilmington checked out on a P-47.<sup>6</sup>

In the spring of 1943, when the graduates of the Women's Flying Training Detachment (WFTD) began to arrive in the Air Transport Command, it was decided to transfer Mrs. Love from California to Ferrying Division

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4. Stat. Control Div., ATC, "Women Pilots in the Air Transport Command," cited in ibid., 73.
  5. Ibid., 78-79. Mrs. Love also made arrangements for the subsequent establishment of cadres at Long Beach, Calif. (6th Ferrying Group), and Romulus, Mich. (3d Ferrying Group).
  6. It is said that Mrs. Gillies' transition to a combat plane was apparently made possible because Mrs. Love had frankly told the commanding officer at Wilmington her reasons for transferring out of his group. Ibid.

Headquarters at Cincinnati, Ohio. In order to gain more experience in flying medium and heavy types of planes, she postponed the move until June, and then, on the way to Cincinnati, ferried a B-25 from Long Beach to Kansas City.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the fact that Mrs. Love early in March checked out on pursuit and cargo aircraft, much more advanced than trainer and liaison types, very soon thereafter directives were issued restricting the flight activities of women pilots. On 25 March the 3d Ferrying Group ordered that WAFS based at Romulus, Mich., would fly light trainer aircraft only. They were not to be assigned as co-pilots on ferrying missions or to transition on any high-powered single-engine plane or on twin-engine craft. Apparently in protection of their morals, they were to be assigned missions in individual flights and, so far as possible, deliveries on alternate days with male pilots. If at all possible, they were to be sent in a different direction from any male flight. "No mixed flight assignments or crew assignments will be tolerated," the directive stated.<sup>8</sup>

At Ferrying Division Headquarters, too, there was a movement to restrict women pilots. In March, Major Teague was given the job of drawing up a directive limiting the activities of WAFS and emphasizing that they were not to serve as co-pilots on bombers.<sup>9</sup> There was particular concern about the physiological problems of women in relation to flying

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7. Ibid.

8. 3d Ferrying Group to all Operations Personnel, 25 March 1943, cited in ibid., 85. A copy of this order in Ferrying Division files bears a penciled comment by Col. George D. Campbell, Director of Operations, stating: "Mrs. Love objected to this directive." Ibid.

9. FERD "Staff Meeting Notes," 16 March 1943, cited in ibid.



activities. Late in the month the division ordered that no woman pilot was to be assigned any flying duties during pregnancy. At the time of the menstrual period a WAF was not to fly from one day before the beginning of the period to two days after the last day of the period. This would mean that every woman pilot would be grounded for six to eight days every month.<sup>10</sup> The ATC Surgeon, although agreeing that pregnancy was disqualifying, held that the menstrual periods should be regarded as an individual problem and regulations should be made by the local WAFS leader. The Air Surgeon upheld this view.<sup>11</sup> In actual practice, it seems that several WAFS continued to fly for several months after the beginning of pregnancy and that it was not necessary to ground all women pilots for six to eight days every month because of the menstrual period.<sup>12</sup>

The tendency to restrict the flight activities of women pilots caused Mrs. Love to make a personal appeal to ATC Headquarters. This brought results. A letter to the Ferrying Division stated that all pilots, whether male or female, should "be privileged to advance to the extent of their ability in keeping with the progress of aircraft development" and that this policy was to apply in the ferrying of planes.<sup>13</sup>

The Ferrying Division, in turn, rescinded its previous directives

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10. FERD to all Group CO's, 29 March 1943, cited in ibid.
  11. ATC to Air Surgeon, 23 April 1943, and 1st ind., Air Surgeon to ATC, 1 May 1943, cited in ibid.
  12. Ibid. For a discussion of physical and psychological factors, as they related to flying by women pilots, see "Medical Consideration of WASPS." One of the conclusions reached in this study is that menstruation, "in properly selected women, is not a handicap to flying or dependable performance of duty."
  13. ATC to FERD, 17 April 1943; conversations, Mrs. Love with Capt. Marx, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 86.

and issued a new letter consolidating the rules governing WAFS operations. Women pilots were to be given transition to multi-engine planes or high-powered single-engine craft "under the same standards of individual experience and ability as apply to any other pilot." Normally, WAFS would be given transition on cross-country check-outs by other fully qualified WAFS if they were available. With the exception of training flights, no WAF was to fly as co-pilot with a male pilot, nor was a male co-pilot to be assigned to a WAF. Delivery flights could be considered as training flights when they were planned as such. Flights of aircraft piloted both by male and female pilots were not to be cleared on the same flight clearance except when they were training flights.<sup>14</sup> All WAFS were to meet the physical standards set by Army Regulations (Form 64). The senior woman pilot at each group was responsible for referring to the group flight surgeon the cases of any women unable to fly because of menstrual periods, and he would relieve them of flying duties for the length of time necessary. Each group commander would designate a senior woman pilot to be charged with maintaining morale and discipline among the WAFS at the group and liaison with Group Operations. Group commanders were warned that the first classes from the Women's Flying Training Detachment would probably have more experience than those to follow, and that women were being accepted for later classes with only 35 hours of flying time.<sup>15</sup>

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14. This restriction might be almost meaningless, of course, if liberally interpreted.

15. FERD to all Group CO's, 26 April 1943, quoted in "Women Pilots in ATC," 86. Early in 1944, when emphasis was being placed on qualifying women pilots in Class III aircraft and then putting them through fighter transition, the prohibition on women serving as co-pilots with men was removed.

During this period, the early spring of 1943, the Ferrying Division was establishing a system of progressive classes of pilot skill, through which pilots would be upgraded. The commanding officer of the division, Colonel Tunner, several times stressed that women pilots would be included in the system as well as men. If they could qualify, they could fly the heaviest and "hottest" planes. He anticipated that the division would eventually have about 500 women pilots and that if they were restricted to light trainers it would not be possible to produce more male ferry pilots, since cross-country experience on these types was essential in the men's transition program. WAFS, therefore, would be encouraged to fly bigger types of planes.<sup>16</sup> Thus, a significant change of policy had occurred. Women pilots were not to be limited to trainer and liaison types of aircraft.

The first AT-6 had been delivered in January 1943. Another was ferried in February. In March, WAFS ferried an assortment of trainers, 39 UC-61A's, and two C-47's. In all, 92 planes were delivered by women pilots that month, a record which stood until May when 95 were delivered.

From November 1942 through April 1943 the average number of WAFS on duty each month was 23. The initial training period on acceptance and the time in transition to new stations, however, meant that during much of the time there were less than 23 WAFS available for ferrying duty. The unit accomplished an average of 49 plane deliveries a month. Average total flying time per month for the unit was 480 hours.<sup>17</sup>

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16. FERD "Staff Meeting Notes," 28 April, 11 May, and 30 June 1943, cited in ibid.

17. Stat. Control Sec., FERD, Statistical Records; Mrs. Love's Flight Log, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 89. See also Appendix in ibid.

From 25 WAFS on duty in May, strength increased to 48 in June and 88 in July as the first graduates of the Flying Training Command course were received. Deliveries of planes rose to 95 in May, 150 in June, and 305 in July. Much longer distances were flown, and the average number of ferrying flying hours for each woman pilot rose to 52 for the month of July, the highest figure attained at any time by them. Male pilots about this time were averaging approximately 35 hours a month.<sup>18</sup> Over a period of nine months of operations, women pilots had presented a hopeful picture of their future role in ferrying. They had shown that they were capable of handling much more difficult types of planes than had at first been expected.

After this time the history of accomplishment by women ferry pilots—after all, a routine affair—is overshadowed by a story of controversies. The creation of a single organization for women pilots with a director in the Air Staff brought in its wake conflicts of authority. On the one hand there seems to have been a rather careful guarding of command prerogatives, and on the other an aggressive control which was out of keeping with the traditional role of a staff officer.

Late in June 1943 the Office of Special Assistant for Women Pilots was established in the Office of the AC/AS, Operations, Commitments, and Requirements (OC&R), and Miss Cochran was made Director of Women Pilots. She was to determine where and in what capacities women pilots could best be used, allocate them to the using agencies, decide upon the number to be trained and the standards for acceptance and graduation,

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18. Stat. Control Div., ATC, "Women Pilots in the Air Transport Command," cited in ibid., 90.

formulate rules governing their conduct and welfare, draw up plans for militarization, and make inspection trips and maintain liaison with using agencies. These and other staff duties were to be carried out in coordination with appropriate offices.<sup>19</sup> In August another memorandum announced that all women pilots with the AAF would be known as Women's Air Force Service Pilots (WASP).<sup>20</sup> Despite the new designation, however, the title WASP was not immediately abandoned in the Ferrying Division.<sup>21</sup>

Soon after the establishment of the position of Director of Women Pilots, a system of special reports concerning women pilots was proposed. This was to include resignations or transfers of women pilots and the reasons therefor, telegraphic notice of any accident involving a woman pilot, and the keeping of detailed statistics.<sup>22</sup>

The Ferrying Division objected strongly to these proposals. It contended that transfers were routine administrative matters, strictly an internal affair; that there was already an established procedure for reporting accidents; and that the type of statistics desired had been abandoned in the case of male pilots some months before because of the

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19. AAF Memo No. 20-4, 28 June 1943.

20. AAF Memo No. 20-8, 5 Aug. 1943. Slightly varying designations for the WASP organization were used during the period of its existence: AAF Memo No. 20-4, 28 June 1943, "Establishment of Office of Special Assistant for Women Pilots," makes no mention of a name for the women's group; AAF Memo No. 20-8, 5 Aug. 1943, says: "The title WASP is hereby designated for the women pilots of the AAF. The full title implied by the name is 'Women's Air Force Service Pilot'; AAF Reg. 40-8 of 21 Dec. 1943 is titled "Women Air Force Service Pilots"; AAF Reg. 40-8 of 3 April and its revision of 30 Dec. 1944 are both titled "Women Airforce Service Pilots."

21. "Women Pilots in the ATC," 93; Cochran, "Comments," 39-40.

22. Although the actual proposal has not been found, these provisions seem to have been the essential elements. Memo for ATC by FERD, 26 July 1943, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 98.

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unwarranted amount of paper work involved. The division's objections went beyond these specific ones to a more general consideration. General Turner stated:<sup>23</sup>

. . . this information seems to me to be quite obviously designed for the purpose of interference with the Command functions here in the Ferrying Division as regards women pilots. . . These transfers are a function of Command and I dislike the idea of having to explain my reasons every time I find it necessary to issue such orders. . . . We will find ourselves in the position of issuing directives and rendering reports to two separate agencies on each subject if we comply with these or similar directives from OC&R.

At about the same time that the Ferrying Division was expressing its opposition, Headquarters, AAF issued instructions requesting, "for the purpose of maintaining our records," that certain matters be reported to the Director of Women Pilots. The Director was to be informed of transfers of women from the ATC to other agencies; change from flying to nonflying status; assignment of women to duty, permanent or temporary, outside continental United States; and any special training for women pilots contemplated by the ATC.<sup>24</sup> The ATC, in turn, instructed the Ferrying Division to comply with the original proposals to the extent that accidents to women pilots would be reported by wire and monthly reports would be submitted on resignations and transfers and on the flying time of each woman pilot.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, almost at once after the creation of a single organization of women pilots, relations between the office in Headquarters, AAF and the chief using agency were clouded by ill feeling and distrust over the matter of reporting information. Other events further tended to nullify

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23. Ibid.

24. AC/AS, OC&R to ATC, 26 July 1943, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC."

25. ATC to FEED, 9 Aug. 1943, cited in ibid.

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possibilities of amicable cooperation.

In July 1943 a decision was made that 25 women pilots from the Ferrying Division would be assigned to Camp Davis, N. C., for experimental use by the Third Air Force in tow-target flying. Apparently there was a "verbal agreement" between OC&R and ATC Headquarters, and at the request of an ATC officer Miss Cochran supplied the names of women who met the desired qualifications.<sup>26</sup> The Ferrying Division was directed to assign 25 women pilots on two weeks' temporary duty with the Director of Women Pilots. Twenty-three of the pilots were listed by name; the other two were to be at least five feet four inches tall. To the division this seemed to be a clear case of assignment by name. Furthermore, the division seems to have been unable to find out the purpose of the temporary duty and was apparently told that the matter could not be divulged. There was evidently some surprise in division headquarters when it received a bill for airline tickets covering transportation from Washington to Camp Davis.<sup>27</sup>

When the Ferrying Division refused payment of this bill, on the ground that the expenditure was unauthorized, it received a telephone call from Headquarters, AMF asking that the original orders be amended to include travel to Camp Davis and to place the pilots on detached service. The division argued that civilians could not be put on detached

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26. Memo for CG ATC by AC/AS, OC&R, 17 July 1943, in files of D/WP; Cochran, "Comments," 46-47.

27. ATC to FERD, 17 July 1943; memo for FERD by ATC, 23 July 1943; interview with Lt. Col. James I. Teague by Capt. Walter J. Marx, 24 July 1944, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 101.

service and refused to amend the orders without written authority. A second telephone call brought the same reply, so Headquarters, AAF agreed to put the authorization in writing and the orders were amended.<sup>28</sup>

On 18 August further instructions from Headquarters, AAF extended the temporary duty to 90 days.<sup>29</sup> ATC was also informed that there would be other experimental assignments of WASPs "to ascertain their adaptability for duties as other than ferry pilots." For example, there was a "proposed" assignment of another 25 women (listed by name)--from the class graduated from the Training Command school on 7 August--to go to the Troop Carrier Command.<sup>30</sup> Since the ATC had "been allotted funds to cover the entire output" of the Training Command school for women pilots, and "to eliminate the necessity for transfer of funds from the Air Transport Command to the agency conducting the experimental assignment," ATC was to take all graduates and detail such numbers to other commands and air forces as were authorized by Headquarters, AAF. Assignments were not to be for a period longer than 90 days, and at the conclusion of the period the WASPs were either to be returned to the ATC or permanently transferred to another agency.<sup>31</sup>

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28. "Women Pilots in the ATC," 101-02.

29. AAF to ATC, 18 Aug. 1943, cited in ibid.

30. Miss Cochran apparently had this assignment in mind when she wrote Maj. Robert K. Urban at Sweetwater asking for "a report on twenty-five of the best students from the standpoint of flying ability. I have requested Mrs. Deaton to send me information concerning height, weight and general deportment of twenty-five of the best girls. I am anxious that I get as many of the qualities desired as possible, as they will be setting the pace for many hundreds more to be used in this capacity if it works out." They were to be used as tow-target pilots, and she asked Major Urban to keep the subject "in confidence" so that the trainees would "get no indication that they may be assigned to any duty but ferrying." Miss Cochran to Maj. Urban, 14 July 1943, in files of D/WP.

31. Brig. Gen. B. E. Gates to CG ATC, 19 Aug. 1943, quoted in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 103.



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The procedure turned out to be not quite so simple as indicated. ATC was not advised as to where this second group of 25 women listed by name would report. The Ferrying Division assumed that they would report to its various groups in the usual manner. The Training Command, however, had not assigned them to ATC, and they seem to have gone to their homes to await instructions. After "a great deal of effort and time," the Ferrying Division complained, they were located by Headquarters, ATC. As they should have reported on 20 August and were not picked up until a week later, the Ferrying Division's records showed them A.O.L. for that period. It was necessary to instruct them to report to the nearest ferrying group and to place them on the payroll as of 20 August. They were then ordered to Headquarters, AAF, and from there went to Camp Davis,<sup>32</sup> the original idea of sending them to Troop Carrier Command having been dropped.

