WOMEN AND MISSIONS: THE STRUGGLE AND THE STRUCTURE
A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 1964 AGREEMENTS

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United Methodist Women, the official organization for women in mission, numbers over one million women in 28,000 local units. At the national level the Women’s Division of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries makes the policy for the organization and participates in the policy making, program, and funding of the whole board. The Women’s Division is generally acknowledged to be the most powerful and effective women’s group in mainline Protestantism. It wields real power and influence in determining the mission of the United Methodist Church. It has one of the most successful adult education programs of any voluntary association in the country. Each year over 20,000 women engage in disciplined study of mission with mission studies, Bible study, and emphasis on social justice in regional and conference schools. Hundreds of thousands of women have studies in local units. The national organization has a budget of twenty million, and many times that amount is retained in local societies for mission in the local church.

“How do they do it?”, women in other churches whose once powerful missionary organizations have declined in influence ask. “How do they do it?”, laymen in the church ask. Some with less affection and respect ask how it happens that the women’s mission organization in the church exercises such power and has such influence with its own members. To understand how the women gained, and even more important, maintained their leading role in mission, it is necessary to look at the history of the board since unification.

The General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church derives its present structure and membership from a complex variety of church unions, mergers, general church reorganizations, and internal restructures. To understand the origin of the 1964 Agreements regarding the role of the women’s mission unit within the present Board, one must know some of the history of the mission board of the former Methodist Church. To understand the importance of the principles under which successive mission boards, whatever their structure, have operated, it is useful to recall the union of three branches of Methodism in 1939. At that time 12 different home and foreign branches of Methodism in New York and Philadelphia. The Board
had four principal units dealing with home missions and church extension, "foreign" missions, a Woman's [sic] Division of Christian Service, and a Joint Division of Education and Cultivation. A Joint Committee on Missionary Personnel served the Board.

The patterns established at the 1939-40 reunion served the Board for a quarter of a century (from 1939 to 1964). In January, 1963 at the annual meeting the Board began a quest for a more unified structure and appointed a committee to bring a report. Until this time the Woman's Division of Christian Service maintained its own institutions and programs primarily serving women and children, owned property, deployed deaconesses and missionaries, raised and expended its own funds for its own personnel and programs while at the same time conducting a program of Christian social relations, mission education, and leadership development for its 1.6 million members in local units. For this purpose it had a staff of 45 which included administrators for home and foreign missions (the nomenclature of the time), editors, Christian social relations executives, finance staff, executives for leadership development, youth, children, and student work, mission education personnel, "field staff," and other functions. It also shared expenses of joint staff in missionary personnel, World Division functional ministries, and the Interboard Committee on Missionary Education. There was no one staff executive or general secretary for the Woman's Division of Christian Service until 1960. It had a composite leadership comprised of the heads of its executive secretaries. The other divisions were headed by staff executives called general secretaries.

No one general secretary or separate full time general treasurer served the Board itself. The heads of the principal units supervised those units and met together in a secretarial council but little was done at the Board level. The library, legal services, business manager, and the joint missionary personnel office comprised a small staff of the Board. The joint educational and cultivation work was composed of two sections: a general section composed of male executives with total church responsibility and a Woman's Section staffed by women (hired and paid for by the Woman's Division). World Service was divided between the home and foreign divisions which in turn funded the general section of the Joint Division (variously called a joint division, section, commission). The Woman's Division maintained and supported its own work from its own financial sources. There was a president of the Board of Missions and Church Extension—Bishop Arthur J. Moore served from 1940 to 1960—and presidents of the units, all of whom were bishops except for the lay women who headed the Women's Division. Basically the structure empowered the various divisions to conduct their own affairs. The members were elected by the jurisdictions to serve on the Board.

By 1963 there were those who felt that "dual administration" was not the best way for the mission board to operate. The impetus for a restructure appears to have come from Board leadership—both staff and elected—and
bishops who travelled overseas. The Woman's Division itself had come out of many different agencies created in the nineteenth century because women were excluded from full participation in the general boards. Different policies and procedures concerning institutions and personnel overseas were evident. The Advance, a program of designated financial giving which emerged following World War II, was another area of potential conflict. The World and National Divisions had separate Advance departments, conducting what seemed to be somewhat competitive campaigns for funds in the annual conferences and local congregations.

