

Michigan State University . East Lansing
Office of the Dean of International Programs

Memorandum for the Record by Ralph Smuckler

Subject: Factual misstatements in the Ramparts article of April 1966

This memorandum covers 53 factual items which are stated inaccurately in the Ramparts article. It covers the article, page by page. It makes no attempt to indicate importance of the factual item contested--some are minor, others major. It does not attempt to cover distortions but only to indicate where factual inaccuracies are stated. These items will be numbered in order of occurrence in the article. Some factual errors may be missed since no one person could cover them all.

1. The sentry box at the front of the chief advisor's home was manned, not by a Vietnamese soldier as stated but by a municipal police officer.

2. The reference to "chauffeured limousine bearing license plate number 1 from the government motor pool" is not correct in that MSU maintained its own motor pool and the license plate on the chief advisor's car was not number 1.

3. The reference to "long driveway of the French Villa" is inaccurate in that the driveway to the chief advisor's home was no more than three car lengths long--considerably short of the descriptive "long driveway."

4. The reference to "huge villa" misrepresents the size of the home of the chief advisor. The house consisted of approximately nine rooms which included three enclosed bedrooms, one open bedroom, a guest room or den, a kitchen, study, living room and dining area and the equivalent of three bathrooms.

5. Reference in the second paragraph of page 14 to Wolf Ladejinsky as "the agricultural expert left over from the New Deal" is not accurate in that Ladejinsky's main international agricultural expertise derived from his service as the land reform expert in Japan and Taiwan. During the New Deal years he was relatively unknown except for his papers on the subject of Asian agriculture and land reform. Far from being left over, he developed his reputation almost entirely immediately following the second world war.

6. Reference to "Fishel had a bigger villa than Barrows" is inaccurate. By any type of measurement the USOM director's home was larger than that of the chief advisor in Saigon, although it was not as new.

7. The article states that the Fishel villa was larger than the American ambassador's. By no stretch of the imagination could this be considered true.

8. The article states that the MSU group had "responsibility for the proper functioning of Diem's civil service and his police network." This is not accurate. The responsibility of MSU was to provide training and advisory service to various aspects of the public service, including the civil police forces. In no sense of the word can the University group be considered "responsible" for proper functioning of these organizations. Vietnamese made all decisions when it came to the operation of the civil service and the civil police.

9. Reference is made to responsibility of the MSU group for the "supplying of guns and ammunition for the city police, the civil guard, and palace police and the dreaded sûreté. This is inaccurate in several respects in that MSU did not supply guns and ammunition for any organizations. Such items were supplied by the aid program. The reference to "palace police" is also inaccurate in that these were not part of the civil police force with which Michigan State had contact.

10. The reference to Clark Kerr as the one who "first came up with the vision of the large university as a 'service station' to society" is inaccurate. The whole concept of universities being of service to society in the United States is one which derives from the land grant act of 1862 and the whole tradition of university development within this country since then. It is far older as a concept than President Clark Kerr.

11. The reference to public service being the "raison d'être of MSU" is inaccurate. Although public service is an important aspect of the University, it is only one of three major activities which are almost always referred to together. The other two are research and education. There are various ways of defining the function of the University but the reference to this one aspect of the University's work as the reason for being for the institution is inaccurate.

12. The reference to President Hannah having an Iowa background is inaccurate.

13. The reference to the School of Hotel Management turning out "educated room clerks" is inaccurate in that it narrows severely and underplays the broader role of the School of Hotel Management.

14. Reference to the International Program Center having been built with administrative allowance on the Vietnam contract is inaccurate. Accumulated overhead funds did pay for a portion of the International Programs Center, but these did not necessarily derive from the Vietnam contract.

15. Reference to the countries MSU is presently helping as "lopsided with military dictatorships" is inaccurate. The fact that there are military dictatorships in the world is known as a fact of life. The countries with which Michigan State is working are no more and no less so governed than the average less developing country of the world.

India	Algeria	Nigeria
Guatemala	Taiwan	
Cuba	Thailand	
Brazil	Pakistan	India
Argentina	Turkey	Vietnam
		Colombia

16. The reference to the University being a leader abroad in areas chosen for it by the federal government is inaccurate in that the University makes its decisions as to where it wishes to work. In several cases it is working in countries where the federal government does not support MSU work. *-Post-Taiwan - here*

17. Reference to the one sentence about the Vietnam Project in the International Program brochure is accurate, but a distortion in that the specific brochure deals with present programs and projections and the Vietnam Project was concluded in 1962.

18. Reference to \$25,000,000 in taxpayer's funds spent by the MSU group is inaccurate. The total expenditures in dollars were in the 5.3 million category and in addition piastre funds were expended at a 2 1/2 or 5 million dollar level (depending on exchange rate used in calculations). The combined total would be far less than \$25,000,000. At most it would be in the \$10,000,000 category. Only by including many expenditures made by the aid program itself in support of public administration and civil police administration work could one arrive at a total in the \$25,000,000 category. These aid program expenditures were not "spent" by MSU, and in fact Michigan State did not control the funds.