The Ferrying Division objected to the procedure which had been established. If the division were required to pay WASPs assigned to other agencies, it was put in the position of paying on payrolls the correctness of which it could not legally certify. Also, these women were assigned to four different ferrying groups, from which they must receive their special orders, creating a burdensome situation. The division therefore requested clarification and recommended transfers: "The only unit that will have the necessary information permitting the maintenance of proper records, is the one to which the WASPs are attached

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32. 2d ind. (Brig. Gen. B. E. Gates to CG ATC, 19 Aug. 1943), FERD to ATC, 2 Sep. 1943, cited in ibid.

for flying duty. Assignment of all such personnel should logically be made to such unit."<sup>33</sup> Near the end of September the division again asked for clarification and that for its records it be notified daily by the Third Air Force of the exact working status of the 50 WASPs then at Camp Davis.<sup>34</sup>

A civilian personnel officer from the 2d Ferrying Group, who went to Camp Davis to check on the status of the WASPs there, reported considerable confusion. At first, he said, he had difficulty in finding anyone who could tell him about the women, and he could find no woman in authority.<sup>35</sup> A representative of the commanding officer, he stated, told him that no one had any ideas on how to handle the women. He learned that four of the WASPs assigned to the 2d Ferrying Group had been sent, without notification to the group, to Camp Stewart at Hinesville, Ga., for special training. Four more were in radio training at Savannah, Ga. Some of the women enjoyed their work, but others, he reported, were disappointed because they had not been assigned to ferrying duty.<sup>36</sup>

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33. Ibid. In September 1943 the Third Air Force recommended that it be allotted funds directly to pay WASPs "in view of the financial situations which have become evident in the past." (3d AF to CG AAF, 23 Sep. 1943, in files of D/WP.) The Ferrying Division heartily indorsed this proposal. "Quite frankly," Major Teague wrote, "we feel that this Division, as well as Headquarters ATC, and even the AAF itself, are all three liable to be criticized at some future date because of the administrative difficulties that have arisen." 3d ind., Maj. James I. Teague to CG ATC, 23 Oct. 1943, in ibid.

34. FERD to ATC, 28 Sep. 1943, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 105.

35. Miss Cochran, however, says that the Camp Davis project "was closely followed by the commanding officer at Camp Davis at the time girls were assigned, and they had not only an establishment officer but a squadron leader." Cochran, "Comments," 45.

36. Memo for CO, 2d Ferrying Gp. by Dir. of Civilian Personnel, 18 Oct. 1943, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 105.

Although the Ferrying Division had been directed to report all accidents involving WASPs to AAF Headquarters, the investigator learned that one of the women, Mabel Rawlinson, had been killed on 23 August, but advice of this was not forwarded to the Ferrying Division until 5 October. Meanwhile the division had continued to pay her. Another pilot had been injured on 7 September, again without advice to the division, he stated.<sup>37</sup> The Director of Civilian Personnel of the 2d Ferrying Group commented on these findings: "There is some lack of coordination as far as the WASPs are concerned."<sup>38</sup>

Even after the transfer of the pilots and funds from ATC in November, the situation was not cleared up. Forty-six WASPs were separated from the Ferrying Division's payroll on 15 November but were not picked up by Camp Davis. Fifteen of these had been moved to Camp Stewart and were "lost" for a while.<sup>39</sup> As late as the middle of January 1944 the 15 WASPs, "now scattered about the United States," were still on no payroll and were \$450 behind in their salary.<sup>40</sup>

Concurrent with the Camp Davis series of incidents, other irritations mounted. In October 1943 the 2d Ferrying Group complained of visits of inspection made by the Director of Women Pilots without

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37. Ibid.

38. Dir. of Civilian Personnel to Exec. for Personnel, 2d Ferrying Gp., 12 Oct. 1943 and 1st ind., 2d Ferrying Gp. to FERD, 13 Oct. 1943, cited in ibid.

39. AAF to ATC, 25 Nov. 1943 and 1st ind., ATC to FERD, 30 Nov. 1943; msg., AAF to 1st AF, 5 Nov. 1943; msg., ATC to 1st AF, 24 Nov. 1943; FERD to AAF, 28 Dec. 1943, all cited in ibid., 106.

40. Jean Forster to D/WP, 14 Jan. 1944, in files of D/WP.

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~~RESTRICTED~~observing proper channels:<sup>41</sup>

This Headquarters would furthermore like to call your attention to the fact that on several occasions Miss Jacqueline Cochran has arrived at this base and gone directly to the WASP alert room, transacted her business, and departed without informing this Headquarters in any manner whatsoever. Such practice makes it extremely difficult for this Headquarters to "keep up" with what is going on in Miss Cochran's mind and it is requested that she be advised to go through channels in the normal manner on all future occasions. . . . Miss Cochran's latest visit occurred on 5 October 1943. We were informed of same after she had departed.

Miss Cochran gives a sharply variant account, claiming that on only one occasion did she fail to pay her respects to the commanding officer at New Castle Army Air Base. She writes that on her fifth visit to the base she went to the office of the commanding officer and found him busy, his executive busy, the next in order of authority busy, and that all of them continued to be busy for an hour and a half while she waited on a bench. At length, when she had only a few minutes before having to leave, she told the commanding officer's secretary that she was going to the WASP barracks to talk about uniforms. On the next visit,<sup>42</sup> she writes, she had given the base four hours' notice of her intended arrival and that a general officer was to accompany her:<sup>43</sup>

No one met the plane. The writer Miss Cochran hunted up a jeep and went to the office of the Commanding Officer. He was out. She told his secretary that a general was sitting in the plane and perhaps something should be done about it. A second Lieutenant was sent out. The general waited in the plane while she transacted her business. On the 6th seventh? trip to the base the writer had only the question of uniform fittings to discuss with the WASPs (which had nothing to do with policies or operations) and having in mind the treatment accorded her on the two previous occasions went direct to the WASP barracks (which still incidentally

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41. FERD to 2d Ferrying Gp., 12 ? Oct. 1943, and 1st ind., 2d Ferrying Gp. to FERD, 12 ? Oct. 1943, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 107-08.
42. Miss Cochran states that it was the fifth visit, but it is obvious from the context that it must have been the sixth.
43. Miss Cochran to Col. Wilfred Paul, 14 Aug. 1945, in AF3HO files.

bore the "WAFS" name painted thereon). The Commanding Officer seized on this to complain through channels. General George admitted the wrong was not on her side and suggested the whole matter be forgotten. The writer understands the Newcastle <sup>New</sup> Castle AAB/ Commanding Officer was transferred thereafter. On her next trip to Newcastle the Commanding Officer was extremely courteous and she returned the courtesies then and thereafter. If the writer had not acted as she did on this occasion her ability to transact WASP business on the Ferrying bases would have constantly diminished.

Whatever the merits of the argument on either side, the important consideration is that there was argument and that cordiality was strained. The matter of failure to observe normal channels was one of several points taken up in a conference between Miss Cochran, Maj. Gen. R. W. Harper, AG/AS, Training, and Lt. Col. Joe Mountain, chief of the Training Division, ATC, on 19 October. Colonel Mountain took the position that his command asked only that Miss Cochran's inspections be handled in the same manner as those of other members of the Air Staff. He reported that General Harper supported this suggestion and that Miss Cochran concurred.<sup>44</sup>

In November 1943 the two opposing ideas of organization and control

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44. Memo for AG/AS, Operations, ATC, b, Chief, Training Div., 19 Oct. 1943, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC," LOC. Miss Cochran writes that when she notified ferrying bases that she was going to visit them, nearly all of the WASFs would be away when she arrived. "It seemed strange that nearly all should be away, although they were only doing one or two trips per month, and it became apparent that this was an effort to keep her from talking to the girls or finding out from them what was going on. She discussed this situation with her chief and with other high officials on the Air Staff and was advised that it was not only within her authority to visit such bases without notice but it was the way that many of the top officials on the Air Staff had of getting a check on operations at any particular base as they actually existed rather than 'dressed up' operations for any particular day notified. She then dropped in at some of the Ferrying Division bases without notice and, as she expected, found large groups of WASPs . . . who could and did tell her of the conditions as they existed." Cochran, "Comments," 43-44.

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of women pilots collided when the Director of Women Pilots sought to work out an AAF regulation and an internal WASP regulation. The proposed AAF regulation, in the enumeration of responsibilities of the Special Assistant and Director of Women Pilots, included the power to appoint WASP administrative officers and field representatives. The administrative officers, who might be appointed at any base or station where WASPs were assigned for duty, were to represent the Director on nontechnical administrative matters and maintain, "in accordance with policies established by Headquarters, Army Air Forces, subject to the control of the Commanding Officer, local discipline and supervise WASPs welfare, conduct and morale and make recommendations thereon." Field representatives were to inspect "WASP activities of using agencies and training establishments, recommending remedial actions where necessary or directing local changes consistent with the authority of the Special Assistant and Director of Women Pilots."

The proposed WASP regulation sought to establish ratings for flying WASPs--squadron leader, deputy squadron leader, squadron executive, squadron operations officer, and squadron supply officer. Appointments already made were to be submitted to AAF Headquarters for confirmation, and recommendations for advancement in ratings were to be forwarded to AAF Headquarters for final action. Rules on conduct and dress, approved flying duties, and a reporting system were also set forth. Proceedings for elimination of a woman pilot for inadequacy or incapacity for the using agency's purposes were "not to be instituted without the approval of Headquarters, Army Air Forces." A board (three flying officers, the WASP squadron leader, and/or the WASP establishment officer) might

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conduct proceedings for reduction of rating of a WASP, but the findings and recommendations were to be submitted to the Director of Women Pilots "for review and approval or revision of action proposed." Before Civil Service procedures could be instituted to discharge a WASP, a board, constituted like that for reduction of ratings, should investigate the findings and present them to the commanding officer; if he determined that a discharge was in order, he would be required to obtain the concurrence of the Director of Women Pilots before it could be processed.<sup>45</sup>

The proposed regulations stimulated ATC to prompt action. When General Tunner of the Ferrying Division heard about it, he sent Major Teague to Washington to assist in preparing an answer. The answer was strongly worded. It took exception to designating nonflying personnel as Women's Airforce Service Pilots. It maintained that training standards should be determined by the using agency—a restatement of ATC's old position. It pointed out that the appointment of WASPs to the various squadron positions described was a command function, as was their reduction in rating, and should not be subject to control of higher authority. Similarly, ATC held, the authority lodged in the Director regarding dress, appearance, and conduct, and the rules included in the regulations, violated the principles of command. The same point was made with respect to WASP administrative officers and field representatives, each of whom, it was charged, was given definite command functions and was appointed by and spoke for the Director of Women Pilots. Generalizing, the ATC reply stated:<sup>46</sup>

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45. Proposed AAF Reg. No. 20-, and WASP Regulation, in ATC 300.3, AAF.  
 46. ATC to AAF, 3 Nov. 1943, quoted in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 113.

The proposed regulations and organization of the WASPs are a direct violation of established military chains of command, and of policies established throughout the Army Air Forces. . . .

Women pilots should be considered on the same basis as men pilots. The Air Transport Command has operated with women pilots for over a year, during which time we have learned by experience that the present organization in use in the Ferrying Groups, based on strictly military lines, is the most efficient. The proposed regulation would set up two methods of administration, one for men, one for women; not only our own experience, but all military teaching is to the effect that uniformity is mandatory.

Any system such as that proposed which directs administrative control from Headquarters, Army Air Forces directly into the squadrons would be intolerable. It is axiomatic in the Army that when a commanding officer is given a mission to perform, he must have full and complete responsibility, and must have command control. The proposed regulation violates this rule in respect to the command responsibilities of the Commanding General, Air Transport Command; Commanding General, Ferrying Division, Air Transport Command; Commanding Officer of each Ferrying Group; and the Commanding Officer of each WASP Ferrying Squadron. None of these could properly function under the proposed regulation. . . .

Since it is believed that only confusion and conflict can result if this regulation is adopted, it is the belief of this Command that it would be far better not to use WASPs in the Command than to have them operating under the proposed terms.

To its rejoinder the ATC attached its version of a proposed regulation, based on the command's point of view that WASPs were first and foremost civilian employees and should be handled accordingly. The functions of the Director of Women Pilots were described as earlier set forth in AAF Memorandum No. 20-4--that is, normal staff functions.<sup>47</sup>

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47. Ibid. The author of "Women Pilots in the ATC" makes this statement: "The ATC letter did not comment on the fact that the provisions to which it took exception were embodied in two regulations--the relatively generalized proposed AAF regulation and the more detailed 'WASP Regulation.' Yet the division is significant. Issuance of a regulation apparently intended to be strictly internal to the WASP, that is having the same relation to AAF Regulations as those issued by a Command or Air Force, is a major function of command. No such authority is enjoyed, for instance, by the Women's Army Corps, nor is it possible for an Assistant Chief of Air Staff to issue a regulation governing lower echelon execution of the function he represents." Ibid.



When the official regulation was issued on 21 December, most of the matter to which the ATC had objected was omitted. The only element that could be construed as interfering with command control was the provision that the Director of Women Pilots would keep a list of WASPs qualified for the position of squadron leader, and that this list would be used by commanding officers in appointing them.<sup>48</sup> The publication of the WASP regulation apparently did much to clarify relationships between Headquarters, AAF and the Air Transport Command. A working compromise had been effected between the two opposing concepts of the simple hiring of women pilots on the one hand and of an organization of and for women on the other.<sup>49</sup>

In the latter half of 1943 and the first half of 1944 there were several other points of conflict between the Ferrying Division and Headquarters, AAF. In large part these seem to have been fostered by the long background of mutual suspicion and irritations. The Ferrying Division criticized the quality of WASP training given in the Training Command and insisted that the graduates had too few hours to permit their rapid progression to pursuit and other advanced types of aircraft. It claimed the right to accept or reject graduates after flight tests and sought to keep within its own hands control over discharge of WASPs. The Director of Women Pilots insisted that training was adequate and that WASPs were unjustly treated in some of the ferrying groups.

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48. AAF Reg. No. 40-8, 21 Dec. 1943. A revision of this regulation, published 3 April 1944, made the use of that list, as well as the appointment of staff directors, permissive. It also permitted the appointment of nonflying WASP staff advisors with staff functions in relation to WASP housing, conduct, welfare, and dress. Greater flexibility in squadron organization was allowed.

49. "Women Pilots in the ATC," 117.

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When the ATC was directed to accept all graduates of the Flying Training Command School, the matter of flight testing the WASPs became an internal matter which had no bearing on their acceptance.<sup>50</sup> There was still a question, however, in the minds of officials of the Ferrying Division: If its flight tests revealed that a pilot was not qualified, what should be done? For the time being the procedure settled on was that she should be given additional ground school and a further check, and that if she failed a second time, she would be discharged by usual Civil Service procedures or returned to the Flying Training Command. The time which elapsed between tests would be about a month and thus would formally, at least, satisfy the requirement that all graduates must be accepted.<sup>51</sup>

The early groups of graduates from the women's Flying Training Detachment were highly qualified, and reports from the ferrying groups were quite favorable. In June 1943, a few months after the first graduates had been received by the Ferrying Division, that organization reported that their training had been "thorough and well adapted to their duties as ferrying pilots. Their attitude and conduct have been generally excellent." Certain suggestions were made, however, for making the training program more adequate for subsequent ferrying work.<sup>52</sup>

When larger numbers of women pilots reported to the division, and these with little experience in flying prior to acceptance for training,

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50. R&R, No. 4, ATC to AAF, 8 Feb. 1943; ATC to FERD, 19 March 1943, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 118-19.