A letter sent by Board president Richard C. Raines in February, 1964 for missionaries, church leaders, jurisdictional conference delegates and others summed up the rationale in its first paragraph:

At union in 1939 more than twelve different boards and agencies of the three uniting churches were combined into a single Board of Missions of The Methodist Church. Of necessity, compromises were involved in that original plan which, with the passing of years and a radically altered world situation, were felt to be deserving of study. In spite of the good work of the past twenty-five years, many Board members came to believe that basic ambiguities in our structure were hindering the fullness of our witness at home and abroad. Concern was centered on the lack of unity of the various Board operations, especially the dual administration involved in the separate work of the Division of World Missions and the Department of Work in Foreign Fields of the Woman's Division of Christian Service. A similar problem was noted in the separate work of the Division of National Missions and the Department of Work in Home Fields of the Woman's Division. Another issue was the multiple approach by the various units of the Board to the local churches in the United States, i.e., through the Advance programs of the Division of World Missions and the Division of National Missions, through the Woman's Division of Christian Service, and through the Joint Section of Education and Cultivation. Other matters considered were the insufficient involvement of Board members in policy making and the fact that the existing structure did not permit adequate use of the functional competence and resources of the other boards and agencies of The Methodist Church in the overseas churches and conferences. ¹

A Boom Period for Missions

The period 1960–1964 was one of unprecedented ecumenical cooperation. The Interchurch Center at 475 Riverside Drive had replaced the Methodist Building at 150 Fifth Avenue as the home for the Methodist mission agency. Along with the National Council of Churches, the Presbyterian mission agency, the New York office of the World Council of Churches, a large New York City Protestant Council, Baptist, Reformed, and United Church of Christ agencies, the Board occupied the new 20-story building next to Riverside Church. It was an era of expansion, mainline church self-confidence, and interest in church union and

¹The primary sources for this paper are the Journals of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church 1961 through 1964 and the Minutes of the Committee to Study the Structure of the board (1963 and 1964). Letter from Bishop Richard C. Raines “To Co-Workers and Friends of the Board of Missions,” February 1, 1964.
ecumenical endeavors. Times were changing and church reorganizations were taking place in many major Protestant denominations.

In January, 1960 the Woman's Division had received a report of its own structure committee and authorized for the first time a general secretary of that division who was to be chairman [sic] of a staff cabinet. That committee had also recommended that the division meet twice yearly so that all members would be more involved in the work of the division. The pattern for the Board as a whole was to meet annually with several meetings of its executive committee which had the power of the Board ad interim. For the first time the Woman's Division had a general secretary like the World and National Divisions. By this time the Joint Division of Education and Cultivation was known as a Joint Section with two general secretaries, one for the General Section and one for the Woman's Section. The structure also included an Interboard Committee on Missionary Education, jointly funded and responsible to the boards of mission and education.

During the first 25 years of the Methodist Board of Missions, there was participation of a large number of bishops. Half of the church's bishops served on the Board of Education and half on the Board of Missions. There were 20 US bishops and six overseas bishops on the Board of Missions in the 1960-1964 quadrennium. In 1960 there were over 1000 World Division missionaries and 455 missionaries related to the Woman's Division. In the period 1956 to 1962, the missionary force related to the World Division had grown by 200. In 1962 Dr. Tracey Jones, Jr. told the World Division, “In spite of independence movements, war, struggle, anti-white feeling, and shifts in political power the world over, there is a need to increase the missionary force.”

The National Division had a goal of starting 400 new churches a year. Dr. B. P. Murphy told the 1962 annual meeting that the denomination was not keeping the ratio to the total population that it had in the previous quarter century. “Neither are we winning our own church constituency, those related to our church school or auxiliary agencies of the church.” Children, youth, and blue collar workers were not being won to the church. “Nor are we reaching the largest minority group, the American Negro, as we should.”

In reading the journals of the early 1960's, it is apparent that this was the height of the post World War II era of sending missionaries. The boom in church building of the fifties was continuing, but, as Dr. Murphy observed, the failure to keep pace with the population growth was beginning to be observed. The establishment of a large number of autonomous churches was to come later in the decade. The National Division was concerned

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2 Journal of the Annual Meeting, Methodist Board of Missions 1962, page 207, Dr. Tracey Jones, Jr.
with urban and town and country work, Goodwill Industries, the establishment of an Alaska Methodist University, ethnic congregations, the Oklahoma Indian Conference, Rio Grande Conference, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico Missionary Conferences. It had only a few institutions.

