



Written by [Sam Blumenfeld](#) on June 29, 2012

# Why Ronald Reagan Couldn't Abolish the Department of Education

As many of us remember, Ronald Reagan, when he became the 40th president of the United States in 1981, tried to abolish the Department of Education, which had been established in 1979 by his predecessor, liberal Democrat Jimmy Carter, and began operating in 1980. Walter Mondale, Carter's vice president, had obtained the backing of the National Education Association by promising them a cabinet-level Department of Education, which the NEA had been strongly advocating since its inception.



There was no popular demand for a federal Education Department. Education was not even mentioned in the Constitution, and it had been the concern of the states since the beginning of the Republic. But the NEA, anxious to get its grubby hands on billions of federal dollars, had been agitating for the department for decades. And finally, the Democrats, with the help of some Republicans, gave them what they wanted.

Lyndon Johnson had given the NEA the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, which opened the coffers of the U.S. Treasury for education. But that was just the beginning of the NEA's thrust for power over the U.S. Congress.

Conservatives had opposed the creation of the department and had persuaded candidate Reagan to abolish the department when elected. But Reagan's agreement to accept George H.W. Bush as his vice president indicated that as president he would cooperate with the liberal-leaning Republican establishment. As a member of the Skull and Bones secret Order, Bush had the power to turn the entire secret society in favor of Reagan or against him.

One of the founders of The Order, Daniel Coit Gilman, Yale class of 1852, became the first president of the University of California, the first president of the Johns Hopkins University, and the first president of the Carnegie Institution. Anthony Sutton, in his book *How the Order Controls Education*, wrote of Gilman:

Daniel Coit Gilman is the key activist in the revolution of education by The Order.... Gilman returned from Europe in late 1855 and spent the next 14 years in New Haven, Connecticut — almost entirely in and around Yale, consolidating the power of the Order.

His first task in 1856 was to incorporate Skull & Bones as a legal entity under the name of The Russell Trust. Gilman became Treasurer and William H. Russell, the co-founder, was President. It is notable that there is no mention of The Order, Skull & Bones, The Russell Trust, or any secret society activity in Gilman's biography, nor in open records. The Order, so far as its members are concerned, is designed to be secret, and apart from one or two inconsequential slips, meaningless unless one has the whole picture. The Order has been remarkably adept at keeping its secret.

Gilman became President of Johns Hopkins University in 1874 and proceeded to start his revolution in



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education. He began by recruiting socialist G. Stanley Hall, who got his doctorate in psychology at Leipzig under Professor Wilhelm Wundt. Hall's pupils included James McKeen Cattell and John Dewey, the founders of Progressive education. In 1898, Dewey outlined what had to be done to transform the public schools into a vehicle for the promotion of socialism.

A pro-socialist education establishment was created. They held their confidential meetings at an annual event called the Cleveland Conference, organized in 1915 by Prof. Charles Judd, head of the University of Chicago School of Education. Judd, who got his Ph.D. at Leipzig under Prof. Wilhelm Wundt, was leading the movement to organize education reform in conformity with psycho-progressive-socialist goals.

Among the members of the first Cleveland Conference were the president of the University of Chicago — who later became president of Yale, directors of the Sage and Rockefeller foundations, the director of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, the founder of the World Federation of Education Associations, and top professors from Stanford and Columbia universities. They were joined in later years by such luminaries as the heads of CBS, the Carnegie Corporation, and Harvard University, and Ralph Tyler of Stanford, whose pioneering work in psychological testing helped Benjamin Bloom design Outcome-Based Education.

The Conference has no constitution, no minutes, no officers save a "factotum," no bylaws, no "public life." But its members are the controllers of American education. And that is why the establishment is so unresponsive to parental complaints and wishes. The establishment has its own agenda, which is basically the agenda of the New World Order.

The choice of Terrel H. Bell to become Reagan's Secretary of Education is a bit of a mystery. Why would President Reagan choose someone who opposed his objective to abolish the Department of Education to be his cabinet-level Secretary of Education? It simply indicates that the controllers of American education had the upper hand in that choice.

The first four years of the Reagan administration proved to be an endless struggle between Bell and the conservatives. It could have been predicted that in the end the conservatives would lose this crucial cultural battle. Bill Bennett replaced Bell in Reagan's second term. But he too was wedded to the establishment.

To give the reader an idea of how much of an insider Bell was, and how committed he was to the progressive reform movement, here is the text of a short letter sent to him by G. Leland Burningham, State Superintendent of Public Instruction in Utah, dated July 27, 1984, which also appears in Charlotte Iserbyt's monumental exposé of the Department of Education in her book *The Deliberate Dumbing Down of America*:

Dear Ted:

I am forwarding this letter to accompany the proposal which you recommended Bill Spady and I prepare in connection with Outcome-Based Education.

This proposal centers around the detailed process by which we will work together to implement Outcome-Based Education using research verified programs. This will make it possible to put outcome-based education in place, not only in Utah but in all the schools of the nation. For those who desire, we will stand ready for regional and national dissemination of the Outcome-Based Education program.



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We are beginning to see positive, preliminary results from some of the isolated schools in Utah which have implemented Outcome-Based Education. These positive indicators are really exciting!

We sincerely urge your support for funding the proposal as presented.

Warmest regards, Lee.

In other words, it was Bell himself who recommended that Spady and Burningham apply for a grant from the U.S. Dept. of Education to work out the process of implementing OBE in all the schools of America! And there was nothing that Reagan could do to about it, even if he knew about it. The controllers of education made sure that there was no interference from conservatives. By the way, it was Jim Baker on the White House staff who proved to be Bell's most valuable ally in the war against conservatives.

Charlotte Iserbyt points out in her book that the war against the American people in education is like no other war we've been involved in:

This book is simply a history book about another kind of war: one fought using psychological methods; a one-hundred year war; a different, more deadly war than any in which our country has ever been involved; a war about which the average American hasn't the foggiest idea.

The reason Americans do not understand this war is because it has been fought in secret—in the schools of our nation, targeting our children who are captive in classrooms. ...

This war has, in fact, become the war to end all wars. If citizens on this planet can be brainwashed or robotized, using dumbed-down Pavlovian-Skinnerian education, to accept what those in control want, there will be no more wars.

A utopian dream which has no more chance of becoming reality than the utopian dreams of Stalin, Hitler, Fidel Castro, or the United Nations — which permits Iran to advocate genocide of a member nation without any penalty. Utopians manage to create much suffering and damage before they are stopped in order to prevent them from doing even more damage.

When George H.W. Bush succeeded Reagan as president, he spoke of this wonderful vision of a New World Order. And when his son, George W. Bush, also a member of The Order, became president, his first major act was to work with Sen. Ted Kennedy in bringing forth No Child Left Behind. As far as he was concerned the Department of Education was here to stay. And as one of his last acts in office, he named the Education Department building in honor of former President Lyndon Baines Johnson.

Conservatives must learn how to use power when they get it, even though political power is something they don't enjoy pursuing, especially with a media that is so overwhelmingly liberal. But today, our survival depends on our ability to assert political power. That is why conservatives must fight to gain control over local Republican organizations and run for office. Only the state legislatures and the Congress can put a stop to this totalitarian drive. Only when our own people are in the state legislatures and the Congress will the problem of liberal-controlled education be addressed.

Indeed, the next president of the United States will have to be judged on how he handles our failed public education system. Will he be able to do something about it, or will he, like Reagan, also be a prisoner of the Establishment? Government education is the true linchpin of the entire big-government totalitarian philosophy. Homeschoolers have shown that they can do without it. Hopefully, more parents will come to the same conclusion.



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