

WAVES, SPARS

ANNOUNCEMENT HAILED AS VICTORY FOR NEGRO PRESS;

WASHINGTON, D. C.—In what was widely interpreted as a last minute pre-election bid for America's vitally significant Negro vote, President Roosevelt last week approved a plan submitted by the Navy Department for acceptance of Negro women into the WAVES and SPARS, the Navy and Coast Guard women's auxiliaries. Under the announced plan, however, Negro women will not be mustered into either service until after January 1. ②

The announcement came only after more than two years of persistent fighting on the part of America's Negro Press and national women's groups for the inclusion of Negro women, a fight that has continued unabated since the inception of the Women's Reserve.

The Navy's announcement, after telling of the President's approval said the plan calls for the immediate commissioning of a limited number of especially qualified Negro women to serve as administrative officers. They will assist in the subsequent planning and supervision of the program for Negro women which will be administered as an integral part of the Women's Reserve.

Enlistment of Negro women, the announcement declared, will be undertaken as soon as these plans have been completed and it is presently indicated that the first Negro recruits will enter training shortly after January 1.

Officer candidates and enlisted women will be trained at the existing schools for the training of Waves, and Spars, according to the Navy Department. These schools are Hunter College in New York City, and Smith College in Northampton, Mass. The number to be enlisted will be determined by the

needs of the service.

No mention in the announcement was made of the Women Marines, from which Negroes have also been excluded. But on the day following the Navy announcement Coast Guard headquarters in Washington, D. C. made the following statement: "The Coast Guard will follow the general policy of the Navy in accepting Negro Women in the Women's Reserve. We will accept Negro Women in the SPARS in quotas according to the needs of the service.

Women's Groups Effective In Fight

Spearheading the number of women's groups who fought for inclusion was the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority's Non-partisan Council headed by Mrs. Thomasina Johnson, legislative director.

Associated with her in the fight were Miss Elsie Austin of Ohio, former national president of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority; Mrs. Jeanette Welch Brown, on leave as executive secretary of the National Council of Negro Women; Mrs. W. Stuart Nelson, wife of the dean of the Howard University School of Theology; Dr. Dorothy Boulding Ferebee, prominent physician and civic worker; Miss Dorothy Hight, former executive secretary of the

Continued on Page THREE-A

Waves Accepted

(Continued from Page ONE—A)

Phyllis Wheatley YWCA here; and Mrs. Pauline Redmond Coggs, executive secretary of the Washington Urban League.

These women, forming a committee of themselves, began real concentration on the fight about a year ago, though efforts had been exerted by them and their organizations since the inception of the WAVES.

On the day the announcement was made by the Navy Department, these women were planning to hold a meeting to discuss information given members of their committee that the Navy would like to entertain some plans and suggestions concerning candidates. The meeting was postponed, however, because several of the group were out of the city. Mrs. Johnson, is working out of New York with the National Democratic Committee, as is Mrs. Brown. Miss Height is now stationed in New York with the National YWCA.

Miss Austin, when informed of the announcement, said; "I am certainly very glad it has happened. I trust that the announcement carries with it a policy of full and complete integration of Negro women without the establishment of separate Negro units. I am confident that the women who are given this opportunity will more than make it worthwhile."