51. Memo for CO FERD by Asst. S-1, 26 March 1943, and memo for Asst. S-1 by S-1, 29 March 1943, cited in *ibid.*

52. FERD to CG AFFTC, 26 June 1943, cited in *ibid.*

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there were more complaints concerning the caliber of the graduates. Late in August, General Tunner stated that there was an excessive number of accidents among women pilots, all of which since April involved graduates of the Women's Flying Training Detachment.<sup>53</sup> Beginning in September and continuing until June 1944, comments on the quality of new women pilots are closely interwoven with the question of their ability to become single-engine pursuit pilots. Complaints were numerous and mostly of the same tenor as the following one of 14 September:<sup>54</sup>

During the last three months, graduates of the Women's Flying Training Detachment . . . were responsible for sixteen aircraft accidents and mishaps on training or liaison type aircraft. The resulting accident rate is excessive for any group of pilots. Investigation of these accidents and mishaps reveals that all except one were attributed to pilot error. . . .

It is felt that many recent graduates are so-called "airport pilots" and have neither the training nor the qualifications to assume the responsibility of completing a ferrying flight distant from the home base without close personal supervision. Since the primary function of this organization is to deliver aircraft intact, it is necessary that all pilots assigned actually be qualified to deliver at least AT-6 type aircraft without this personal supervision or additional training. It is strongly recommended that changes be made in the requirements for graduates of the Women's Flying Training Detachment in order that more suitable pilots be available. . . .

In view of the large number of tactical aircraft to be delivered and the decreasing proportion of trainers, it is essential that women pilots be trained to ferry other types than trainers. The Ferrying Division can and will continue to train women as pursuit delivery pilots. However, it has always been beset by a shortage of pursuit aircraft for this purpose. Furthermore, it is felt that this training should be the function of the Training Command inasmuch as it could more easily be accomplished at the completion of the present training course at Sweetwater. It is, therefore, felt that 25% of all women who graduate should be trained on pursuit aircraft of the P-39, P-40, P-51, and P-47 types. It is suggested that pilots chosen for pursuit training be selected from the best qualified members of each class and that they be given 25 hours of specialized instruction.

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53. FERD to 2d Ferrying Gp., 28 Aug. 1943, cited in ibid.

54. FERD to ATC, 14 Sep. 1943, quoted in ibid.

Underlying this and later criticisms was a new situation facing the Ferrying Division. Whereas some women pilots were considered incapable even of ferrying primary trainer planes, the major problem facing the division was the advancement of women to the delivery of pursuit planes.

Through a progressive series of transitions to more advanced types of aircraft, ATC pilots were normally upgraded until, as Class V pilots, they were qualified for four-engine transport flying. The importance of maintaining a flow of men upward through this process was greatly increased when, in October 1943, the Ferrying Division took over the job of training all transport pilots for ATC operations, including its transoceanic flights, and the conduct of part of the actual foreign transport operations. During the same period, the fall and early winter of 1943, production of trainers dropped sharply while production and ferrying of pursuits increased equally sharply.<sup>55</sup>

The ferrying of trainers was the foundation of the division's on-the-job upgrading program. In order to insure a regular movement of pilots into Class V, only two groups of aircraft could be omitted from the sequence: single-engine pursuits (Class P), and twin-engine pursuits and attack bombers, constituting one element of Class IV. Of these, the single-engine aircraft were the only ones of which it could be said that experience in ferrying them made little or no contribution to eventual qualification in Class V. Omitting both these types from the upgrading process, it remained inescapable that none of the other types from Class

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55. "Women Pilots in the ATC," 126.

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I to Class V could be monopolized for any length of time by a single group of pilots without jeopardizing the entire program.

When trainers were being produced in their greatest numbers, the possibility of having a considerable number of women pilots "frozen" in that class did not present serious problems; as the supply of these aircraft fell off, and the demand for advanced ferry and transport pilots increased, that possibility became alarming. It became highly desirable, if not essential, to have the women pilots qualify in Class P and specialize in that work, and secondarily to qualify on the faster group of aircraft in Class IV. As they could not be used in foreign operations, there was no loss to the Army if they did not pass through the whole course to Class V, and by using them on the pursuit and attack types, male pilots would be released for ferrying that fitted the transition program. It was not proposed that women pilots be restricted to these types; on the contrary, AIC and the Ferrying Division on numerous occasions reasserted the policy of giving women transition on all types of aircraft for which they were qualified. The essence of the problem was to make sure that they could and would progress beyond Class III (twin-engine cargo and transport types) to Class P.<sup>56</sup>

The Ferrying Division's attitude toward the graduates of the Women's Flying Training Detachment was undoubtedly colored by its insistence on considerable experience before admission to training, interference with what it considered command prerogatives, and the numerous circumstances which had brought strained relationships with the office of the Director of Women Pilots. Ill feelings probably did induce a tendency to look

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56. Ibid.

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for faults in the training school.

The claim that graduates after a certain period were markedly inferior to earlier graduates or the original WAFS is difficult to assess, even though the reversal of opinion between July 1943 and September 1943 is perhaps significant.<sup>57</sup> With respect to women's adaptability to the Ferrying Division's peculiar requirements, however, the division was on firmer ground. This was not a reflection on the quality of the training program, but rather an indication that the course of instruction no longer suited the primary needs of the division. As Miss Cochran writes:<sup>58</sup>

The yardstick by which the training program and the efficiency of the graduates must be measured is not whether all could successfully complete pursuit training or B-17 training or other types of advanced work, but first whether such graduates were, at time of graduation, qualified to ferry trainer type planes under daylight non-instrument conditions, and second whether as high a portion of them could classify for higher classes of duty as in the case of graduated cadets.

From the fall of 1943 through the spring of 1944, there were excessive numbers of male Class I and Class II pilots backlogged in the division, whom it was having difficulty in upgrading. The necessity of giving WASP newcomers equal opportunity to fly the aircraft by which upgrading was achieved inevitably became a handicap. Hence the division increasingly asked first for more advanced and longer training for WASPs assigned to it, and secondly to be relieved of new graduates who had not had such experience.<sup>59</sup>

Whether because of its opinion of their general proficiency, or

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57. Ibid.

58. Cochran, "Comments," 25.

59. AAF to AEC, 1 Oct. 1943 with 2d ind., FEED to AEC, 18 Oct. 1943, and 3d ind., AEC to AAF, 29 Oct. 1943, cited in "Women Pilots in the AEC," 133-34.

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because of the special situation just described, on 21 September 1943 the Ferrying Division requested that its quota be reduced to 15 WASPs a month. The reasons advanced were entirely concerned with the situation in regard to upgrading pilots. The request was approved by Headquarters, AAF on 13 December,<sup>60</sup> but the matter of the ATC quota seems to have been reopened early in 1944. Who made the suggestion does not appear, but in January General George told Brig. Gen. H. A. Craig, AG/AS, OC&R, that the ATC was "prepared to utilize any number of women pilots" assigned to it, and the next day the Ferrying Division was advised that General George had made "a definite commitment to General Arnold personally" that the command could use 1,500 WASPs. Also, General Craig wrote to the ATC that General Arnold's intention was to use WASPs to replace male pilots wherever possible and that the ATC should restudy its requirements to determine the number that could be efficiently used. Although increased allotments of WASPs were anticipated in the ATC, on 5 February 1944 ATC Headquarters advised the Ferrying Division that the figure of 15 a month would stand.<sup>61</sup>

Other difficulties, of a less fundamental nature, were encountered in connection with the assimilation of new graduates. Early in October

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60. FERD to ATC, 21 Sep. 1943; ATC to AAF, 24 Nov. 1943, and 1st ind., AAF to ATC, 13 Dec. 1943, cited in *ibid.*

61. ATC to AAF, 22 Jan. 1944; ATC to FERD, 22 Jan. 1944; AAF to ATC, 21 Jan. 1944; msg., AAF to FERD, AFATC 5901, 25 Jan. 1944; memo for CG FERD by Exec., 6 Feb. 1944, all cited in *ibid.* Miss Cochran views these communications as indicative of an inability of the ATC to make up its mind and of a difference in opinion between Headquarters, ATC and the Ferrying Division. "Comments," 51-54. On the other hand, there seem to be some good grounds for inferring that pressure was put on General George to agree to take a large number of WASPs.

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1943 the 5th Ferrying Group reported two WASPs as so lacking in proficiency that they could not be used for ferrying without an unreasonable amount of outright training. A number of other recently assigned WASPs at that and other bases were also considered unsatisfactory. These judgments were said to be based upon from three to five flight tests given after intervals of ground school. The Ferrying Division initiated action for the discharge of at least two WASPs at Love Field, Dallas, Texas. Certain of these women communicated with the Director of Women Pilots, asserting that they had been unfairly treated. Acting on this information, Miss Cochran obtained an investigation by the Air Inspector.<sup>62</sup>

Before the investigation was begun, apparently the Air Transport Command, and in turn the Ferrying Division, received instructions to the effect that no WASPs were to be discharged for lack of flying proficiency. At any rate the Ferrying Division sent a telegram to the 2d Ferrying Group on 7 October which stated: "You will not discharge any WASP for lack of proficiency. You will retain on your payroll all such WASPs whom you consider unsatisfactory until further notice."<sup>63</sup> This injunction seems to have given the impression of being a discriminatory limitation upon the command's freedom of action and of again setting women pilots apart from male civilian pilots. It is not apparent how long this prohibition

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62. FERD to ATC, 2 Oct. 1943; interview with Mrs. Nancy H. Love by Lt. Col. Oliver La Farge, 3 Oct. 1945, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 137-38. Miss Cochran states that "the Ferrying Division attempted to eliminate from the WASP program as a whole by discharge seventeen WASPs who they said had not been adequately trained and were not qualified to fly trainer type aircraft." She had "heard from many of the girls involved that there was discrimination against them at the various ferrying bases and an attempt through them to discredit the training program." Cochran, "Comments," 24.
63. Msg., FERD to 2d Ferrying Gp., 7 Oct. 1943, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 139.

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lasted. If not withdrawn earlier, it presumably was removed automatically by the publication of AAF Regulation No. 40-8 on 21 December 1943.

There was additional irritation resulting from the fact that about the same time as the above events two WASPs at Camp Davis were discharged on disciplinary grounds, and when the Ferrying Division sought to hear their appeal, the Director of Women Pilots succeeded in getting the matter removed from the division's jurisdiction.<sup>64</sup>

The Air Inspector's report, dated 22 November 1943, stated that women pilots at the 2d and 5th Ferrying Groups--New Castle Army Air Base and Love Field--were discriminated against in regard to transition. At Love Field "the attitude and method" in the conduct of flight checks were said to be "obstructive and unfair"; check pilots were resentful of the women's pilot program, and tended to favor the elimination of WASPs. It was recommended that the commanding officer at Love Field be admonished and that the 2d Ferrying Group's attention be called to existing Ferrying Division directives on the advancement of women pilots.<sup>65</sup> Before this report was received at Ferrying Division Headquarters, Mrs. Love visited Love Field to look into the causes of low morale there. She found maladministration a primary cause but also attributed it in part to the excessive accident rate. The latter, she found, was due to pushing the women through transition school too fast and without making sure that they were fully qualified on the planes involved. Contrary to Ferrying

64. "Women Pilots in the ATC," 139-40; Cochran, "Comments," 44-45.

65. AFTAI, Report of Investigation on WASP Eliminations--Utilization of Women Pilot Graduates, 22 Nov. 1943, in AAG 324.5, WASP Eliminations--Utilization of Women Pilots, Bulk; Cochran, "Comments," 24-25; "Women Pilots in the ATC," 140-41.

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Division instructions, it was stated, several women had been checked out on pursuits there instead of being sent to pursuit school. Since this was apparently done without the knowledge of the commanding officer, it seemed to indicate that some check pilots, rather than being resentful of the women pilot program, were willing to give the women "bootleg" transition.<sup>66</sup> The 2d Ferrying Group contended that its WASPs were given transition to Class III planes as fast as the women were qualified, even though the 2d Group had practically no planes of that type to ferry.<sup>67</sup>

The number of women pilots assigned to the Ferrying Division rose from 120 in August 1943 to a high point of 303 in April 1944. It remained close to 300 until July. Then 123 were transferred to the Training Command, mostly the least experienced, plus some whose ability was doubted and others who signified that they did not wish to fly fighter planes. From September to the deactivation of the WASP in December 1944 the number on duty with the Ferrying Division averaged 140. During the closing months of women's ferrying activities, the division seems to have had no grounds for complaints. It had a fairly stable women's auxiliary which concentrated largely on ferrying fighters. It had succeeded in transferring all pilots whom it did not judge to be sufficiently qualified, and it was well satisfied with those who remained. Indicative of the specialization in pursuit ferrying is the distribution of the Ferrying Division's WASPs at the end of November 1944: Class V pilots, 4;

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66. FERD "Staff Meeting Notes," 3 Dec. 1943; memo for CG FERD by Exec. for WASP, 14 Dec. 1943, both cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC," 141.

67. 1st ind. (FERD to 2d Ferrying Gp., 14 Dec. 1943), 2d Ferrying Gp. to FERD, 28 Dec. 1943, cited in ibid., 142.

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Class IV, 29; Class III, 102; Class II, 4; Class I, 1; Pursuit, 113.

By the end of activities on 20 December 1944, WASPs in the ATC had ferried 77 types of aircraft. Over the full 27-month period of service with the command, women ferry pilots had completed 12,650 ferrying movements over a distance of approximately 9,224,000 miles. In the latter months they had specialized on a type of aircraft which did not fit into the progressive transition program, thereby facilitating the advancement of male pilots to foreign duty, combat and noncombat.<sup>68</sup>

In addition to the ferrying of military aircraft, women pilots came to be used in the AAF for a variety of other flying duties to release male pilots for combat or to supplement them. In July 1943 women pilots were first assigned to target-towing jobs in support of antiaircraft and aerial gunnery training. This project was to be under the constant supervision of a board which was to establish necessary schedules for the transition and tests of women pilots, set up a daily reporting system and review daily progress reports on the women pilots, make recommendations, and investigate cases requiring disciplinary action.<sup>69</sup> Policy on the use of WASPs in target towing was to be based on the findings of the test, and stress was laid on the fact that it was "imperative that this test be conducted in such a manner that the conclusions derived therefrom" would "permit no debate."<sup>70</sup>

On 10 November 1943 the board reported that pilots of the first class

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68. "Women Pilots in the ATC," 142-43, 148, 161.