The Woman's Division in addition to providing leadership development, missionary education, and spiritual life resources for nearly two million women in local societies managed an extensive network of community centers, homes for retired workers, hospitals, schools and colleges at home and overseas. It also directed the work of 415 deaconesses and more than 400 overseas missionaries supported by the division. The Department of Christian Social Relations was active in international affairs, civil rights, and disarmament.

The journals of the first part of the 1960–1964 quadrennium reveal little discussion concerning the inter-relationships of the units, except in authorized areas such as jointly supported interboard committees on missionary education and Christian education in foreign fields. The stresses and strains are not reflected. But evidently there was much talk "on the field" and in the corridors about the problems of dual administration, particularly overseas. These differences included quality of the institutions supported by the general church and those supported by the Woman's Division, differences in policy and procedures for personnel, funding, and relationships to the church in the area, etc.

The Committee to Study the Structure created at the annual meeting in January, 1963 was given this mandate:

That a study be made of the Board of Missions which will include relationships between the Board and the staff, between the various units of the Board, between the Board and the church in the United States and overseas; that the study be made by a committee composed of the president of the Board, the presidents of the administrative Divisions and the Joint Section, the chairman of the Joint Committee on Missionary Personnel and five other Board members to be named by the president, and the general secretaries as advisory members without vote. It was further moved that the findings of the committee with recommendations, if any, be reported to the Board at its 1964 Annual Meeting.3

The committee members included the president of the board and its units including Bishop Raines and the bishops who headed the Divisions of National Missions, World Missions, the Joint Section of Education and Cultivation, the Joint Committee on Missionary Personnel, and Bishop Roy Short who was co-opted. The president of the Women's Division, Mrs. J. Fount Tillman, was also in this category of presidents which totaled six members. There were two clergy, two laymen, two women, and the four general secretaries without a vote. They were Mrs. Porter Brown, Woman's Division of Christian Service, Dr. H. Conwell Snoke, Division

of National Missions, Dr. Eugene L. Smith, Division of World Missions, and Dr. Gerald Clapsaddle, Joint Section. There were only four women.

The problems to be addressed were four in number: briefly stated, as dual administration overseas, multiple approach to local churches in the US, Board members not sufficiently involved in policy making, and relation of the churches overseas to other boards and agencies of the church. The presuppositions were listed as (1) "no change simply for the sake of change;" (2) business efficiency "not even or chief criterion;" and (3) preservation of the Woman's Division of Christian Service. The latter was to be cared for in five ways:

1. By keeping open channels of leadership from local church to the principal administrative positions of the Board.
2. By increasing female membership on the Board.
3. By providing that two of the four principal administrative positions must be occupied by women.
4. By providing that in the DMA and the DHM* one-third of the staff in supervisory capacity must be women.
5. By providing that no less than 40% of the Board selected staff must be women.4

It was agreed that the major principles and procedures would be included in the Discipline, while administrative details would be placed in the by-laws to provide flexibility and allow for change within the quadrennium according to experience. The initial agreements were modified somewhat but the basic principles of participation of women at staff and board levels were maintained.

In September, 1963 the report from the committee was appended to the executive committee minutes. In December, 1963 Bishop Raines sent a letter to all members of the board outlining the proposed plan. The plan of reorganization was outlined:

The plan of reorganization calls for the following alterations in the structure of the Board of Missions: (1) That a general secretary and full-time Board treasurer be added who shall be charged with the task of unifying the Board in the areas of program and finance. (2) That all overseas work be carried on by the newly created and merged Division of World Missions. The work formerly done by the old Division of World Missions and the Foreign Department of the Woman's Division will be united and grouped in smaller areas under a single area secretary. Functional service and liaison relationships with the other boards and agencies of The United Methodist Church will receive special emphasis. (3) That the Woman's Division of Christian Service carry on its work under three sections, namely the Section of Program and Education for Christian Mission, the Section of Christian Social Relations, and the Section of Finance. The Woman's Division will work in close liaison relationship with the Joint Commission on Education and Cultivation in the establishment and nurture of local Woman's

