

Westmoreland: UNL may be new leader of unrest

By Scott Nelson

Despite a bomb threat and vocal protesters, retired Gen. William Westmoreland, former head of U.S. military forces in Vietnam, spoke to an estimated 2000 people Friday afternoon in the Nebraska Union.

Westmoreland was interrupted several times during his speech by a group of dissenting Iranian students and other protesters chanting "down with fascism" and "fasist," and some members of the audience attempted to shout down the protesters.

Westmoreland commented that the chanting voices did not "have an American accent" and that he would continue his speech in spite of it.

His lecture, entitled "Vietnam in perspective," centered around his experience in Vietnam, and his feelings toward America's withdrawal of support from South Vietnam.

U.S. betrayal

"Our honorable country betrayed and deserted that little country after we enticed them to our bosom. It was a shabby performance by America, a blemish on our history, and a possible blight on our future, a shameful national blunder," he said.

Westmoreland said he felt the U.S.



Photo by Bob Pearson
Retired Gen. William Westmoreland

could have justifiably withdrawn its support in the two years of political chaos following the overthrow of president Diem, but he said President Johnson's increased aid and involvement during those years locked the U.S. into supporting South Vietnam indefinitely.

He said national protest to the war was viewed by the North Vietnamese as a sign of political weakness and instability.

"Civil disobedience by the militant minority to frustrate the war over the majority was glorified, and we're paying the price for that precedent at this time.

"The syndrome of cliches such as 'illegal' and 'immoral' war were just examples of communist propaganda," Westmoreland said.

Crowd disapproval

When the crowd roared its disapproval, Westmoreland pointed out that the war was supported by six presidents and nine Congresses through the budgetary process.

He said college draft deferments resulted in the privileged class refusing the draft and the war being "fought mainly by the poor man's son."

"In my opinion that was a tragic error."

"As our soldiers were fighting and dying for liberty and the right to dissent, civil disobedience by the militant minority group, burning the American flag, destroying ROTC buildings, burning their draft cards, lying and cheating in order to disqualify themselves from the military service, fleeing to Sweden and Canada only prolonged the war and cost thousands of lives."

News media responsible

Westmoreland held the news media partially responsible for encouraging negative opinions about the war.

"It is a sad commentary that our open society and open system were masterfully manipulated by Moscow and Hanoi to serve their purpose."

When questioned about reports of bombed hospitals and schools, Westmoreland vigorously objected.

"No war was every fought with more care to protect civilian lives than the Vietnam War. The way the war was conducted was humane, as it intended to avoid civilian casualties as has never been done before or could have been done. With regard to that question I can categorically say that no hospital was ever intentionally bombed."

Disapproval surprising

Westmoreland expressed some surprise at the loud disapproval of his presence.

"I've been to over 30 campuses in the past four years and I must say I've never run into one quite like this. Maybe you're leading the vanguard of another era of campus unrest.

"I don't have any apology for my conduct, I did my level best to carry out national policy," he said.

"I'm quite willing to stand here and be abused and associated with this kind of immature emotion," he added. "I'm not defending or condemning the war, and I'm not really supporting it. I was put in a position of responsibility to make good a commitment, and I must say it was a commitment on which we were not able to make good."

Westmoreland said, "All I can say is that under very difficult circumstances my troops and their leadership did their best to carry out national policy despite the fact that there were kids their own age raising hell and waving the enemy flag at home. I don't believe anybody could have done any better."

Roskens gives Regents NU system's objectives

By Brenda Moskovits

The NU system will review its general educational requirements and academic standards in the coming year, NU President Ronald Roskens told the NU Board of Regents Friday.

Roskens' annual list of institutional objectives includes seven areas which he said "we plan to give attention to, to make progress on, or accomplish during the upcoming year."

The university should concern itself with "what, from a university-wide perspective, should a student know and with what skills should a student be equipped when he or she departs from this institution with a degree," Roskens said.

Other objectives

- Other objectives are:
 - improving the university's research and graduate studies programs;
 - considering management alternatives in light of increasing inflation and a relatively stable enrollment;
 - guaranteeing that special attention be given in hiring more women and minorities;
 - reducing administrative duplication among parts of administration;
 - improving communication with the regents and taxpayers;
 - retaining a sense of humor.

"We need to have things in proper perspective and not take ourselves too seriously," Roskens said. "We know that none of us are irreplaceable."

In the business affairs subcommittee, however, the regents refused to review university-wide business operations. The review was suggested by NU Regent Robert Simmons of Scottsbluff.

Time to review

Simmons said the resignation of UNL Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance Miles Tommeraaen makes it a good time to review having business offices at each

campus at the university level.

A search committee will be formed to fill the position. Tommeraaen is leaving to become president of Morningside College in Sioux City.

The regents did approve Roskens' recommendations for two central administration positions.

James Raglin, columnist and special writer for the *Lincoln Journal* was named Director of Public Affairs, a post which has been vacant for nearly four years.

Raglin will coordinate university public affairs with the mass media and state constituents.

He will assume the post in early November at a salary of \$26,500.

Another appointment

Appointed as NU general counsel was Richard Wood, a Lincoln lawyer and former Lincoln assistant city attorney.

The post has been vacant since John Gourlay was killed in a car accident last summer.

Wood will serve as the university's staff attorney starting in November at a salary of \$41,500 a year.

A plaque in memory of Gourlay was presented by his family at the meeting.

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American and Iranian students gathered together in protest of retired Gen. William Westmoreland's visit to the UNL campus. See story on page 3.

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