69. Brig. Gen. R. W. Harper to CG 3d AF, 26 July 1943, in AFSHO files.

70. Ibid.

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to arrive at Camp Davis were not considered capable of flying the B-34 or the P-47, although they were believed competent to serve as co-pilots in the B-34 or R-37 types. Additional experience was needed in formation flying, and other elements of instruction had not been completed.<sup>71</sup> The test was continued, and in February the board made its final report. WASPs were deemed capable of flying all types of planes used at Camp Davis except the B-34 and P-47. "Additional experience will determine when each Woman Pilot should fly these airplanes." Again it was stated that more experience was required in formation flying. The board believed that most of the WASPs could eventually become first pilots on twin-engine medium-bombardment aircraft for towing and tracking missions, "but only after a prolonged experience as Co-Pilots on these same aircraft." The majority of them "might also be capable of performing night searchlight tracking missions, but only after thorough training in this type flying and qualification as rated instrument pilots." Assignment of most of them to high-altitude work was "believed to be quite practical." The greater number of the WASPs were considered capable of performing the duties of airplane commander on medium-bombardment planes, again "dependent upon experience and familiarization with the aircraft." In summing up, the board reported:<sup>72</sup>

It will be noted that all of these recommendations are predicated on the necessary experience for proper performance of the suggested duties. It is the belief of the board that the training necessary for fulfillment of these flying requirements by Women Pilots would, in each instance, be substantially greater than the training required by men pilots for the performance of the same duties. And finally, it is

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71. Report of Proceedings of Board of Officers, Camp Davis Army Air Field, 10 Nov. 1943, in 353, Women's Flying Training, files of D/WP.  
72. Ibid.

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emphasized that these recommendations apply only to the majority of the Women Pilots. Not all of the Women Pilots would be capable of fulfilling these recommendations.

Perhaps this cautious statement of conclusions and recommendations was induced by the order that these should "permit no debate." At any rate, Headquarters of the First Air Force (to the command of which the WASPs at Camp Davis had recently been transferred from the Third Air Force) was not completely satisfied with the report and called for fuller information. About the middle of March 1944, it returned the report for the signature of the two women members of the board (which were lacking) and stated, "it is desired that the document as finally forwarded be a fair and complete statement."<sup>73</sup>

This prodding brought signed statements by the two women members of the board, the WASP squadron leader and the establishment officer. The squadron leader wrote that, while the report gave "a valid account of WASP activities in tow target work at Camp Davis" over a seven-month period, she had refused to sign it because of "the ambiguity which is bound to accompany any test in which punches have been pulled." She said that three fields had been closed to WASPs, there was little opportunity for formation and instrument flying, and the experiment had "been a mock battle so that no one will get hurt." "We have been spared responsibility and risk," she contended. "Is this a fair test of our ability to assume responsibility and face risks?" In short, the test did not "determine the capabilities of women pilots for use in tow target squadron activities."<sup>74</sup>

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73. 1st ind., Hq 1st AF to CO 3d Tow Target Sq., 1 March 1944, and 3d ind., Hq 1st AF to CO 3d Tow Target Sq., 17 March 1944, in 231.21, Women Pilots, files of D/WF.

74. Statement by Alta Corbett, 24 March 1944, in 353, Women's Flying Training, files of D/WF.

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The establishment officer reported similarly, although she recognized that the operational duties at the 3d and 14th Tow Target squadrons "left insufficient time, aircraft, and pilots to fairly test and give a true account of capabilities of women pilots in all fields of tow target work." She went on to say that two fatal accidents to women pilots had apparently "completely shattered the confidence of the command in woman pilotage." WASPs were assigned no missions over 10,000 feet, first pilots handled the controls nearly all of the time when women were serving as co-pilots, and only one WASP had been able to accumulate enough instrument time to take the test and receive her instrument card.<sup>75</sup>

Headquarters, First Air Force informed Headquarters, AAF that the high priority of the antiaircraft training at Camp Davis had not permitted any interference with it. To prevent abortive missions, which disrupted the programs there, WASP training had to be "given a secondary priority and accomplished on the job concurrently with the primary mission." Although a substantial amount of training was given the WASPs, "the squadrons had neither the facilities nor the instructors to conduct training in excess of that which was given." The conservative safety policy was "concurrent in and was directed by this headquarters."<sup>76</sup>

Essentially, the problem indicated by the First Air Force seems to have been similar to that which came into being in the Ferrying Division of ATC when it was necessary to utilize women pilots largely on fighter planes. If the Training Command could take over the major part of the transition load, there would be less interference with normal operations.

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75. Statement of Jean Forster, 24 March 1944, in files of D/WP.

76. 5th ind., Hq 1st AF to CG AAF, 2 April 1944, in ibid.

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In February 1944, Headquarters, First Air Force had requested that women pilots subsequently assigned to it "be fully transitioned by the Training Command prior to assignment, as no facilities or personnel are provided in tow target squadron organizations for any but normal operating missions."<sup>77</sup> Other air forces which received WASPs for tow-target duties also indicated difficulties in carrying on transition training.<sup>78</sup>

Late in July 1944 the four domestic air forces were informed that there might be a possibility of using 400 WASPs in the tow-target program. It was argued that "although great success had not heretofore been achieved in transitioning WASP pilots to higher performance aircraft within the tow target units themselves, it does appear practicable that such transitions could be effective to a considerably greater extent than past experience has indicated, if proper emphasis is placed upon the job."<sup>79</sup> The Fourth Air Force replied that it could not absorb more than 10 a month, and the First and Third Air Forces answered that they would not be able to take on any additional women pilots for such work. The Second Air Force requested 222, to be assigned over a four-month period beginning 15 September, but with the elimination of tow-target units in that air force in September it asked for cancellation of such assignments.<sup>80</sup>

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77. 1st ind. (basic unknown), Hq 1st AF to CG AAF, 10 Feb. 1944, in ibid.

78. Col. K. P. Berquist to CG's, 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th AF's, 23 July 1944, and 1st inds., Hq 4th AF to CG AAF, 5 Aug. 1944; Hq 3d AF to CG AAF, 6 Aug. 1944; Hq 1st AF to CG AAF, 3 Aug. 1944, all in ibid.

79. Col. K. P. Berquist to CG's, 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th AF's, 23 July 1944, in ibid.

80. 1st ind., Hq 2d AF to CG AAF, 8 Aug. 1944; msg., CG 2d AF to CG AAF, n. d.; msg., CG AAF to CG AFTRC, 18 Sep. 1944, all in ibid.

There are some indications that male pilots resented the presence of WASPs and that this and inactivity brought low morale among the women pilots.<sup>81</sup> Perhaps an example of distrust of women's abilities was a report by a radio-control flight leader in a tow-target squadron at March Field. He charged that WASPs assigned to his flight were insufficiently trained and that "their contribution to 'R' Flight was nil" during three days of continuous operations. He went on to say:<sup>82</sup>

3. It was noted during operations that the WASP's had no inclination to plan ahead. This fault alone was partially responsible for a preventable accident had the control pilot been on her toes and felt at home with the equipment she was checked out in.

4. It is believed that no amount of training will make excellent Radio Control pilots out of the WASP's because the flying required is of a precise nature and demands more than ordinary flying ability. The complicated nature of the equipment used and the flying characteristics of a nullo target seem to be beyond the comprehension of the WASP's observed.

AAF Headquarters replied that any recommendations should be based on at least 30 days of observation, not a mere three.<sup>83</sup>

In general, it seems that women pilots proved capable of tow-target work. The chief of the Tow Target Section in Fourth Air Force Headquarters stated that in many respects they were better adapted to the activity than most pilots returned from combat. Former combat pilots, and Air Corps pilots at large, he stated, looked upon tow-target work as a dull chore, whereas nearly all of the WASPs considered it a "high

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81. C. C., Biggs Field to Miss Cochran, 9 Sep. 1944; digest of telephone calls, Ruth Woods (Gowen Field), Dorothy Kielty (Hq 2d AF), 26 Sep. 1944, in ibid.

82. Lt. Daniel G. Stewart, Jr., to CO 7th Tow Target Sq., 20 Jan. 1944, in ibid.

83. 2d ind., Maj. William S. Smith to Lt. D. G. Stewart, 26 Jan. 1944, in ibid.



adventure."<sup>84</sup> A conference at Fort Worth in September 1944 concluded that WASPs were suitable for assignment as tow-target pilots. As they acquired more experience, they became more effective in tow-target and other duties. In the Fourth Air Force they served as first pilots and co-pilots in towing targets, daytime tracking missions, nighttime search-light-tracking missions, radio control work, laying of smoke screens, and simulated bombing attacks. In addition, they acted as pilots on administrative flights and in ferrying.<sup>85</sup>

Soon after the beginning of the tow-target experiment at Camp Davis in 1943, other tests were started in the Training Command. Transition to the C-60 for glider towing turned out to be too strenuous physically for the WASPs.<sup>86</sup> Seventeen women pilots entered B-26 transition training at Dodge City, Kans.; 11 graduated and were assigned to tow-target work and the six eliminees were used as utility pilots. Although their progress was said to be equal to that of the average male transition student, the women's lack of inclination to mechanical subjects caused them some difficulties in ground school.<sup>87</sup> Another group of 17 were given B-17 transition, and 13 graduated as first pilots. Four of these

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84. Interview with Maj. Norman Cleaveland by Historical Officer, Hq 4th AF, Feb. 1945, cited in 4th AF Historical Study No. V-3, "Women Airforce Service Pilots in the Fourth Air Force" [WASPs in the 4th AF], 17.
85. Maj. Paul Walker to C/S AFTRC, 8 Sep. 1944, in files of D/WP; "WASPs in the 4th AF," p. 11.
86. See above, pp. 32-33.
87. AFTRC Project Book, Women's Flying Training Program, 17 Dec. 1943, 13 Jan. 1944. Similarly, the Ferrying Division's 1st Operational Training Unit found that women pilots were lacking in mechanical aptitude, so that it was necessary to give them more instruction than male pilots on such matters as hydraulic and electric systems. (Memo for CG, ATC by FERD, 19 April 1944, cited in "Women Pilots in the ATC.")

were assigned to engineering flying and delivery work and the others as co-pilots of B-17's on gunnery missions.<sup>88</sup> These women were said to be diligent but were somewhat weak in the fundamentals of flying and in the correct procedures for cross-country planning, cross-country clearances, and use of facility charts and radio aids.<sup>89</sup> Of 20 WASPs entered in a B-25 school, one resigned immediately and the other 19 graduated as first pilots. They were assigned to the Third and Fourth Air Forces for tow-target work.<sup>90</sup>

Miss Cochran in March 1944 suggested to General Arnold that WASPs might well be assigned to basic flying schools to test the feasibility of using women to instruct men and to "lighten the burden of a class of very much over-worked pilots."<sup>91</sup> The Training Command, at the suggestion of General Arnold, took steps to begin the experiment in the Eastern and Western Flying Training Commands.<sup>92</sup> In conversations between Lt. Gen. B. K. Yount, Commanding General of the AAF Training Command, and Maj. Gen. T. J. Hanley, Jr., Commanding General of the Eastern Flying Training Command, the point was made that there was available a large surplus of men for this type of instruction.<sup>93</sup> And in the Western Flying Training Command there seemed to be a unanimity of opinion among commanding officers, supervisors, and the WASPs themselves that women should not be used as basic flying instructors. One officer expressed his opinion as

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88. Ibid., 13 Jan. 1944; memo for CG AAF by J. Cochran, 2 March 1944, in AFSHO files.

89. AFTRC Project Book, Women's Flying Training Program, 17 Dec. 1943.

90. Ibid., 13 Jan. 1944; memo for CG AAF by J. Cochran, 2 March 1944.

91. Ibid.

92. Lt. Gen. B. K. Yount to Gen. Arnold, 15 March 1944, in 353, Women's Flying Training, files of D/WP.

93. EFTC WASP History, 17.

follows: "Unfortunately, in most circles women pilots are considered inferior to men pilots, which is not the case, but the general attitude would require a considerably better job of a woman instructor to obtain the same results and maintain a harmonious atmosphere than is required of a man in the same situation." Another said: "The psychological aspect of a woman instructor would probably be a great morale blow to the aviation cadet. He prides himself on being a member of the Air Corps and having been instructed by an Air Corps graduate."<sup>94</sup> WASPs were used successfully, however, in instrument instruction in the Eastern Flying Training Command.<sup>95</sup>

In September 1944 it was decided, on the basis of experience in the three flying training commands, that WASPs were suitable for the following flying assignments:<sup>96</sup>

- (1) Engineering Flights
- (2) Testing and slow-time
- (3) Administrative pilots
- (4) Ferrying aircraft
- (5) Tow-Target pilots
- (6) Instrument instructors
- (7) Safety pilots
- (8) Instrument check pilots
- (9) Flights to acquaint Link Trainer Operators with instrument flying and radio range.

In addition, several types of administrative duties were listed as suitable assignments:

- (1) Engineering--maintenance and supply

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94. WFTC WASP History, 55-56.

95. EFTC WASP History, 16.

96. This and the following list are quoted from Maj. Paul Walker to C/S AFTRC, 8 Sep. 1944, in AF3HO files. See the histories of WASPs in the three flying training commands (and the various station histories cited in them) for details on the utilization of women pilots in the Training Command. All of these histories are on file in the Archives of the AAF Historical Office.

- (2) Operations
- (3) Assistant to Link Trainer Department head
- (4) Control tower-observer
- (5) Office of Air Inspector
- (6) Reporter--Aircraft accident investigations
- (7) Assistant Personal Equipment Officer

Early in October, however, General Yount apparently disapproved their use as instrument instructors and as assistant personal equipment officers.<sup>97</sup> By this time plans to deactivate the IASPs had been made, and the list of suitable assignments was simply sent to the three flying training commands for their guidance.<sup>98</sup>

At the time of the closing down of the program there were 916 IASPs on duty with the AAF, assigned to the following agencies:<sup>99</sup>

Headquarters, AAF	1
Training Command	620
Air Transport Command	141
First Air Force	16
Second Air Force	80
Fourth Air Force	37
Weather Wing	11
Proving Ground [Command]	6
Air Technical Service [Command]	3
Troop Carrier [Command]	1
	916

The Director of Women Pilots states that their duties included "Ferrying, target towing, tracking and searchlight missions, simulated strafing, smoke laying, and other chemical missions, radio control flying, basic and instrument instruction, engineering test flying, administrative and utility flying." She reported to General Arnold that women pilots had

97. Hq AFTEC to D/AF, 12 Oct. 1944, in ibid.

98. Ibid.

99. Report on Women Pilot Program, 28. The 620 IASPs in the Training Command apparently include approximately 70 women who had been graduated on 7 December 1944 and who were assigned to stations in the Central Flying Training Command. CFTC IASP History I, 91.

averaged 33 hours of flying per woman a month and had flown a total of approximately 60 million miles on operational duties.<sup>100</sup> Although the all-accident rate was higher than that for male pilots, the fatal accident rate was approximately the same.<sup>101</sup>

The actual contribution to the war effort made by WASP operations is difficult to assess. The favorable unfolding of events in the theaters of operations changed the needs on the home front, and by the time women pilots were ready to make their chief contribution it seemed that there was no longer a pressing need for their services. Their utilization apparently gained its chief significance as an experiment, though the results in this instance may not be considered conclusive. It was demonstrated that women are capable of performing a variety of flying and aviation administrative duties. Whether they are equally as capable as male pilots in these respects and other types of piloting and ground activities will perhaps continue to be a point of controversy.

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100. Report on Women Pilot Program, 28, 31.

