

Baha'i Growth Reported At 61st Annual Wilmette Meet

WILMETTE, Ill. — May 3, — Delegates to the 61st Annual National Baha'i Convention received reports on the continued rapid expansion of the Baha'i Faith in the United States, particularly in the South.

Convention delegates were told of a 30% increase in adult enrollments and a 40% increase in youth enrollments over last year. Localities where Baha'is reside in the United States have increased from 2,517 to 2,779 and the number of Baha'i assemblies has increased from 440 to 519.

Around the world Baha'i National Assemblies have increased from 83 to 94. Seven new national assemblies were formed in Africa, one in South America, one in Asia and two in Australia.

The four-day convention was held at the world-famous Baha'i House of Worship, Wilmette, and at the National College of Education, Evanston, Illinois, April 30 through May 3. The more than 1,500 attendees recommended the adoption of a \$2 million budget for teaching the Faith. They also heard a message from the Baha'i international administrative body, the Universal House of Justice located on Mt. Carmel in the Holy Land. In addition to new national assemblies, the message calls for the formation of additional national assemblies, and the expansion of the Faith to more localities around the world.

In 1969 the Faith was established worldwide in over 33,000 localities, had over 6,800 local Baha'i assemblies, and has spread to 312 countries and territories. Baha'is were told that the new Baha'i House of Worship being built in Panama City, Panama will be completed in 1972.

During 1970 American Baha'is are actively observing International Education Year with several conferences including national awards in the field of education. Also during 1970 and 1971 eight oceanic and continental conferences on the

Faith are scheduled to be held in localities in South America, Africa, the South Pacific, the Indian Ocean, the North Atlantic, the West Indies, and Japan. Baha'i holy days, delegates were told, are now recognized in all the fifty States.

As the main order of business the convention elected the nine members responsible for the administration of the Faith in the United States in the coming year. Members of this National Spiritual Assembly subsequently elected officers: Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh, Chairman, New Haven, Connecticut, Professor of History, Yale University and author of the recent book *Russia and Britain in Persia 1864-1914: A Study in Imperialism*; Dr. Daniel Jordan, Vice Chairman, Amherst, Massachusetts, Professor of Education, School of Education, University of Massachusetts; Mr. Glenford E. Mitchell, Secretary, Wilmette, Illinois, former assistant editor of *Africa Report Magazine* and co-author of *The Angry Black South*; Miss Charlotte Linfoot, Assistant Secretary, former administrative assistant to the national director of the American Junior Red Cross for Western United States and Alaska; Dr. Dwight Allen, Amherst, Massachusetts, Dean of the School of Education, University of Massachusetts; Dr. Sarah Martin Pereira, Washington, D. C., Professor of Romance Languages, District of Columbia Teachers College; Mr. Jack McCants, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, presently a Fellow in a graduate program at the Public Health School, University of North Carolina; Franklin Kahn, Flagstaff, Arizona, member of the Navajo Tribe and artist; and Dr. Dorothy W. Nelson, Convina, California, Professor of Law and Dean of the University of Southern California Law Center.

The Baha'i Faith is an independent world religion. It originated in Persia. Baha'u'llah, Prophet-Founder of the Faith, died in 1892 in the Holy Land.