*Abbreviation of titles later changed to World and National Divisions.
Societies. The plan allows the Woman's Division to maintain control of its funds, contributing to the programs of the newly merged Divisions of World and National Missions with specific designation and a time limit after which unspent funds may be returned to the Woman's Division. (4) That all work in home fields be conducted by the newly created and merged Division of National Missions. The program areas of the work formerly done by the Home Department of the Woman's Division and the old Division of National Missions will be brought together in the new Section of Home Fields. This section will include the church and community program in urban and town and country areas, the outpost mission work, the health and social welfare program, educational work, goodwill industries, and research and survey. The present Section of Church Extension of the Division of National Missions will be maintained as presently structured, and the Commission on Deaconess Work will be placed under the jurisdiction of this Division. (5) That the Joint Commission on education and Cultivation be united, thus eliminating the distinction between the Woman's Section and the General Section. All Advance cultivation will be placed under the jurisdiction of the Joint Commission and be carried on through regular channels of the church, exclusive of Woman's Societies and Guilds. The Joint Commission will fulfill its functions through its Sections on Cultivation, Communication, and Education, its Office of Student Work, and the Interboard Committee on Missionary Education. (6) That there be guaranteed staff participation of women on all levels, including a minimum of forty per cent of the total elected staff of the Board, two of the five principal administrative positions of the Board, and one-third of the principal leadership of the newly merged Divisions of World and National Missions. As to the membership of the Board and its various divisions and joint agencies, the proposal calls for the reduction of seven laymen and the addition of nine women to equalize the number of men (i.e. ministers and laymen) and women on the Board. The general principle followed was that the divisions (except the Woman's Division) and agencies and their executive committees shall have an equal number of men (excluding bishops) and women as members. The general executive committee of the Board will be composed of the executive committee members of the divisions and the Joint Commission.5

At the annual meeting in January, 1964 the plan was adopted as outlined in the Raines letter. A letter was sent by Bishop Raines to the Board membership and to other church leaders and mission personnel. The General Conference met in April, 1964 and legislation based on the plan was submitted to and passed by that General Conference. The Plan of Reorganization was presented and discussed at two sessions of the Board at the annual Meeting of January, 1964, but it was not acted upon separately by the Woman's Division.6 The plan was debated and adopted by the board by an overwhelming vote of 84–7. However, 53 members were absent or abstained, according to Barbara Campbell in, In the Middle of Tomorrow (1975, 1983 reprint).7

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7UNITED METHODIST WOMEN: IN THE MIDDLE OF TOMORROW, Barbara Campbell, 1983 edition, 147 ff, 166 ff
Steps Toward A New Structure

What then was the plan and why was it needed? According to the journals which record little of the discussion or debate, the rationale and conclusions are all given in the relatively short letter by Bishop Raines. It is this agreement that was adopted and authorized by the 1964 General Conference. Other “mainline” Protestant denominations were undergoing similar restructures and rearrangements. Several went much further than the Methodist mission agency in stripping authority from their women’s mission agencies. Some became “women of the church” with authority only over their own national work. One church’s women’s unit was submerged totally into a lay life and work unit. The zeitgeist was toward merging structures and authority. Multiple administrations were considered outmoded and although the Methodist agencies had been in a single overall board since 1940, some of the other churches still had strong separate domestic and overseas units. Unique to the Methodist experience was the retention by women of strong control over money and large representation in decision making bodies and 40% representation of women both in the top staff level and across the Board.

The minutes of the structure committee and the Board journals reveal relatively little of the debate on the conclusions of the committee. The journal of the January, 1964 annual meeting records that Bishop Raines addressed three questions to the board:

Does the Board want a unified Board?

Does it want the Woman’s Division of Christian Service protected in the way the Structure Committee suggests?

Does it think the proposals of the Structure Committee furnish the proper machinery and channels, checks and balances for the unified board in the next quadrennium?

Bishop Raines reported that the proposed bylaws and the memorial to the General Conference would come to the Spring Executive Committee. The journal records that the committee answered questions from 11 staff and board members. The questioners are named but the questions are not. Some adjustments were made to the proposed structure and General Conference legislation.