101. Ibid., 32, 34. Miss Cochran states, "Accident hazards . . . are somewhat higher in the early and expanding stages of any flying program. . . . The WASP all-accident rate of .693 per 1,000 hours is slightly lower than the .707 per 1,000-hour rate for men in 1942 in all domestic flying." (Ibid., 34.) It is doubtful, however, that trustworthy conclusions could be drawn from such comparisons. There were some important differences between types of flying for men and women. Numerous criticisms from overseas resulted in more combat realism in the training of male pilots, for example, close formation, acrobatics, and "on-the-deck" flying. (See draft History of Military Training in the AAF, especially the chapters on advanced and transition pilot training, in AF3HO files. Cf. H. Rept. No. 1600, 78 Cong., 2 Sess., 7-8.) The study, "Medical Consideration of WASPs" (p. 4) states that there "should be no attempt to compare WASPs to male pilots." Also, the Chief of the Field Research Unit reported to the Training Command Surgeon: "Many factors of differences in method of selection and training require that comparisons of WASPs and cadets be made with reservations." Memo for Gen. Glenn by Lt. Col. J. P. Guilford, 19 April 1944, quoted in "Medical Consideration of WASPs," 33-34.

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## Chapter IV

## THE MOVEMENT FOR MILITARIZATION

Before the AAF began its program for women pilots it had received authorization for the use of civilian pilots in military aircraft.<sup>1</sup> After the creation of a single organization for all women pilots assigned to the AAF, apparently the War Department felt that the authorization for the training of women pilots was inadequate, for on 23 July 1943 the Secretary of War requested the Civil Service Commission to amend its original authorization for the appointment of civilian pilots in order to cover the new trainees. On 14 August the commission complied with this request and specifically approved the appointment of "female pilots in the Army Air Forces Training Command through extension of existing authorities covering appointments of pilots." No absolute restriction as to salary was imposed, though it was understood that the salary was to be approximately \$150 a month for the training period of three months.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to these Civil Service letters, the War Department pointed to the implementing directive of 7 October 1942 and to the inclusion of estimates for the WASP in the preparation of the Military Establishment appropriation bills as further authorization for the program. The implementing directive authorized the training of 500 women, and described the objective, scope, source of personnel, pay, status, and administration of the women's pilot-training program.<sup>3</sup> Although no specific appropriation

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1. 54 Stat. 712; AR 95-15, 21 April 1930; John E. Blann to S/W, 23 Feb. 1942; L. A. Moyer to S/W, 27 July 1942; L. A. Moyer to S/W, 12 March 1943, in AFOLS files.
  2. L. A. Moyer to S/W, 14 Aug. 1943, in ibid.
  3. Maj. Gen. G. E. Stratmeyer to CG AAFTC, 7 Oct. 1942, in files of D/WP.

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was made for the training of women pilots in 1943, the program was included as an item in the estimates prepared prior to the passage of the appropriation act. In the justification for these estimates it was entered under "Cost of Tuition for Training of Pilots, etc. and Enlisted and Civilian Technicians at Civilian Schools." In the estimates for 1944 and 1945, the WASP received specific justification, but nowhere in the Military Establishment appropriation acts for the period of its existence is the program mentioned.<sup>4</sup> These acts merely authorized the War Department to make such expenditures for "salaries and wages of civilian employees as may be necessary." The general provisions of the 1943 act authorized expenditures for the training of such civilian employees during the fiscal year 1943, while Section 8 of the 1944 act gave specific authority for expenditures during the two fiscal years in connection with the instruction and training, including tuition, of civilian employees.<sup>5</sup>

While the AAF early recognized the advantages of specific legislative authority for the WASP program and sought for many months to obtain congressional approval of military status for women pilots, apparently the legality of the training program was not questioned until the Ramspeck investigation in the summer of 1943. When the House Committee on the Civil Service, under the chairmanship of Robert Ramspeck, undertook its inquiry into civilian employment in the departments and agencies of the government, it soon centered its attention on the WASP program.

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4. Questions on WASP program contained in letter dated 17 March 1944 from Staff Director, Civil Service Investigating Com. and answers thereto, in ibid.
  5. Public Law No. 649, 77 Cong.; Public Law No. 108, 78 Cong.

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Unsatisfied with the citations of authority made by the AAF,<sup>6</sup> the committee reported on 5 June 1944 that though there was ample authority for the employment of previously trained civilian personnel, the War Department had failed to produce specific authorization for the WASP training program. The committee expressed the opinion, moreover, that a program "involving 2,500 graduate trainees, at an approximated cost of \$50,000,000 of public funds" was of sufficient importance to have required specific legislative sanction.<sup>7</sup> The AAF was apparently well aware of the fact that there was very nebulous authority for such extensive training of civilian personnel. From the first stages of the program it had been planning for the day when the WASPs could discard their civilian status and emerge as full-fledged members of the Army of the United States. When that day should come, whether they were incorporated into the Women's Army Corps (WAC) or constituted as a separate women's organization in the AAF, the controversy concerning authorization would be over. Their failure to realize militarization, however, continued the question of their legal status to the last days of the program.

At the time of the establishment of the WAFS and the Women's Flying Training Detachment, the possibility of incorporating women pilots into the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) was discussed. On 20 November 1943, Brig. Gen. Luther S. Smith, the Director of Individual Training, requested the Air Judge Advocate for an opinion on the legality

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6. Memo for Col. Earl S. Patterson by Maj. Harold G. Reuschlein, 9 Aug. 1943; Questions on WASP program contained in letter dated 17 March 1944 from Staff Director, Civil Service Investigating Committee, and answers thereto, both in files of D/WP.
7. H. Rept. No. 1600, 78 Cong., 2 Sess.

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of training the WAAC under AR 35-3500 which authorized aviation instruction at nonfederal institutions.<sup>8</sup> Three days later the Air Judge Advocate replied that the regulation applied to aviation instruction given military personnel, and inasmuch as the WAAC was only an auxiliary of the Army, its members were ineligible for the training desired.<sup>9</sup>

Nevertheless, General Arnold broached the subject of AAF women personnel to Colonel Hobby, and as a result arranged a formal conference for 27 November to discuss the matter in detail. It was agreed at this conference that the AAF would favor incorporating the WAAC into the Army.<sup>10</sup> Following the discussion, Col. Aubry L. Moore, AC/AS, Program Planning asked Colonel Hobby what her attitude would be toward a separate women's organization as a part of the AAF. She indicated that she did not wish to comment on the matter since she had given the subject no thought and believed it would require a War Department rather than a WAAC decision.<sup>11</sup> The news that the AAF was considering a separate women's organization was not long in reaching the Chief of Staff who wrote immediately to Maj. Gen. George E. Stratemeyer, Chief of Air Staff:<sup>12</sup>

I believe Colonel Moore took up with Mrs. Hobby the question of

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8. AR 35-3500, 20 July 1942; R&R, AFRIT to AFAJA, 20 Nov. 1942, in files of D/WF.
  9. R&R, AFAJA to AFRIT, 23 Nov. 1942, in ibid.
  10. Representatives of the AAF attending the conference were Col. F. Trabee Davison, Maj. Maxwell Murray, Col. Aubry L. Moore, and Brig. Gen. L. S. Smith. Memo for C/AS by Brig. Gen. L. S. Smith, 27 Nov. 1942, in ibid.
  11. Memo for C/AS by Col. F. Trabee Davison and Aubry L. Moore, 27 Nov. 1942, in ibid.
  12. Memo for Gen. Stratemeyer by Gen. George C. Marshall, 27 Nov. 1942, in ibid. Apparently General Arnold discussed the matter with General Marshall, for the memo bears the penciled note, "Gen. Marshall is satisfied but hopes that there will be no more loose talk. H.H.A."

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her attitude toward a separate women's organization for the Air Corps. I don't like the tone of this at all. I want to be told why they cannot train these women, why the present legal status prevents such training. I don't wish anyone in the Air Corps office to take up without my personal knowledge any question of organizing a separate unit, nor any discussion of it except with me first.

General Marshall's protest was effective in stopping further discussion of a separate organization, but the next day a second conference with Colonel Hobby completed arrangements to give women pilots basic training as a part of the WAAC. In reporting the results of the conference to General Stratemeyer, General Smith admitted that the proposed pilot training was a violation of the law but stated that the procedure would be continued until such time as congressional action could be obtained for inclusion of the WAAC in the Army.<sup>13</sup>

This plan was, however, not satisfactory to all concerned. On 30 November 1942, Colonel Tunner protested the placing of women pilots in the WAAC and recommended instead that authority be given the Ferrying Division to enlist and commission women in the Army of the United States. General George concurred in this recommendation.<sup>14</sup> Shortly thereafter, however, A-1 of the Air Staff agreed in the principle but not on the details of placing women pilots in the WAAC.<sup>15</sup>

Apparently the lack of agreement on the proposed type of organization convinced General Arnold that no hasty action should be taken, for the following day he called the Chief of Air Staff by telephone and stated that

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13. Memo for C/AS by Brig. Gen. L. S. Smith, 28 Nov. 1942, in ibid.  
 14. Col. William H. Tunner to CG AAF thru CG ATC, 30 Nov. 1942, and 1st ind., CG ATC to CG AAF, 30 Nov. 1942, in ibid.  
 15. Memo for C/AS by Col. F. Trubee Davison, 30 Nov. 1942, in files of D/WP.

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"all remarks reference the training of women pilots as WAACs should be withdrawn."<sup>16</sup>

Consequently, General Stratemyer instructed the Director of Individual Training in conference with General George, General Yount, and Miss Cochran to prepare a plan for training women pilots under which they would eventually be brought into the military service. He cautioned General Smith, however, not to violate General Arnold's directive to leave the WAAC out of the picture. According to General Stratemyer, the Commanding General disapproved inclusion of women pilots in the WAAC because such an arrangement would preclude the use of women under 21 years of age. Moreover, any delays which might be encountered in the proposed militarization of the WAAC would slow down the training of pilots for ATC.<sup>17</sup>

In the course of the next few days further disagreement developed. Although General Stratemyer favored inclusion in the WAAC, Miss Cochran and General Yount were of the opinion that women pilots should be kept on civilian status until the first class had graduated from the training course.<sup>18</sup>

This basic disagreement resulted in the dropping of the whole subject of militarizing women pilots for a period of about two months, during

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16. R&R, C/AS to AC/AS, A-1, 1 Dec. 1942, in ibid.

17. R&R, C/AS to AFRTT, 3 Dec. 1942, in ibid.

18. On 9 December, General Stratemyer proposed to G-1 that 2,083 WAACs be given pilot training by the Flying Training Command and requested amendment of AR 95-60 to permit the rating as service pilots of WAAC personnel with the necessary qualifications. Memo for AC/S, G-1 by Gen. Stratemyer, 9 Dec. 1942; Brig. Gen. C. R. Smith to Gen. H. H. Arnold, 19 Dec. 1942; memo for CG AAF by Brig. Gen. Walter F. Kraus, 19 Dec. 1942; memo for Col. K. P. McNaughton by J. Cochran, 15 Dec. 1942, in ibid.

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which time legislation was pending for the creation of the Women's Army Corps. The matter was revived late in February 1943 by General Smith, who recommended that flying training and aeronautical ratings be given to members of the WAAC.<sup>19</sup> Subsequently, General Yount was asked to submit his recommendations for incorporating the training program into the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. He complied with this request on 14 March 1943 and outlined the points which he desired to be included if the plan were to be put into effect.<sup>20</sup> This was approved by General Stratemeier. On 6 April he recommended to the Chief of Staff that, contingent upon the creation of the WAC as a branch of the Army, women in the pilot training program and those to be recruited in the future be incorporated into that organization.<sup>21</sup>

Meanwhile plans were being made for the merging of the WAFS and the WFTD. Just prior to this merger and the establishment of the Office of Director of Women Pilots, General Arnold sent to Brig. Gen. M. G. White, the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, a draft of a memorandum addressed to General Marshall requesting that legislation be initiated to militarize women pilots and incorporate them into the AAF. Such action would not entail the organization of a new women's group. In presenting his arguments against inclusion of the WAAC (or WAC should it be militarized), General Arnold outlined differences in educational and physical qualifications required by the AAF and the WAAC. General Arnold asked General White

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19. Memo for AFDLR by Brig. Gen. Luther S. Smith, 19 Feb. 1943, in ibid.

20. Maj. Gen. B. K. Yount to Gen. Stratemeier, 14 March 1943, in ibid.

21. Memo for C/S by Gen. Stratemeier, 6 April 1943, in ibid.

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for his "frank reaction."<sup>22</sup> In reply to this proposal General White stated that he did not believe the recommended action to be either necessary or desirable and that he felt, following the creation of the Women's Army Corps, standards pertaining to women pilots could be worked out which would be entirely satisfactory to the AAF.<sup>23</sup>

Soon thereafter the WAFS and the WFTD were merged under Miss Jacqueline Cochran as Director of Women Pilots.<sup>24</sup> About this time conversations were resumed with Colonel Hobby concerning the possibility of including women pilots in the WAC. From the record of the discussion it was apparent that a number of compromises would have to be worked out if this type of militarization were to be effected. Moreover, a dispute developed over the type of person who should administer the program. Miss Cochran argued that since "women pilots are very temperamental," their "administration should be handled by people who do understand them—not by people who have no appreciation of the type of work they are doing."

Col. H/obby: I don't know what you mean by administration.  
 Miss C/ochran: I mean people over them who understand their problems.  
 Col. H: I don't think it is very likely that you would have anybody over them who didn't.  
 Miss C: Yes, I think so.<sup>25</sup>

Shortly afterward General Arnold directed that the whole matter be held up for from 60 to 90 days at the expiration of which time plans were to

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- 22. Memo for Gen. George C. Marshall by Gen. Arnold, n.d., with memo for Gen. White by Gen. Arnold, 16 June 1943, in AAG 211D, Pilots.
  - 23. Memo for CG AAF by Brig. Gen. H. G. White, 20 June 1943, in AAG 324.5, WAFS Bill—Pending Leg., Bulk.
  - 24. AAF Memo No. 20-4, 28 June 1943.
  - 25. Conversation between Colonel Hobby, Miss Cochran, and Col. R. H. Carmichael, 25 June 1943, in AAG 211D, Pilots.

be presented either for the militarization of women pilots or their removal from Civil Service.<sup>26</sup>

On 1 July 1943 the Women's Army Corps was created by an act of Congress,<sup>27</sup> and within the month AIC was urging the merger of the WASP with the MAC.<sup>28</sup>

It was now necessary to take some kind of action. A women's military organization was finally in existence, many AAF officials recognized the advantage of militarizing the WASPs, and a specific request had been made by the using agency to make these women a part of the MAC. On the other hand, the Director of Women Pilots and the Commanding General of the Flying Training Command were opposed to any type of militarization other than the direct commissioning of women pilots in the AAF. Moreover, the need for militarization was becoming increasingly apparent as flying accidents and fatalities demonstrated the disadvantages under which the women were working as civilian pilots. In such cases the victims were not covered by the insurance and benefits provided for military personnel. In addition, there was nothing to prevent women who had received their flying training at government expense from resigning immediately after their graduation. These were problems which only militarization could solve. Faced with this situation General Arnold presented his problem to Col. T. C. Odum, the Deputy Air Inspector, who <sup>was</sup> directed to institute a personal investigation of the situation and make a report not later

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26. Report on question of Militarization of Women Pilots, in files of D/JP.

27. 57 Stat. 371.

