

EDUCATORS HOLD CONFERENCE

OBERLIN, OHIO (WNS) -- "There is probably no other area in American Jewish life where there is a greater gap between pious pronouncements and practice today than in that part which deals with teaching," Dr. Walter Ackerman, head of the department of education at Ben Gurion University of the Negev, told an audience of Jewish teachers at the sixth Conference on Alternatives in Jewish Education (CAJE) held at Oberlin College.

The 800 Jewish educators in attendance at the recent five-day conclave from Orthodox, Conservative Reform and Reconstructionist backgrounds, attempted through a program of workshops, media demonstrations and task force meetings to diminish the gap. The CAJE conference was the largest gathering of Jewish educators to convene in the Midwest.

The 800 participants ran the gamut from classroom teachers to bureau administrators, from

researchers to interested lay persons.



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Approximately 55 percent of the attendees were from the Midwest, while the rest came from all over the United States, Canada and Israel.

Conference participants were challenged by Ackerman to establish more

rigorous standards for the Jewish teaching profession. "We sadly live in a time which marks the passing of the Jewish teaching profession in this country," Ackerman said. "If CAJE is to assume an obligation, there is nothing

more important it can do than recreate that profession." CAJE is a broad based network of persons involved in the transmission of Jewish heritage. Beginning with a North American Jewish Students Network-

sponsored conference at Brown University in 1976, it has run six annual conferences "to bring together Jews of all ideologies for work, study, and sharing of ideas in Jewish education."



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