

Bahai's Elect Negro Secretary At Confab

WILMETTE, Ill. — Delegates to the 59th annual National Baha'i Convention reaffirmed their support of the Baha'i position that human rights are God-given rights and are therefore inviolable. Baha'i see the race situation as the most challenging problem facing America today. The convention again elected Negroes to its nine-member U. S. national administrative body and now has a Negro as its national secretary.

The U. S. Baha'i Community will shortly publish, "Why Our Cities Burn", a booklet including the writings of Baha'u'llah, Prophet-Founder of the Faith on the causes of the racial crises and its solution. Delegates also heard reports showing that the Baha'i population in the United States increased nearly 16 percent during the past year.

The three-day convention was held at the world-famous Baha'i House of Worship in Wilmette, Ill., May 23 through 26. The more than 1,000 attendees were informed that the number of Baha'i Assemblies in the U.S. had increased during the past year from 376 to 394, and the number of U.S. localities where Baha'is reside has increased from 2,000 to 2,152. This is the 75th anniversary of the introduction of the Faith into the United States.

The U.S. Baha'i Community issued a statement on "The Poor In Your Midst" which stresses that "the Baha'i Faith upholds the principle that society in general and the wealthy in particular have responsibility for removing the conditions of poverty and relieving the poor from its debilitating effects. . . In these times, those who have arisen to initiate such measures are carrying out a mission which Baha'u'llah (founder of the Faith) has given divine sanction and which is destined to bestow a great bounty upon humanity."

Worldwide achievements of the Baha'i Faith for the past year included: the Faith is now established in 314 countries and territories; Writings of the Faith are now translated and published in 411 languages; localities where Baha'is reside increased over 3,000 to a new total of 31,883; the Faith now operates 71 educational institutions around the world; 22 countries now recognize Baha'i marriage and 23 recognize Baha'i holy days. The diversity of the Faith is shown by the 1,088 tribes and minorities included in its world-wide membership.

The Second International Baha'i Convention was held in

Haifa, Israel in April. This was attended by National Baha'i Assemblies from 81 countries who elected the nine-member Universal House of Justice, the world administrative body.

As the main order of business, the convention elected the nine members responsible for administration of the Faith in the United States in the coming year. Members of this National Spiritual Assembly subsequently elected officers:

Dr. Firtuz Kazemzadeh, Chairman, New Haven, Conn., Professor of History, Yale University, Dr. Daniel Jordan, vice-chairman, Terre Haute, Ind., professor of Behavioral Science, Indiana State University.

Glenford E. Mitchell, secretary, Wilmette, Ill., former assistant editor of Africa Re-

port 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 U.S. and Alaska; Miss Edna True, recording secretary, Wilmette, founder of the North Shore Travel Service of Evanston, Ill. Arthur Dahl, treasurer, Pebble Beach, Calif.

Dr. Sarah Martin Pereira, Washington, D. C. professor of Romance Languages, District of Columbia Teachers College; Paul R. Pettit, San Antonio, Texas, insurance counselor; and Dr. Dwight Allen, Amherst, Mass., dean of the School of Education, University of Massachusetts.

The Baha'i Faith is an independent world religion which originated in Persia in 1844.