19. Reference to MSU asking the "CIA unit to go elsewhere because its presence had become such embarrassing general knowledge" are inaccurate. It was not a matter of knowledge but a matter of the University, in redefining and reappraising its international program work, feeling that it should not be engaged in tasks for which its own faculty did not have the specific talents needed. It was the principle involved, not the "general knowledge" which caused the move.

20. Reference to Fishel's thesis as "nondescript" is inaccurate in view of the fact that it was at that time being considered for publication by the California Press and in fact was published shortly thereafter and was well reviewed.

21. Reference to Diem being appointed a consultant to the MSU Governmental Research Bureau is inaccurate in that while he was named consultant for a very brief period he was not appointed formally nor did he receive any funds from the University for his brief visit to the campus.

22. The reference to Arthur Brandstatter "who now heads the Police Administration School" seems to imply that he did not head the school at the time he served on the survey mission. ~~The fact is that he was chairman~~ of the Department of Police Administration (predecessor to the School) at that time.

23. The statement that none of the men who went on the survey team had any experience in academic or technical assistance roles overseas is in error. Brandstatter for one, had served abroad and had participated in advisory services related to police administration.

24. The statement that the first time the survey team met as a group was when they fastened their seat belts is false. At least several of them were very close

colleagues and the group did meet prior to their departure.

25. The reference to the first MSU professors joining Fishel in Saigon in late May of 1955 is not correct. Fishel did not remain in Saigon during the early contract period. He had returned to East Lansing before the survey team began to assemble in Vietnam. Although he visited on one occasion, he was not in residence in Saigon again until he came out to assume the position as chief of the mission for the MSU group in March 1956.

26. The statement that from 1956 on for a period of "four years" Fishel "was the most important American in Vietnam" is incorrect. Without being able to state who the most important American was, it could not have been Fishel since Fishel left Saigon in March 1958.

27. Fishel is labeled an assistant professor of Political Science. The fact is he was then an associate professor.

28. The references to the conditions of life for the academicians in Saigon are inaccurate in that they describe only the comfortable things about Saigon life and even these inaccurately. There is no reference to the health problem or the insecurity of the situation or the climate. It overglamorizes several aspects of the life in Saigon and refers specifically to "air conditioned villas." Particularly in the early period of the project there was very little air conditioning and that which existed was quite unreliable because of power failures. Electric power failures also affected the availability of water. ~~With perhaps just a few exceptions the "villas" were not air conditioned,~~ although eventually air conditioned bedrooms were provided.

29. References to the salaries, if not inaccurate, can be considered a distortion because the reference does not indicate that the normal salary formula was followed in the case of Vietnam. The normal salary formula equals annualization plus an average of not more than 10% as an incentive increment plus whatever the permissible allowances are for the specific post under U. S. government regulations.

30. The statement that there was "a lack of any substantial scholarly research during the project" is not factual. A quick count shows that at least seven books were published based on work in Vietnam under the project. There were at least 25 monographic studies published (including training manuals) and there were 30 or 40 mimeographed studies and reports based on surveys. In addition there were an uncountable number of scholarly articles contributed to journals.

31. The reference to two-thirds of the MSU faculty getting promotions in Saigon suggests that the rate of promotion was unusually rapid. This runs contrary to the frequently heard complaint that the opposite is true and was true on the Vietnam Project. Furthermore, the rate of promotion even as stated does not appear to be unusually rapid, given the quality of the people sent to Saigon.

32. The reference to CIA men being given academic rank is false. No such academic appointments were made.

33. Reference to the CIA agents' instructions as being "to engage in counter-espionage and counter-intelligence ~~cannot be demonstrated to be factual.~~ While serving for the University, individuals hired from outside were clearly under University supervision and in their activities were restricted to conduct themselves in ways that would carry out the University's project objectives which clearly did not include counter-espionage and counter-intelligence.

34. The statement that the Police Administration division was by far the largest of the three divisions of the MSU group was not true. For 58 months out of the 86 months of the project, the public administration was larger and for three months the two divisions were equal in size. The police division was larger for ~~only~~ 25 months of the project.

35. The direct quotations attributed to Ralph Smuckler by Stanley Sheinbaum are fictitious.

36. References to the men coming in early in the morning, staying for about an hour and then locking their offices and leaving for the day, is fictitious. Many of the advisors spent most of their time at the Vietnamese offices since that is where counter-parts were working. The pattern for the individuals referred to was essentially the same as for the rest of the group and their time in the MSU office far exceeded the reference in the article.

37. Sheinbaum says he remembers signing papers that gave "the CIA guys" faculty status. This is factually inaccurate in that Sheinbaum had no such authority to give faculty rank and, furthermore, none of the people hired from outside positions were given faculty rank. Their Board appointment papers testify to this.