At the earlier July, 1963 meeting of the committee important agreements were made concerning the role of the Woman’s Division in the new structure. It was agreed that “although changes should be made in the structure, there is no desire to undermine the strength and existence of the Woman’s Division, and there is every desire that it be continued.” The second general agreement was that there should be as nearly as possible 50% of women occupying executive positions, “but due to circumstances sometimes it might not be possible to maintain this percentage.” And finally, the “present financial policy of the Women’s Division will be continued, with money from local societies or undesignated pledge,” channeled through the various treasurers to the Women’s Division.
As that meeting continued, the Woman’s Division negotiated out a treasurer for the Woman’s Division “to whom money is channeled, with money kept intact.” Important guarantees were secured for staff leadership and for women Board members with representation on other divisions. Debate in the committee appeared to be more around the placement of the Advance in the joint mission education and cultivation unit (the executives of world and national are on record early on as opposing this). An early plan which would have merged national and world missions into a single unit was abandoned.

The committee met in July and again in September, 1963. By September, the general principles had been agreed upon. Malcolm McVeigh, a missionary who had served in Africa and later a staff member of the World Division, did staff work for the committee and helped draft the legislation for the 1964 General Conference. On January 9, 1964 the committee met in Cincinnati and worked out the staff titles and salary levels, Disciplinary alterations, and agreed that a minimum of three of the top six positions would be occupied by women. (This later became 40%). A letter was read from the Rev. Allen Mayes, a committee member, requesting that consideration be given to persons of all races on the staff. He stated questions had been raised about the all white staff of the Division of World Missions. The committee decided this was not the business of the structure committee “but this matter will be referred to the nominating committee, asking them to give this matter serious consideration so that the staff will reflect the multi-racial character of the church.”

It is not the official record but a news story printed in the *Methodist Woman* for April, 1964 that best describes the final vote on the committee’s recommendations at the January, 1964 Board meeting. Leonard Perryman writes: “The final vote on the plan was precipitated by a motion seeking to set aside the report of the structure committee and asking a four year delay in plans for reorganization. It called for a longer study and more consultation on the plea ‘that we are moving too fast.’”

Debate on this motion, Perryman observed, seemed to catalyze the conviction that “something must be done now.” The motion to refer was lost four to one. The previous question on the entire recommendation was moved and passed then came to final vote on the entire plan and its passage by the 84 to 7 margin.

Bishop Raines summed it up: “This plan provides fuller unity in the Board itself, for fuller unity in missionary education and cultivation. These

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9Minutes of the Committee to Study the Structure of the Board of Missions July 1–3, 1963, Commission on Archives and History, The United Methodist Church.
10Minutes of the Committee to Study the Structure of the Board of Missions, January 9, 1964, Cincinnati, Ohio, The Commission on Archives and History, United Methodist Church.
benefits will be derived through having one general secretary, doing away with the dual administration and lodging in one part of the Board (the reorganized Joint Commission) all responsibility for education and cultivation."

"It should be emphasized that in all of the changes the values and heritage of Methodist women's work are to be preserved. Careful provision has been made for continuing the channels from the Woman's Societies to the highest level of the Board."

Perryman summarized the provisions related to the Woman's Division. "There will continue to be a Woman's Division of Christian Service. It will have as its major function the building of program for local Women Societies, the training of women for leadership in the church, and the development of an active program of Christian social relations (in such fields as race and world peace). The Woman's Division will continue to receive funds from local societies and will allocate the funds to World and National Missions for expenditure for home and overseas missionary work. The funds will be used primarily for mission projects of special interest to Methodist women. The number of women members of the Board will be increased."

The Board nominating committee chose Mrs. Porter Brown, the general secretary of the Woman's Division, to be the first general secretary of the new unified Board. The next change for the Board followed the 1968 union of The Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church. The Evangelical United Brethren had already had a restructure which integrated its women's work into a general mission board and had a general secretary. When the merger came about, little change was made in the former Methodist structure but top staff of the Evangelical United Brethren mission agency were integrated into what was basically the structure of the former Methodist Board of Missions. Dr. Tracey K. Jones, Jr. succeeded Mrs. Brown as general secretary. The heads of the World Division and the Joint Commission on Education and Cultivation were Dr. John Schaefer and Dr. Lois Miller, former Evangelical United Brethren. Other staff were placed in positions in other units of the board.