28. Brig. Gen. C. R. Smith to Gen. H. H. Arnold, 19 July 1943, in AAF 324.5, WASP Bill-Pending Leg., Bulk.

than 1 August 1943.<sup>29</sup> It was the general consensus that within a short time the WASP would be nonexistent as a separate organization and that it would probably disappear into the AAC.<sup>30</sup>

Miss Cochran, however, suggested another tack. Taking as precedent the law which provided for the appointment of women physicians and surgeons in the Medical Corps of the Army and Navy, she proposed that similar legislation be passed for the militarization of women pilots, who were also professional personnel.<sup>31</sup> But in the meantime, realizing the likelihood of their incorporation into the WAC, she drew up a comprehensive list of points which she felt should be agreed to in case of such militarization. Approval would virtually have made a separate corps of the women pilots.<sup>32</sup>

Neither course was followed, however, for on 5 August 1943 the Deputy Air Inspector recommended that no change be made in the policies governing the use of women pilots. His report was based on the contention that Civil Service status offered greater flexibility for experimentation than would any form of military organization. He further recommended that after 90 days the entire women's pilot project be restudied on the basis of the Third Air Force tow-target experimental project and <sup>the</sup> added experience gained by the Air Transport Command.<sup>33</sup>

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29. Memo for Col. T. C. Odum by CG AAF, 22 July 1943, in ibid.  
 30. Telephone conversation between Col. R. H. Carmichael and J. Cochran, n.d., in ibid.  
 31. Memo for Brig. Gen. B. M. Giles by J. Cochran, 26 July 1943, in files of D/WP.  
 32. Memo for CG AAF by J. Cochran, 31 July 1943, in Project #110, Militarization of Wasps, in files of Plans and Liaison Div., AC/AS, Personnel.  
 33. Col. T. C. Odum to Gen. H. H. Arnold, Report of Investigation Regarding the Proper Use of Women Pilots in the AAF, 5 Aug. 1943, in AAG 324.5, WASP Bill-Pending Leg., Bulk.

No important action seems to have been taken during the next two months, but on 30 September 1943 Representative John M. Costello (Calif.) introduced the first of the WASP militarization bills (H. R. 3353).<sup>34</sup> The measure made no provision for administration or for training, but simply specified that during the war and for six months thereafter there should be included in the AAF such licensed women pilots as the Secretary of War might consider necessary. They were to be appointed and removed by the Commanding General of the AAF subject to approval of the Secretary of War. Those appointed were to be commissioned in the Army of the United States and were to receive the same pay and allowances and be entitled to the same rights, privileges, and benefits as members of the Officers Reserve Corps of the Army with the same grades and length of service.

The bill was analyzed by the Air Staff and forwarded to the War Department General Staff with proposed amendments designed to make it impossible for the commissions to be awarded to women pilots as a part of the WAC and to guarantee women aviation cadets the same privileges and benefits as other members of the Army of the United States. Accompanying the bill was a letter for the signature of the Secretary of War recommending that the Air Staff's proposed changes be incorporated in the measure and that it be submitted to Congress with the full approval of the War Department.<sup>35</sup>

The proposal was next studied in the G-1 division of the General

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34. Daily Cong. Rec., 78 Cong., 1 Sess., 8006 (30 Sep. 1943).
35. Memo for Chief, Legislative and Liaison Div., ADGS, by Brig. Gen. William E. Hall, 27 Oct. 1943, in AAG 324.5, WASP Bill-Pending Leg., Bulk.



Staff which decided that the WASPs should be taken into the existing WAC organization and therefore disapproved the changes made by the Air Staff. This decision was concurred in by G-3, and consequently the letter to the Committee on Military Affairs was not dispatched.<sup>36</sup>

On 5 January 1944 General Arnold opposed the stand taken by G-1 and G-3 but as a matter of record made a definite statement of his position on the subject of militarization of women pilot personnel. He wished it to be known that he approved taking these women into the military organization but not through the WAC. His principal reasons for opposition to incorporation into the WAC were that these women were definitely recruited and employed as pilots, the youngest were the most useful, and some of the finest pilots had children under 14 years of age. If they were brought in as part of the WAC, they would be in a corps consisting principally of administrative, technical, and clerical personnel, and they would be subject to the limitations as to age and children which applied to the organization. He again recommended amendments to the proposed legislation which would make possible their direct commission in the AAF.<sup>37</sup>

It then occurred to the Deputy Chief of Air Staff that perhaps militarization might be effected without legislation. He asked the AC/AS, Personnel to look into the legality of commissioning women pilots directly into the Army on the basis of their qualification as service pilots, stating that if such legal basis could be found, General Arnold would be

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36. Memo for C/S by Maj. Gen. H. G. White, 13 Dec. 1943, in files of D/WP.

37. Memo for DC/S by Gen. H. H. Arnold, 5 Jan. 1944; memo for all Div. Heads by Col. E. O'Donnell, 19 Jan. 1944, in AAG 211C, Pilots.

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highly pleased because it would be the answer to militarizing the WASP and at the same time keeping them out of the WAC.<sup>38</sup> In his reply the AC/AS, Personnel cited a decision of the Comptroller General which stated that the authority required extended only to men and could "not be regarded as authority for commissioning women as officers in the Army of the United States."<sup>39</sup>

The only alternative seemed to be the making of a compromise on the WASP legislation. On 8 February, Col. Charles H. Deerwester, Legislative and Liaison Officer of the War Department General Staff, accompanied by Miss Cochran, met to discuss the subject with a board representing the Bureau of the Budget. The civilian members of the board were tractable, but a Lieutenant Colonel Robinson insisted that the proposed women aviation cadets should not be under the AAF because of the adverse effect this would have on WAC recruiting. After almost two hours of discussion, Colonel Robinson conceded to the other members of the board, and a decision was finally made to approve the proposed legislation and AAF amendments with certain changes. The clause "female administrative personnel" was to be stricken out, and the amendment was to be reworded to state that 95 per cent of the women inducted under the act would be pilots. In the second place, the new women aviation cadets were not to be considered eligible for veterans' benefits should they be eliminated from the school and discharged from the service. In the course of the discussion Colonel Deerwester accepted these changes on behalf of the Office of the Chief of Staff and the AAF.<sup>40</sup>

38. R&R, DC/AS to AC/AS, Personnel, 11 Jan. 1944, in *ibid.*

39. R&R, AC/AS, Personnel to DC/AS, 13 Jan. 1944, in *ibid.*

40. Memo for Maj. Gen. B. M. Giles by Col. Charles H. Deerwester, 8 Feb. 1944, in AIG 324.5, WASP Bill-Pending Leg., Bulk.

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On 16 February 1944 a letter was dispatched from the Secretary of War to Chairman Andrew J. May of the House Committee on Military Affairs recommending the passage of the bill with Air Staff and Bureau of the Budget changes.<sup>41</sup> The next day the WASP bill was redrafted and introduced as H. R. 4219.<sup>42</sup>

The new militarization measure provided that for the period of the war and for six months thereafter there should be included in the AAF such women--commissioned, flight officer, and aviation student personnel-- as the Secretary of War might consider necessary. No officers were to be appointed to a grade higher than colonel, and there was to be only one officer of that grade. Of the commissioned personnel selected directly from civil life, not less than 95 per cent were to be qualified pilots. Aviation cadets could be appointed for pilot training, and upon successful completion of the course be commissioned as second lieutenants or appointed as flight officers. Service as an aviation cadet which was terminated before completion of the prescribed course of training was not to confer veteran's status on any person. Finally, all persons commissioned or appointed as women pilots were to receive the same pay and allowances as members of the Army of the United States and be entitled to the same rights, privileges, and benefits as were accorded other military personnel of the same rank, grade, and length of service.

In the meantime, decided changes had been made in the pilot-training

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41. S/W to Andrew J. May, 16 Feb. 1944, in *ibid.*

42. *Daily Cong. Rec.*, 78 Cong., 2 Sess., 1882 (17 Feb. 1944). On 24 March an identical bill (S. 1810) was presented in the Senate by Senators Lister Hill (Ala.) and Harold H. Burton (Ohio). *Ibid.*, 3090 (24 March 1944).

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program. On 15 January 1944 the CAA War Training Service (CAA-WTS) program was terminated. An announcement was also made that the AAF college training programs would be terminated on 30 June and that a number of civilian-contract flying schools would be released soon thereafter. This meant that a great many civilian students and instructor pilots would be grounded. The purpose of the Army in the inauguration of the new policy was to utilize as many men in combat units as possible in both the Army Air and Army Ground Forces in anticipation of the invasion of Europe. Those men who were members of the Air Corps Enlisted Reserve who could qualify were to be taken into the Air Transport Command, and those who could qualify for cadet training were to be sent to the training centers. Still others were to have the opportunity to qualify for glider training, or training as bombardiers, navigators, technicians, and aerial gunners. If they could not qualify in any of these categories, they were to be released and made subject to selective service and use by the Ground and Service Forces.<sup>43</sup>

After the introduction of the WASP bill in February, Congress was deluged with letters from the CAA-WTS trainees, instructors, and their friends who protested vehemently against the militarization and instruction of women pilots when men already trained as pilots were being put into the "walking Army." The volume of letters and telegrams descending upon the legislators was so great that congressman felt compelled to take

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43. WD Press Release, 26 April 1944; Questions on WASP program contained in letter dated 17 March 1944 from Staff Director, Civil Service Investigating Com., and answers thereto, in files of D/WP.

some kind of action. It came on 24 February 1944 with the introduction of the first in a series of bills which provided for the commissioning as second lieutenants or appointment as flight officers of CAA-WTS pilots who met the requirements for AAF flying officers.<sup>44</sup> In addition, the House Committee on the Civil Service (Ramspeck Committee), which had been previously authorized to investigate various activities in the departments and agencies of the government, undertook to inquire into the criticisms made of the WASP program.<sup>45</sup>

It was about this same time that the AAF instituted its plans to send WASPs to the School of Applied Tactics at Orlando, Florida, for training as prospective officers,<sup>46</sup> a move which prompted the Washington Daily News of 29 April 1944 to say: "The action literally jumps the gun on Congress by anticipating passage of a bill permitting officer status for the WASPs, although enactment of the legislation is unlikely without a fight on the House floor." Although, according to the Daily News, headquarters in Washington insisted that the training given at Orlando in no way resembled officer training but was merely "physical conditioning training and theoretical flight instruction,"<sup>47</sup> the course of study which

44. Daily Cong. Rec., 78 Cong., 2 Sess., 2065 (24 Feb. 1944). Other bills making similar provision were S. 1797 and S. 1821, ibid., 2749 (20 March 1944), 3283 (29 March 1944).

45. H. Res. No. 16, 78 Cong., 1 Sess. The committee asked the Secretary of War to furnish information on such matters as the specific authority for the program, cost of training, authority for and cost of procurement of uniforms, interference with male pilot training, whether pilots on administrative duty could not replace WASPs, and why the Navy did not require women pilots. On uniforms, for example, the committee asked for citation of authorization for uniform allowance, the cost per WASP and the number uniformed, the items furnished at government expense, expense of designing, whether the contract was awarded after open bidding, and when uniforms were issued. E. J. McCormack to Julius H. Amberg, 3 April 1944, in AAG 324.5, WASP--Civil Service Investigation, Bulk. For details on WASP uniforms, see AAG 421, Uniforms--Development.

46. Memo for CG AFTAC by Maj. Gen. H. A. Craig, 25 March 1944, in files of D/WP.

47. Washington Daily News, 29 April 1944.

was followed actually did place emphasis on such basic military training as Army discipline, military courtesy, customs of the service, duties and responsibilities of an officer, and AAF and War Department staff procedure.<sup>48</sup> It was natural that the inauguration of the new course should fan the flame of resentment among both men pilots and members of Congress.

While the controversy was raging and the Ramspeck Committee was pursuing its investigation, the House Committee on Military Affairs held hearings on the WASP bill. The sole witness was the Commanding General of the Army Air Forces who told the committee that he hoped to expand the WASP sufficiently to replace every man in the AAF qualified for overseas service. He denied that any of the civilian pilots who could qualify would be refused an opportunity to serve with the AAF, but protested against lowering standards to accommodate them. In view of the serious shortage of manpower both in the Army and in key industries, General Arnold urged the committee to approve this legislation and make it possible for him to use the WASP as full military personnel for noncombat service.<sup>49</sup>

On 5 June 1944 the Ramspeck Committee brought in its report which was critical of the proposal to militarize the WASP. It claimed that the program was unnecessary and unjustifiably expensive and recommended that recruiting of inexperienced women and their training as pilots be immediately terminated. The committee also studied the CAA-WTS instructors' complaints and recommended that the service of this and similar groups of experienced

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48. Military Training, Program of Instruction for WASP Trainees at the Army Air Forces School of Applied Tactics, in files of D/WP.

49. House, Hearings on H. R. 4219, 78 Cong., 2 Sess.

air personnel be immediately utilized.<sup>50</sup> The report, however, was far from unanimous. Five members of the committee signed a minority report in which they expressed the opinion that the termination, continuation, or further development of a women's flying program was a matter for the AAF to determine.<sup>51</sup>

In order to forestall the public criticism which it felt would result from publication of the Ramspeck Committee report, the War Department took two courses of action. First, it approved the addition of H. R. 4269, called the "Brooks Amendment," to the Costello bill. The Brooks bill authorized the direct commissioning of qualified CAA-WTS personnel in the AAF. Second, it issued a regulation on 22 April 1944 which eliminated the requirement that CAA instructors had to be members of the Air Corps Enlisted Reserve to be eligible for ATC pilot training.<sup>52</sup>

These developments brought a flood of comment from metropolitan newspapers. While the Boston Herald, the New York Herald Tribune, and the New York Times favored militarization of the WASP, the Washington Daily News, Post, and Times-Herald were definitely critical. The Daily News charged that not all WASPs were favorable to militarization and quoted Miss Jeanne Robertson, a retired WASP, as saying that 25 per cent if not more would resign in the event women pilots were given military

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50. H. Rept. No. 1600, 78 Cong., 2 Sess., 13. The report recommended that WASPs already trained and in training be utilized and that provision be made for hospitalization and insurance.

51. Members of the committee signing the minority report were Clarence E. Kilburn (N. Y.), Richard P. Gale (Minn.), Graham A. Barden (N. C.), Christian A. Herter (Mass.), and Winifred C. Stanley (N. Y.).

52. Lt. Gen. B. M. Giles to W. G. Andrews, 19 May 1944, in AAG O32.1, Leg.

status.<sup>53</sup> The New London (Conn.) Day also expressed disapproval of militarization, while the Zanesville (Ohio) Times-Recorder made a personal attack on Miss Cochran.<sup>54</sup>

Shortly after the Ramspeck Committee made its report, representatives of the War Department discussed disposition of the WASP bill with Congressmen John W. McCormack (Mass.) and John M. Costello (Calif.). As a result of this conference it was decided to bring the measure to the floor of the House and fight it out, though as Colonel Deerwester said on 12 June 1944: "The outcome is doubtful, as the die-hards are going to make every effort to muddy the water."<sup>55</sup>

During the days immediately preceding debate on the bill it appeared to supporters of the CAA-WTS personnel that they could receive consideration for their legislation only if they supported the WASP measure with the Brooks amendment. They were not willing, however, to give the AAF unlimited authority to use women pilots. Therefore, Congressman Forest A. Harness (Ind.) prepared an amendment which limited the total woman pilot personnel to 1,500. On 17 June 1944 six members of the House addressed a letter to their colleagues branding the WASP program as "duplication and completely unnecessary," and urging that if it became necessary to support the Costello

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53. Boston Herald, 10 May 1944; New York Herald Tribune, 6 May 1944; New York Times, 16 June 1944; Washington Daily News, 9 June 1944; Washington Post, 17 May 1944; Washington Times-Herald, 4 May 1944.  
 54. New London Day, 5 June 1944; Zanesville Times-Recorder, 26 May 1944.  
 55. Memo for Col. John P. Proctor by Col. Charles H. Deerwester, 12 June 1944, in AAG 324.5, WASP Bill-Pending Leg., Bulk.



