

## Ellsberg says Nixon policy included nuclear bombs

By L. Kent Wolgamott

Quoting from the memoirs of Richard Nixon and H. R. Haldeman, anti-war activist Daniel Ellsberg Thursday described a secret foreign policy in which the United States reached the point of using nuclear weapons and was halted only by strong public opinion against the move.

Ellsberg, who spoke to about 1,000 people in an appearance sponsored by the University Program Council's Talks and Topics committee, said the reason Nixon did not use the "excessive force" of nuclear weapons was that the people who participated in the Vietnam moratorium of 1969 "were stopping the plans going on in the White House that moment."

He said although Nixon considered using such force "he believed he would be thrown out of office" if he had done so and that demonstrators had "postponed an era of nuclear war for another nine years."

### Dissenters end war

Ellsberg, who released the Pentagon Papers to the *New York Times*, said the dissenters brought an end to "Westmoreland's war, Johnson's war, Nixon's war... against their will."

"The Vietnamese could not have stopped our bombers from flying... only Americans could do that."

He said that the anti-war effort provided hope that freedom in the United States can have enough meaning and value to prevent other catastrophes, particularly nuclear war.

Recently convicted on three counts of trespassing at the Rocky Flats nuclear production plant in Colorado, Ellsberg spoke against nuclear weapons in general and against the neutron bomb in particular.

### Spark to start flame

He said the neutron bomb is "the match that will set off the others, so it is the most dangerous of all."

Ellsberg said the neutron bomb, although publicly said to be for use in

Europe, is actually "to use against people who don't have nuclear weapons."

He said if a bomb is produced and deployed it will soon go off and "lower American national security catastrophically" because "when the era of nuclear wars begin, it makes more nuclear explosions much more likely."

Brought to the university to balance the presentation given by William Westmoreland earlier this fall, Ellsberg said Westmoreland should not be singled out for the blame for Vietnam.

### Civilians murderous

"It is true that William Westmoreland is a war criminal but it is also true the orders given by civilians were enormously more murderous and genocidal than any he could have issued."

He said those who associated Westmoreland with the situation in Iran were correct because Iran reflects a worldwide policy of the United States being carried out by the same people who were in power during Vietnamese conflict.

But, Ellsberg said, those that attempted to keep Westmoreland from speaking were "misguided" as the "approach of abridging the ability of a person to speak will be used against dissenters."

He said Westmoreland had also proposed the invasion of North Vietnam, an invasion to be protected through the use of tactical nuclear weapons.

### 'Madman'

Using the quotations from the memoirs, Ellsberg demonstrated that Nixon and Kissinger had contemplated the use of nuclear weapons, using a "madman theory" in which Nixon wanted the enemy to believe he "would do anything to end the war."

Ellsberg said Nixon may have suspected that Ellsberg knew of this and other contemplated usages of nuclear weapons by other presidents and took action against him.



Photo by Mark Billingsley

Daniel Ellsberg

He said the action included the break-in of Ellsberg's psychiatrists office "to gain information to blackmail me into silence" and sending 11 men to "totally incapacitate" him at a speech on the steps of the capitol.

But Ellsberg said "too many people were exercising free speech that day" and the men did not attack him.

### Nixon had secrets

Although Ellsberg said he knew of the history of Vietnam, "he (Nixon) had a lot more secrets I could have known but didn't."

At a press conference before his speech,

Ellsberg said he did not believe a revelation like the Pentagon Papers in the area of nuclear weapons was possible because government news management had become "more adroit" since 1971 and the American people have become cynical and blasé to the revelations of the government corruption by the press in recent years.

But, he expressed hope that public pressure such as that opposing the Vietnam war "can be as effective in turning around the arms race."

He said the SALT treaty is desperately needed, but it does not stop the arms race, it only puts a ceiling on the degree to which the amount of arms is increased.

## Simmons favors smaller university

By Tamara Lee

**Editor's note:** This is the fourth in a series of in-depth profiles of the eight members of the NU Board of Regents.

Scottsbluff-NU Regent Robert Glenmore Simmons Jr. said he believes a smaller institution with larger classes may be the long-range solution to many of the problems facing the university.

Simmons, a Scottsbluff attorney, said the university is going to have to "quit taking everybody that comes along." Although it is not required by state statute or the university bylaws, Simmons said it has been the university's policy to admit any student who has graduated from an accredited Nebraska high school.

"I think the high schools will have to quit graduating people that don't know how to read and sending them down to the university to straighten it out."

Simmons said he would like to improve the quality of instruction. But he said he believes that larger classes, rather than smaller ones, is the best way to achieve that goal.

### Good instructors essential

A study done by the administration shows that with a good instructor, students learn as well in large lectures as they do in small classes, and sometimes even better, he said.

"I'd like to see a smaller faculty and a higher quality faculty," he said, "and use the money to concentrate on getting better instructors."

"Every now and then we are told that classes are getting too large and we have to keep increasing faculty and get down to smaller classes. I personally don't believe that is true in a university where the students should be well-prepared when they get to school and should be motivated."

"In high school, when you have to take students who are not well-prepared and may not be motivated, then maybe small classes are desirable, but I don't see any benefit of it in the university."

### Regent 'a hobby'

Simmons, 60, said he became a regent as "a hobby." "It's interesting. Everybody should have some kind of activity or interest besides their work." He said he is not yet sure whether he will run again in 1980.

He was elected to the board in 1974, following the death of long-time regent J.G. Elliott.

"I'd been waiting a long time for Jack Elliott to retire," Simmons said.

He succeeded Camille Elliott, who was appointed to finish her husband's term. She did not subsequently run for the seat. She is the only woman to ever serve on the board.

He said his father, Robert G. Simmons Sr., chief justice of the Nebraska Supreme Court for 24 years had an influence on his becoming involved in public affairs.

He has also served on the Scottsbluff Junior College Board of Education and the Scottsbluff Board of Education. He once was a delegate to the Republican National Convention.

The junior member of the board is a former FBI agent and Marine. He currently serves as Banner County attorney, an appointive post he has held for nearly 30 years, he said.

County attorneys usually are elected, but Simmons said since Banner County has no resident attorneys, he was appointed by the county board under a statute covering counties with no attorneys. According to the Banner County Clerk's office, Simmons receives \$4,800 a year for his services.

### Attorney is civil

Simmons said his position there is mostly civil. "Advising the county board and speeding tickets is about it," he said. In the 30 years he has served, there have been about 10 serious criminal trials, he said.

Simmons said he has not yet encountered any significant conflicts of interest with the university as a result of his law practice.

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Photo by Ted Kirk

Scottsbluff Regent Robert Simmons

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