Two important restructures followed, one which affected the whole church passed by the 1972 General Conference of The United Methodist Church, and another more internal one which went into effect in 1983. The 1972 restructure was of all the boards and agencies of the church. It placed in a new General Board of Global Ministries the work of the former Board of Missions, the former Board of Hospitals and Homes, the United Methodist Committee on Relief, and the Commission on Ecumenical Affairs. The Health and Welfare Ministries and UMCOR program departments (former divisions) remain in the Board but the Christian unity division successfully petitioned the General Conference in 1980 to become a separate commission.
In 1983 the Board, following recommendation of a Board Committee of Ten to seek a more "flexible administrative structure," refashioned the Board into three program divisions—world, national, and women's—and created four program departments: mission education and cultivation, UMCOR, health and welfare, and mission personnel resources. This reduced the board from five divisions to three and created a department for mission personnel and did away with the old Joint Committee on Mission Personnel.

Through all these successive reorganizations, the 1964 principles giving women authority over their own programs and control of their own funds with guarantees of women at top levels and across the Board membership have been maintained. The Women's Division continues to own property including community centers and other institutions related to the National Division and the Service Center operated by the Mission Education and Cultivation Program Department. In 1991 the Women's Division will resume supervision of the Service Center and the journal of United Methodist Women, Response magazine. These transfers were mutually agreed upon by the Mission Education and Cultivation Program Department and the Women's Division.

In the Women's Division report to the 1972 meeting of the newly structured Board of Global Ministries, Theresa Hoover said: "With merging of national and world mission streams in 1964, there was a commitment on our part to continue educational and financial support. With it was also a written agreement (Discipline 1964, 1968, 1972) that forty percent of the top decision-making staff positions would be the minimum requirement. With it also went the agreement that one-third of all division staff [cabinet] representation would be women. Some people would have trouble with quotas but most women don't."

The Women's Division did not become a funder of the new entities of the 1972 restructure: Health and Welfare, UMCOR, and Christian Unity. At the annual meeting of the Women's Division in October, 1989, Barbara Campbell referred to the 25th anniversary of the 1964 agreements. A paper on the agreements and implications prepared by Ms. Campbell was included as an appendix to the Journal of the Women's Division, October, 1989. The paper notes that the Women's Division does not have direct administration of national or world mission projects or of the Service Center. This paper underlines implications of the agreement including the fact that the Women's Division as property owner has major expenditures annually. The World and National Divisions and the Mission on Education and Cultivation Department bring budget requests to the Appropriations Committee of the Division (General administration also appears before this committee). A docket process releases funds to world and national divisions from permanent funds designated for mission.

With autonomy of churches overseas transfer of property to the autonomous churches has occurred in many countries in accord with
policies agreed upon by the Women's Division and the World Division in March, 1972. The Women's Division has monitored the board closely to see that the principles are respected. It continues to appropriate funds for the board and other divisions along the lines set out in the original agreements. There are provisions that certain members of the executive committee of the Women's Division are on the executive committees of the National and World Divisions, and Mission Education and Cultivation Program department. The number of representatives on the Board has varied but the principle that one half of division and department membership be women remains. Despite massive changes in the church and the world, the principles which ensure women's participation have remained an important part of the church's largest program board to which it has entrusted its mission outreach.

Postscript to History

Journals and minutes record the actions but not the passions that went into this radical restructure. This paper was sent to six persons who were deeply involved either as members of the committee or staff at the time and immediately afterward. All responded—one by telephone and five in letters, two of them very detailed. In essence their responses were, “Your record is correct but it does not reflect the struggles.” One respondent who staffed the committee felt the paper implied that the restructure was against the will of the women policy makers and was weighted towards an impression that the Board women were really not in favor of the reorganizations “but were more or less tricked into it against their will.” Malcolm McVeigh who helped draft the legislation that went to General Conference says:

The impression is given that the plan was very controversial and the women strongly against it, and the general atmosphere was devoid of freedom, that the only way they could express their dissent was through staying away from the meeting itself or a minimum abstaining from the vote. Let me say very clearly that the vote of 84–7 reflected the sentiment of the board, including women, at the time.