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bill in order to commission the CAA-WTS instructors, the House should attach the Harness amendment thereto.<sup>56</sup>

On 21 June the WASP bill was debated on the floor of the House with Congressman Ramspeck in the chair. The opposition was well organized. Citing the Ramspeck report as evidence of the waste and duplication in the program, it adroitly evaded the merits of the bill itself. The debate then became a frank discussion of the disposition of CAA-WTS trainees and instructors. Had the Brooks amendment been brought up and attached to the measure fairly early during the discussion, it is altogether possible that the legislation might have passed. The opposition, however, led by Harness of Indiana, Robert L. F. Sikes (Fla.), Paul J. Kilday (Tex.), James H. Morrison (La.), and Compton I. White (Idaho), was able at the end of the original hour allotted for debate to begin inserting amendments which further involved the situation. The Harness amendment to limit the program to 1,500 pilots and the Hobbs (Sam Hobbs, Ala.) amendment to make the commanding officer of the women pilots a captain instead of a colonel were both defeated. The debate grew increasingly bitter as the afternoon wore on. Personal attacks were made on General Arnold and Miss Cochran by Congressmen Edward V. Izak (Calif.) and Joseph P. O'Hara (Minn.). In the middle of the afternoon a vote was called to strike out the enacting clause before the Brooks amendment could be attached to the bill. This motion was carried by a vote of 188 to 169, 73 not voting.

The men favoring the legislation<sup>57</sup> tried hard to present their view

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56. James H. Morrison, Compton I. White, David K. Hoch, Alvin E. O'Konski, Walt Horan, and Karl Stefan to Members of the House of Representatives, 17 June 1944, in AFOLS files.
57. Among the principal supporters of the bill were Congressmen Costello, May, Thomason, and Andrews.

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of the facts and to drive home their principal argument--that all available manpower was needed at the front--but from the record of congressional proceedings, it appears that the supporters of the measure were too poorly organized and worked too slowly to match the legislative tactics of the opposition.<sup>58</sup>

Five days after the defeat of the Costello bill General Arnold announced that the recruitment and training of all additional WASPs would be terminated immediately, though the training of women pilots then in school would be completed and operations of the WASP would be continued by the existing personnel of the organization.<sup>59</sup>

Had the WASP question not been complicated by the CAA-WTS controversy, it is probable that the Costello bill would have passed the House. Personally supported by General Arnold, whose prestige with Congress had always been high, it conceivably would have had as favorable a chance for approval as the majority of war measures. As a matter of fact, both sides of the controversy had just claims. The WASPs had been enrolled at a time of crisis when there were not enough pilots for combat flying and behind-the-lines service as well. They had performed their duties well, and a number of them had died in service. Militarization would not only have increased their prestige but would have given them certain benefits and protection to which the nature of their work entitled them. On the other hand, the men of the CAA-WTS program also had just claims. They had helped turn out over a quarter-million flyers for the armed forces. They felt that throwing them into places in the Army for which they had no

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58. Daily Cong. Rec., 78 Cong., 2 Sess., 6481-99, (21 June 1944).

59. WD Press Release, 26 June 1944.

liking and where their skills had little value was unfair to them and to the nation.<sup>60</sup> But regardless of the justice of these claims, the plain fact remained that the pressing need of the armed forces in June 1944 was for infantrymen.

There was one more chance of obtaining militarization. The Senate bill (S. 1810), which was identical to the defeated Costello bill, was still in the Senate Committee on Military Affairs. If this measure could be forced out to the floor of the Senate and sufficient pressure could be brought to bear upon members of both houses, it was possible that the WASP might still become a part of the Army.

On 7 August 1944, Miss Cochran made a report to General Arnold in which she recommended that consideration be given either to disbandment of the WASPs or to another attempt for militarization. The next day her report was made public by General Arnold in a War Department press release.<sup>61</sup> The suggestion was heralded in the newspapers as an "ultimatum" on the WASP question. The Washington Times-Herald openly spoke of it as "pressure" on the Senate which Miss Cochran hoped would bring favorable consideration in both houses.<sup>62</sup>

Coincident with this report, a pressure campaign to revive the WASP bill was begun. The Washington Daily News claimed that it originated in a committee in Sweetwater, Texas, and with the "99's," an international organization of women pilots whose national president was Mrs. Ethel A. Sheehy, assistant to the Director of Women Pilots.<sup>63</sup> But General Arnold

60. National Aeronautics, June 1944.

61. WD Press Release, 8 Aug. 1944.

62. Washington Times-Herald, 8 Aug. 1944.

63. Washington Daily News, 6 Sep. 1944. A spokesman for the 99's in Washington denied that Miss Cochran or Mrs. Sheehy knew anything about the recommendations that Congress reconsider the WASP militarization.

apparently realized that militarization of the WASP was impossible of attainment. The military scene had changed radically during the summer, and to many observers victory in Europe seemed imminent. On 6 September steps were taken to inactivate the three-week WASP training course at the AAF School of Applied Tactics.<sup>64</sup> On 3 October General Arnold announced that with the graduation of the final class of trainees at Sweetwater, Texas, on 20 December, the whole WASP program would be deactivated.<sup>65</sup> In justification of this action the Commanding General told the WASPs that the change in the military situation demanded that women pilots be released if they were not to replace men adequately trained to perform the required duties.<sup>66</sup>

This announcement was a bitter disappointment to many of the women who had spent many months in training and some of whom had been employed as pilots for a period of two years. Objection was also made to it by the Ferrying Division of the Air Transport Command which claimed that the ferrying activities would be handicapped by the loss of the women pilots.<sup>67</sup>

At this point there seems to have been a shift in attitude on the part of the press. Whereas in the spring a considerable number of newspapers had been critical of the whole program, several journals now praised the service of women pilots and urged that those who were already

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64. OC&R Daily Activity Report, 6 Sep. 1944, in AFSHO files.

65. WD Press Release, 3 Oct. 1944.

66. General Arnold to each member of the WASP, 1 Oct. 1944, in files of D/WP.

67. Brig. Gen. Bob E. Nowland to CG ATC, 1 Nov. 1944, in AAG 324.5A, Independent Organizations. Some of the women pilots were so eager to continue their work that they offered their services to the government on a dollar-a-year basis, an offer which was rejected. Special Investigations Div., AFTAI, Daily Diary, 29 Dec. 1944, in AFSHO files.

trained be used. Typical of the newspapers and magazines which assumed this attitude were the New York Herald Tribune, the Boston Post, and Flying Magazine.<sup>68</sup> In a personal answer to Gill Rob Wilson, who had opposed deactivation in the New York Herald Tribune, Miss Cochran wrote:<sup>69</sup>

Personally, I was disappointed that all the WASPs could not continue to fly in the war effort. But there is nothing that would hurt the cause of women pilots so much as to keep them on when really no longer needed. The rumble that had already started to the effect that they were getting air hours at the expense of men would have gradually grown into a roar with no logical comeback.

On 20 December, as planned, the WASP organization was deactivated, and the experiment with American women pilots in World War II came to an end. To a casual observer, unacquainted with the course of military events during the summer of 1944, the AAF would appear to have made an about-face on the WASP question. In June General Arnold was pleading for the induction of women pilots into the Army as a military necessity. In October he was stating that unless the program were deactivated these pilots would be keeping men out of the air. The explanation for this rapid change in view apparently lies in the phenomenal military successes of the intervening months and in an AAF attrition rate much lower than had been expected.

There is no doubt that failure to militarize women pilots was unfair to many WASPs who had given good service. They were left without the benefits to which veterans' status would have entitled them, and the families of the girls who had been killed in the performance of their duties were denied the gratuities which they would have received as beneficiaries of military personnel. On the other hand, the failure of Congress to militarize the WASP relieved the War Department of what might have proved

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68. Boston Post, 5 Dec. 1944; Flying Magazine, Dec. 1944.

69. J. Cochran to Gill Rob Wilson, 21 Dec. 1944, in files of D/WP.

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to be the embarrassing and difficult task of finding assignments for trained flying personnel whose skills were no longer needed.

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## Chapter V

## CONCLUSIONS

In the course of more than two years with the Army Air Forces, women pilots made a contribution to the war effort and demonstrated that they were capable of performing several flying duties which would release male pilots for combat duty. They were frequently confronted by hostility on the part of male pilots and commanding officers,<sup>1</sup> but doubts about their capabilities and existing fears of the limitations which might arise from physical or temperamental characteristics peculiar to women pilots seem to have been removed or substantially lessened, at least in many cases, as their total of hours and miles flown mounted.<sup>2</sup> In ferrying, target towing, administrative flying, and in several capacities in connection with the pilot training program, they showed their usefulness. In General Arnold's judgment, "Their very successful record of accomplishment has proved that in any future total effort the nation can count on thousands of its young women to fly any of its aircraft."<sup>3</sup>

Instituted, it would seem, for the primary purpose of releasing men for theater assignments, the WASPs were prevented by the fortunate sequence

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1. Various reports on WASPs; attitudes of commanding officers and bases, in 333, Inspections and Reports, files of D/WP.
  2. See quotations from commanding officers and others in Cochran, "Comments," 27-37.
  3. Quoted in Cochran, Report on Women Pilot Program, 49.

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of victories overseas and certain developments on the home front from making a greater contribution in this respect. By the time they were ready to replace a substantial number of men, the pilot training program had hit its peak and leveled off. Operational losses of pilots turned out to be substantially lower than anticipated. A problem of surplus manpower followed the early problem of scarcity.

Perhaps women pilots should have been used earlier, but the constant extensions in the training program indicate that, if any except the rather small group of highly experienced women flyers had been employed, a rather lengthy course of instruction would have been required.<sup>4</sup> Before the closing months of 1942 or early 1943, an additional load on the Flying Training Command—constantly faced by equipment and instructor shortages until that time—would have entailed interference with the important mission of individual training of male pilots, bombardiers, navigators, and gunners.<sup>5</sup>

As an experiment to determine the capabilities of women pilots, the program was hampered by the fact that it had to be carried on during wartime, when opportunities for adequate testing were limited. There were conflicts with major training and operational missions in ferrying and tow-target work.<sup>6</sup> A similar circumstance evidently occurred in the Training Command with the coming of the B-29 program. In September 1944 when Miss Cochran sought to get WASPs more opportunity to do engineering flying

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4. See Chap. II.

5. See draft "History of Military Training in the AAF, 1939-1945," in AFMHO files.

6. See Chap. III.



on B-17's, General McNaughton told her:<sup>7</sup>

. . . if they don't hog all the time and they still continue to check off men, o.k., but I've got to get every man in this Training Command checked off on B-17's that I possibly can, Jacky, and any minute that we spend checking off girls on four-engine equipment, regardless of whether it's for engineering or anything else, we're just spinning our wheels and if the girls are already checked off and competent, I don't mind them doing it, but if they've got time to spend checking off other people, why I want them to check off men.

Late in 1944, after it had been decided to disband the WASPs, certain newspapers suggested that it would be desirable to continue to use the women who had already been trained and who represented a considerable investment.<sup>8</sup> It is, of course, impossible to estimate what the public reaction would have been to the continuation of the program. Some of the WASPs would have resigned in the belief that their services were no longer needed. Indeed, some such resignations had already occurred after the movement for militarization had failed. In September 1944 one of the WASPs wrote Miss Cochran: "Last month, due to recent action of Congress and the opinions of such columnists as Drew Pearson I concluded that my services were not essential and, giving the above reason, resigned."<sup>9</sup> Although the program did indicate that women pilots could replace men in certain types of flying and administrative duties and revealed some of the strong points and weaknesses of women flyers, further experimentation

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7. Telephone conversation, Miss Cochran and Gen. McNaughton, 18 Sep. 1944, in files of D/WP.

8. See above, p. 100.

9. Barbara J. Ward to Miss Cochran, 14 Sep. 1944, in files of D/WP. Another, who had heard that Miss Cochran considered WASPs who resigned as "ungrateful," wrote that she had come to the conclusion "that there are now far more pilots than are needed and so long as the shortage is over it was time to resign." Helen S. Stone to Miss Cochran, 9 Oct. 1944, in ibid.

would probably have given additional valuable information and provided an opportunity to explore new fields of aeronautical usefulness for women. A careful study of the medical aspects of the WASP program allowed some rather definite conclusions:<sup>10</sup>

- I. Women can meet physical requirements of WD AGO 64 examination for pilots.
- II. Psychological aptitude tests are useful in female pilot selection.
- III. Menstruation, in properly selected women, is not a handicap to flying or dependable performance of duty.

Other conclusions, however, had to be stated tentatively:

- IV. Experience with this women's program indicates:
  - a. The most favorable age group stems from 18 to 28 years physically, but younger (18 to 20) may lack responsibility.
  - b. The minimum leg length probably should be 64 inches with a minimum of 105 pounds.
  - c. Leg length measurements should probably be included in the original examination.
  - d. If a similar program is reinstated it should be militarized.
  - e. Women without family obligations probably do better than the others. (Husbands do not seem as great a deterrent as young children.)
  - f. A study of muscular strength and endurance may furnish necessary data to forecast the size and kind of airplanes women could successfully fly.

The attempt to militarize the WASPs might have been successful if it had come earlier. When the attempt was made, their usefulness was no longer obvious, and the plight of the CAA-war Training Service instructors was all too apparent. Within the AAF itself, there seems to have been a preponderant feeling that the women should have been militarized. In this connection, however, there was a common awareness of the fact that the Commanding General was a strong proponent of militarization--and, indeed, of the whole program.

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10. "Medical Consideration of WASPS," Conclusions.

The simpler solution might have been incorporation of the women pilots in the WAC by suitable amendment of the legislation providing for that organization. Miss Cochran, however, stated that she would be unwilling to serve if the WASPs were placed under the WAC. From her point of view, women pilots were a very temperamental group, and the administration of the program should be in the hands of one who understood them and their peculiar problems--that is, another woman pilot.<sup>11</sup>

Many of the administrative difficulties which characterized the ATC part of the story grew out of two opposing concepts which were present at the very beginning of the program--that which called for small numbers of experienced pilots handled in the same manner as male civilian flyers, and that which contemplated large numbers of women pilots subject to centralized direction and control. The large-numbers concept was adopted, though it was administered, at least theoretically, under the principle of decentralization officially in force in the AAF after the reorganization of 29 March 1943. The chief troubles arose between the Ferrying Division and Headquarters, AAF. On the one hand there was a strong--perhaps over-zealous--assertion of command prerogatives, and on the other, more vigorous

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11. Miss Cochran reports the incident as follows: "After Colonel Hobby had stated she knew nothing about flying and 'didn't know one end of an airplane from another' she asked the writer [Miss Cochran] if the writer didn't think it a good idea to put the women pilots into the WAC. The reply was in the negative and when the reasons were requested the writer said there were several administrative and other reasons such as difference in age and dependency requirements, but that one reason was that Colonel Hobby, who would be charged with the WASP operation, had just said she knew nothing about flying or the problems peculiar to pilots. Colonel Hobby's reply was that she would expect the writer to run the operation and the writer stated that Colonel Hobby would have to look for someone else because the writer would be unwilling to assume the responsibility under these conditions." Cochran, "Comments," 56. Also see above, p. 85.