38. The conditions under which the "CIA operation" was terminated are stated falsely. Termination came because of principle and desire to reduce the size of the total group. It had nothing to do with embarrassment referred to in the article. Furthermore, the references to information being brought by Smuckler to Scigliano and passed to Jones are fictitious. This includes the reference to the matters of weeks transpiring until the entire unit could be moved to the offices of the United States mission. It took considerably more than weeks to arrange a transfer of a number of the police functions to USOM since it was necessary for USOM to set up an entirely new civil police division.

39. Reference to the fact that by 1959 the U.S. was making "little pretense of following the Geneva Accords anyway" is false. In the first place the transaction referred to had nothing to do with the Geneva Accords and, secondly, the Geneva Accords were being respected and observed and were a matter of concern to the official community in Saigon.

40. Reference to the task of rebuilding the entire Vietnam police apparatus as belonging to MSU is inaccurate. All such tasks belonged to the government of Vietnam--not to the University group which served as advisors.

41. Reference to Diem as lacking popular support during the first years of his regime would be difficult to substantiate. Considerable evidence exists to the contrary.

42. Reference to supplies including revolvers, ammunition, etc., being "requisitioned by the East Lansing School of Police Administration from stocks left over from America's aid to the French Expeditionary Corps" are purely fictitious. Furthermore, all equipment provided to the Vietnamese police or any other service came as a normal part of American aid provisions to the Vietnamese government. In the field of civil police administration this meant that equipment normally used by police were in fact supplied, not by the MSU project, but by the aid mission directly.

43. The photo copy of what is called "an MSU inventory 1955" carries on it no indication that it is an MSU document. It could have been typed by anybody for any purpose. It probably represents an inventory which was used by the civil guard and/or MSU advisors and/or USOM to appraise the status of equipment needs for the civil guard or other civil police forces in Vietnam. In no sense can it be an inventory of items that Michigan State had or supplied through its East Lansing School of Police Administration.

44. The reference to Brandstatter personally inspecting the palace guard during one of his inspection trips is fictitious. It probably refers instead to the first trip Brandstatter made to Vietnam as a part of the survey team. At that time he was asked to inspect the palace guard but at no time following the inception of the program did he do so.

45. The reference to 33 police advisors at one point in the project is false. At the peak of the police administration program there were 25 advisors. Following mid-1959 the police part of the project was reduced in size considerably (to less than 10) with a reasonable portion of the smaller police advisory team actually coming from the Michigan State campus.

46. References to the reports of Milton Taylor being "often rewritten by the project head" are not true. His reports as all others, were reviewed by other members of the team, including the project head and some of the wording may have been questioned but never rewritten.

47. Milton Taylor was not told by any responsible person on the project that other universities "were in hot pursuit of the juicy Vietnam contract".

48. The accusation that MSU professors failed to bear witness against violations of civil liberties are not true. Criticism of Diem and his government were quite open in Saigon, both among Vietnamese and Americans, and were known to journalists and others who would normally write for public consumption. Some of the MSU staff members in the civil police division, as well as public administration division, were openly critical and frequently so. Criticisms were brought directly to the attention of Diem, to the American ambassador, and to other responsible officials in Saigon. These violations increased in number as the years of the Diem regime progressed and

the criticism of professors became more open and in fact were printed. Some of the MSU professors were openly friendly with opposition leaders. Criticism of the Diem regime was made on the basis of professional weaknesses as well as political and civil liberty violations. The observations of David Halberstam referred to in the article, which came following the termination of the MSU group, cannot be assumed to have been valid for the period of the late 50's, but even in the late 50's there were published criticisms to which MSU people contributed directly or indirectly.

48. The reference to the Jaffee and Taylor essay in the New Republic in 1961 is inaccurate in that this was but one of a number of incidents and articles which caused Diem to feel that the continuation of the contract beyond 1962, even in a reduced form, was not desirable from the standpoint of his regime. An article by Frank Child, which appeared earlier, and the activities of several other of the MSU advisory team were of equal or greater importance.

49. The reference to Alfred Seelye going to Saigon to "smooth things out by telling Diem that the University was prepared to weed out any future troublemakers" is inaccurate. This was not the purpose of Seelye's trip and, contrary to the impression created by the article, the University was not prepared to restrict its personnel along the lines suggested.

50. Reference to the mimeographed reports and documents piled in "out of the way files" in the University Library are false. The various publications and reports of the project are available and are, in fact, being used.

51. The general reference to the dominance of police forces on the University campus is completely false.

52. The quotation attributed to Ralph Smuckler is false in several respects. First, there is no "action" project in Formosa. There is only a faculty exchange program which so far has involved anthropology, history and philosophy exchanges with National Taiwan University. There was at one time a program in the field of agriculture, but this ended several years prior to the writing of the article in Ramparts. Furthermore, the quotation which implies that "anybody not involved in overseas operations is obsolete" is an inaccurate statement in that it does not reflect Smuckler's viewpoint and is ridiculous on the surface.

53. The final question which asks "what is a university doing buying guns anyway" is a false question since it is based on the false assumption that the University purchased guns, an action it did not take.

The University bought no guns
no police support in return no doubt
for this project