All of the respondents agree that there were serious problems of dual administration, especially overseas, and that there was a desire for a more unified Board. One of the gains of the new Board was stronger participation and leadership of women across the board. Mrs. Glenn Laskey, a member of the committee, puts it this way:

To be perfectly fair and honest the restructure has many worthy points, many advances were made, many heated arguments, ensued, but the final outcome was very different from the ideas projected at the beginning.

Mrs. Laskey observes that one of the objects was to do away with “dual administration.” One of the other objects was “to put it quite bluntly and openly to reduce the power of the Women's Division, remove property and rechannel funds—to lessen power. The ‘powers’ soon found this was highly improbable.”
Dr. Dow Kirkpatrick stressed the importance of the consultations that were held in Asia, Africa, and Latin America in the early 60's. They included Bishop Raines, Mrs. J. Fount Tillman, president of the Women's Division, Mrs. Thelma McCallum, area executive staff, the executive head of the World Division, and others. These visits and talks with the churches in the area brought out many conflicts and contradictions in the relationships between the two administrative units regarding program and personnel.

Observing that she was for unity and not for dual administration, Mrs. Laskey, a former president of the Women's Division, says that there was "much, much overlapping in all areas—money, program and effort." While not in favor of relinquishing the property of the Woman's Division, she was well aware of the conflicts concerning overseas work on both sides. "Each failed to see the great Methodist Church—its outreach, its ministry to people in all areas—but each saw the work as their 'own little kingdoms.'" So, she says, she agreed to conditions that would bring about "a greater board, a broader viewpoint." She comments, as does McVeigh, that there was less overlapping in the field of home missions. "There was much more harmony but one division could not be changed without the other," Mrs. Laskey said.

"I took a long look into the future and felt that women were too talented, too able, too well-informed, too involved to serve the church 'just as women' with no part in the ongoing growth and development of the total church. They needed to have a major part in the development of the whole concept of missions and not to be categorized as doing 'women's work.' By unifying the Board I saw much room for future growth and development (and it has happened!)."

Mrs. Laskey writes that outside the Women's Division, women had no leadership in any form in the Board of Missions. Only the president of the Women's Division was involved in most instances, and only as representative of women. The proposal for 40% women in places of leadership did not come initially from the Structure Committee, Mrs. Laskey says. "The plan was hammered out line by line, give and take—at the outset no such outcome was anticipated, as I said earlier, the objective was to reduce the power of the Women's Division."

Malcolm McVeigh takes a different perspective.

You give the impression that the percentages of women on the staff set in 1964, were to be fixed and frozen through legislation forever. That was never the intention of the committee. The establishment of percentages of course was debated at great length. The problems involved in it were recognized from the outset. One of them you allude to where mention is made of Rev. Allan Mayes' attempt to broaden the legislation to include a full range of ethnic persons on staff through fixed quotas. The idea was turned down as an opening of Pandora's box in a way that would make unmanageable the selection of staff in the future. Nevertheless, women were especially protected in the plan because of the specific nature of this reorganization and to set a clear pattern of how the committee saw the future. It was fully anticipated that what was done at
first through legislation would be carried on later through understanding and good will, and that the rigidities created by legislation would ultimately give way to flexibility and freedom in staff appointments.

McVeigh also feels that the paper gives the “impression that the kind of control that the Women’s Division has in fact exercised over the use of Women’s Division money by the world and National Divisions was envisaged from the beginning.” That was not the case, he says. “The committee had not thought of the Women’s Division as losing its work to the ‘men’s’ division. The plan of reorganization rather was seen as creating three new divisions doing the same work in a different way.”

Dr. Gerald Clapsaddle who became the head of the new Joint Commission of Education and Cultivation writes:

It is my judgement that your paper is an accurate and a comprehensive record of what happened. The toughest issues the structure committee faced were in relation to the role of the Women’s Division and the merging of the two Advance Departments and lodging them in the Joint Commission on Education and Cultivation.

“In retrospect I believe the agreements of 1964 were right for that particular time,” Dr. Jones writes.

But who can say for sure. It created a new missionary decision making structure where women and men at every level had to equally share power and yet provided an ongoing women’s missionary structure of ‘women organized for mission’ that was free to raise its own money, educate its constituency, hold its property, determine its staff and set its own priorities. But did it, as Pierce Beaver, historian of missions, contended, undermine the unique role that Christian women had historically played in the global missionary movement?