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control and detailed direction than are traditionally associated with staff functions. And it seems that issues became muddled with the outcropping of personal animosities and peevishness. It may be that these unfortunate occurrences will be longer remembered than the contribution to the war effort or the testing of women pilots' abilities.

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G L O S S A R Y

ACFC	Air Corps Ferrying Command
AFAAP	Office of Personnel
AFAJA	Air Judge Advocate
AFDAS	Deputy Chiefs of Air Staff
AFDMR	Directorate of Military Requirements
AFFTC	Flying Training Command
AFOLS	Office of Legislative Services
AFRIT	Directorate of Individual Training
AFSAT	School of Applied Tactics
AFSHO	Historical Office
AFTAC	Tactical Center
AFTAI	Air Inspector
AFTRC	Training Command
ATC	Air Transport Command
CAA	Civil Aeronautics Administration
C/AAF	Chief of Army Air Forces
C/AC	Chief of Air Corps
CAP	Civil Air Patrol
CFTC	Central Flying Training Command
CPT	Civilian Pilot Training
DC/AS	Deputy Chief of Air Staff
D/WP	Director of Women Pilots
EFTC	Eastern Flying Training Command
Exec.	Executive
FEND	Ferrying Division
GCTC	Gulf Coast Training Center
S/W	Secretary of War
WAAC	Women's Auxiliary Army Corps
WAC	Women's Army Corp
WAFS	Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron
WASP	Women's Airforce Service Pilots
WDGS	War Dept. General Staff
WFTC	Western Flying Training Command
WFTD	Women's Flying Training Detachment
WTS	War Training Service, CAA

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

The most valuable materials for this study were found in AAF Central Files, the office files of the Director of Women Pilots, and the texts and appendices of histories of women pilots submitted by the Air Transport Command, the Training Command, and the three subordinate flying training commands (Eastern, Central, and Western).

In AAF Central Files (cited AAG) the following file volumes were of use:

032.1	Legislation
211C	Pilots
211D	Pilots
231.21	Women Pilots
291.3A	Sex
324.5A	Independent Organizations
324.5 (Bulk)	WASP Bill--Pending Legislation
324.5 (Bulk)	WASP--Civil Service Investigation
324.5 (Bulk)	WASP Eliminations--Utilization of Women Pilots
337	Conferences
421	Uniforms--Development

The office files of the Director of Women Pilots contained a considerable amount of material that was not duplicated in Central Files. Since the closing down of the office, most of these materials have presumably been transferred to Central Files. Some correspondence and reports formerly in the files of the Director of Women Pilots were turned over by her to the AAF Historical Office and are on file in the Administrative History Branch.

Among the lower-echelon histories, the most valuable was "History of Women Pilots in the Air Transport Command," written by Lt. Col. Oliver LaFarge of the Air Transport Command Historical Section. Some parts of the ATC history have been incorporated in this narrative almost verbatim. The fullest account of training of women pilots is given in "History of Central Flying Training Command, WASP Program" (2 vols.). The Historical Section of the AAF Training Command utilized this account and those from the Eastern and Western Flying Training Commands in the preparation of "History of the Women Airforce Service Pilots Program and Activities in the AAF Training Command." Among other histories that were useful, mention should be made of "The WASP Training Course at the AAF School of Applied Tactics, 19 April 1944-29 September 1944" and "Women Airforce Service Pilots in the Fourth Air Force" (Fourth Air Force Historical Study No. V-3). These and other histories of women pilots are on file in the Archives of the AAF Historical Office. Another documented study

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that should be consulted by anyone interested in the details of the women pilot program is "Medical Consideration of WASPS," prepared by Capt. Nels O. Monserud, M.C., under the guidance of personnel of the Professional Division of the Air Surgeon's Office. Several copies of this study are on file in the Historical Unit of the Air Surgeon's Office.

Other indispensable sources were Jacqueline Cochran, Report on Women Pilot Program (mimeographed, n.d.), and her typewritten "Comments of Director of Women Pilots with Respect to the Historical Report of Ferrying Division of Air Transport Command concerning WASP in Said Division," both of which are on file in the Administrative History Branch of the AAF Historical Office. On some of the phases of preactivation planning, Miss Cochran's "Comments" supply almost the only written primary material.

The Washington Daily News (1941-1942, 1944) was the chief newspaper source. Other papers consulted, mainly for reflections of press attitudes toward militarization in 1944, were the Washington Post, Washington Times-Herald, New York Times, New York Herald Tribune, Boston Post, and Boston Herald. Flying Magazine (December 1944) and National Aeronautics (June 1944) supplied incidental information.

Congressional documents were used extensively in research concerning the attempt to incorporate the WASP into the Army. Those of primary significance include the Daily Congressional Record, 78th Congress, 1st and 2d Sessions; House Resolution No. 16, 78th Congress, 1st Session; House Report No. 1600 (Report of the Ramspeck Committee), 78th Congress, 2d Session; and the House of Representatives Hearings on H. R. 4219, 78th Congress, 2d Session.

Materials in the Office of Legislative Services and in the Plans and Liaison Division of AC/AS, Personnel were valuable for the treatment of the movement for militarization of the WASP.

In addition to the materials received from the office files of the Director of Women Pilots, there are other useful sources in the AAF Historical Office. These include the Training Command Project Book, Training Command Memorandums, publications of Headquarters, AAF, a draft History of Military Training in the AAF, 1939-1945, and several AAF Historical Studies: No. 2, Initial Selection of Candidates for Pilot, Bombardier, and Navigator Training; No. 7, Legislation Relating to the Army Air Forces Training Program, 1939-1943; No. 15, Procurement of Aircrew Trainees; and No. 33, Administrative History of the Ferrying Command, 29 May 1941-30 June 1942.

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Appendix

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY COORDINATING OFFICES AND  
INDIVIDUALS AFTER READING THE ORIGINAL DRAFT OF THIS STUDY.

(Page references in these comments refer to  
the pagination of the original manuscript.)

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December 15, 1945.

TO: Colonel W. J. Paul  
Chief, Historical Division A 2

SUBJECT: Historical Report on Women Pilot Program.

FROM: Jacqueline Cochran.

- 1 -

On Page 35 dealing with Sweetwater operations, reference is made to the findings of special investigators of "mismanagement and lack of cooperation", "improper duty assignments or military personnel" etc. I recommend that this be made a little more specific as to who was charged with mismanagement, lack of cooperation etc. As it stands it might be read to refer to the Training Command Staff or the Director of Women Pilots. The special investigation was in fact instituted at the request of the Director of Women pilots to clear up these faults at Sweetwater that were found by her to exist.

- 2 -

On Page 51 I think the statement that the accomplishment of the Women Ferry Pilots "is submerged in a story of controversies" is an overstatement that serves no useful purpose. The story of accomplishment of these Ferry Pilots has been spelled out in the statistics and has been widely publicized in a laudatory way. To say that the control exercised by the Director of Women Pilots "was out of keeping with the traditional role of a staff officer" carries a possible implication that it was wrong. If there was anything wrong about it it was with respect to the concept - not the control. A certain concept has been put into effect by the highest authorities. The Director was carrying out her directives and complying with the pertinent regulations. One thing it is believed has been overlooked, which should be pointed up in the report. The Women Pilot program was something entirely new, dealt with something that crossed command lines and was experimental in nature. Uniforms, health regulations peculiar to women, pay assignments of trainees to various commands or types of experimental projects, discipline, etc., had to apply to the women uniformly whatever command they were with, and could not be handled in different ways as isolated command problems if the experimental features of the special project were to be properly handled and appraised. The Air Force didn't permit its various commands to select different uniforms for their male pilots, for example and there were many other matters of general application fixed at the top for all Air Force personnel, so well established in character and so long standing as to be forgotten as not being decentralized command functions. Operations (i. e. ferrying with respect to ferrying division) was a command function and was handled that way with respect to AIC and all other commands and air forces.

- 3 -

It seems to me the material on Pages 52 to 61 gives too much emphasis to what were in fact (applying in fact only to one command) minor conflicts and distractions and therefore leave in the shadows the real finding as a result of the Wasp program. It tends "to submerge the accomplishments in a story of controversy". Particularly the material on Pages 60 and 61, while factually true, does not seem to me to add to but rather to detract from the report. It is hoped some of the lengthy recital of conflicts can be eliminated. The basic conflict of concepts is well covered in the material on Pages 62 to 67.

- 4 -

I think it will be found that the instruction mentioned on Page 76 not to discharge Wasps for lack of proficiency was a temporary measure in view of the pending air inspectors investigation. The way it is stated in the draft of historical report the instruction might be construed as a permanent measure and as discriminatory in favor of Wasps.

- 5 -

On Page 80 the all accident rate for the Wasp is stated to be higher than for the male pilots. A reference to the report of the Director of Women Pilots will disclose that while this statement is true comparing calendar year with the same calendar year it fails to take the lag factor in the program into consideration and the decreasing rate among both males and females as their respective programs progressed. The sound conclusion would seem to be that both the all accident rate and the fatal accident rate among Wasp and male pilots closely paralleled each other.

- 6 -

The last two sentences of the report starting with "And it seems" and ending with "xx women pilots abilities" are unnecessary for purpose of the report and should be eliminated because the first of the two sentences places accent in the wrong place so far as the report as a whole is concerned and the last sentence seems to be a gratuitous remark as to future events which can only serve to talk down the accomplishments of these women pilots and the experience gained from the experiment.

In place of what it is suggested be stricken should be added something along the following line to place in proper balance the other statements "There was little if any trouble between the other Commands that used Wasps and Headquarters. The Commands for the most part welcomed and even asked for the kind of centralized Wasp coordination and supervision objected to by the Ferry Division. It would be reasonable to assume from this that at least a part of the attitude in the Ferrying Division grew out of the fact that this Ferrying Division started the

first use of women pilots, chose its own women pilots and their leader, selected a name for the organization and proceeded along definite lines as to organization and controls only to find that a larger organization involving several commands and different uses and with a different name was growing up around them. Unconscious resistance to the new broader concept and different set up would be understandable under these circumstances with a rationalization of the objections unconsciously placed on other grounds. Towards the end of the program the Ferrying Division expressed satisfaction with and pride in the work of the wasp in that Division and most of these wasps in fact came to Ferrying Division from the training program. Other Commands and Air Forces also expressed complete satisfaction with the results obtained from the Women Pilots. At the end Wasps were preferred over men pilots for certain types of work, notably target towing."

- 7 -

The report deals too sketchily with the medical features of the experiment. It's true a separate medical report is available for reference but would it not be advisable to state some of the outstanding conclusions in the main report. For example could not something along the following lines be inserted at a suitable place, possibly about Page 80 or 81 after dealing with accidents.

"The medical aspects of the women pilot program were closely followed by the Air Surgeons Office. A complete report is available on this subject. It is sufficient to state here that the medical findings were that the Women Pilots has as much endurance and were no more subject to fatigue and flew as regularly and for as long hours as the male pilots in similar work, that aptitude and psychological tests were found equally determinative and selective in the case of women as in the case of males and that "it is no longer a matter of speculation that graduate Wasps were adapted physically mentally and psychologically to the type of flying assigned."

For purpose of emphasis I wish again to state that I think too much space has been given to reporting conflict between two concepts and the minor conflicts that grew out of this major one as a consequence the general impression of the report is out of balance. Furthermore when the conflicting concepts are stated it should be also clearly stated that the concept that was in force to be adhered to was the concept laid down by the Commanding General of the A.A.F. and consequently resistance to the same could in itself be looked upon as an error on the part of any particular command. I am sure the broader concept was the only one under which 1000 Wasps scattered about at scores of stations in several commands and Air Forces could be operated as both an experimental and useful project. But even if I am wrong about this I could not be wrong in adhering to that concept which had been adopted by the highest authorities and in attempting to see that others did likewise.

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Review of AAF Historical Study 1st Ind.  
Hq. AAF, Air Transport Command, Washington 25, D. C., 10 January 1946.

TO: Commanding General, Army Air Forces, Washington 25, D. C. Attn:  
Chief, AAF Historical Office.

1. "Women Pilots with the AAF, 1941-1944" has been carefully reviewed by the Historical Branch, this Headquarters. It is considered an excellent, complete, and well-balanced story. Those passages which deal with activities of the Air Transport Command are accurate. It is particularly felt that the controversy in which this Command became involved is presented in a fair and balanced manner.

2. This Headquarters concurs in the suggestion contained in the appended memorandum from Miss Cochran, 15 December 1945, that somewhat more attention should be given to the medical and physiological lessons learned. Although a detailed medical study exists, it is felt that the AAF history of the subject is incomplete without a brief summary of the medical findings. It is suggested that one or two pages would be adequate.

3. Attention is called to what appears to be a typographical error on page 19, line 2: ". . . members of the Air Staff and type directors . . ."

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

ROBERT L. WRIGHT  
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps  
Chief, Intelligence &  
Security Division.

1 Incl. n/c

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CAF 314 (11 Jan 46) 1st Ind HI  
HEADQUARTERS CONTINENTAL AIR FORCES, Bolling Field 20, D.C. 19 Jan. 1946

TO: Commanding General, Army Air Forces, Washington 20, D.C.  
ATTENTION: AAF Historical Officer.

1. The inclosed study has been carefully reviewed by the Historical Division, this Headquarters. Although historical material on which to base a factual criticism of this study is not available at this Headquarters, the following general comments are offered for consideration:

a. The study appears to be an accurate, judicious, and eminently readable account of the experience gained from the WASP program.

b. The controversies as to policy and administration are very well handled, but it is felt that insufficient emphasis is placed on the experience gained in the actual training and operational employment of women pilots. It is realized, of course, that this experience was limited, and that the data available may not warrant any very significant conclusions.

c. Chapters I and II end rather abruptly. A concluding and summarizing paragraph might well be added to each of these chapters in order to round out the discussion.

d. Sub-divisions of long chapters, such as Chapter III, which runs to nearly 50 pages, are suggested in order to aid the reader in grasping the main elements of the story.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

1 Incl:  
n/c

THOMAS L. GALE  
Captain, AGD  
Asst Adj Gen

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Hq AAF, 28 January 1946, subj: "Review of AAF Historical Study"

1st Ind

F

Headquarters, AAF Training Command, Fort Worth 2, Texas., 8 Feb 1946

TO: Commanding General, Army Air Forces, Washington 25, D. C. ATTENTION:  
Office of Secretary of Air Staff, Historical Office

1. "Women Pilots with the AAF, 1941-1944" has been carefully reviewed by the Historical Section, this Headquarters, and the following general comments are submitted:

a. The study is a carefully presented, complete narrative of the establishment, training, and attempts at militarization of the WASP. The facts are well organized, and the account moves along in smooth sequence.

b. It is suggested that the insertion of headings and sub-headings would improve the general appearance of the text and be of great assistance to the reader. It is assumed that a Table of Contents will be provided for the study; incorporation of such headings into the Table of Contents would be desirable.

2. It is believed that insufficient space is given to utilization of WASPs in the Training Command. Although data is presented indicating the nature of duties of which WASPs might be assigned in the Training Command, relatively little information is given concerning the quantity and quality of actual performance. It is suggested that a somewhat fuller discussion be given of the over-all aspects of WASP utilization in the Training Command, especially with respect to interaction of the program on male pilot training and assignments. Substantial evidence on these subjects is included in the WASP studies prepared in the Training Command.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

/s/ John F. Concannon  
JOHN F. CONCA'N  
Lt. Col, AGD  
Asst. Adj. Gen.

1 Incl  
n/c

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