

Memo of the Month

MEMORANDUM

College of Business Administration and Economics

February 20, 1974

TO: B A & Econ Faculty
FROM: Bryce J. Brisbin, Dean *BJB*
SUBJECT: Physical Change in Classrooms

It has just been brought to my attention that some person or persons unknown have rearranged the tables and chairs in GU 301, our seminar room into a typical classroom arrangement. I don't know the reason for the change but I would remind all faculty that no physical change in a classroom is to be made without the recommendation of the Faculty Advisory Council (see Minutes F.A.C. November 6, 1973, Item No. 1). A change of the seating arrangement in mid-semester without approval of the F.A.C. or the Dean certainly is not in harmony with the F.A.C. statement and might cause serious inconvenience to other users of the room.

In the event any faculty member desires another seating arrangement or other physical changes to the room, please bring it to me in advance and I will refer it to the Faculty Advisory Council for its study and recommendation.

I am uncertain as to what action to take at this time. According to the F.A.C. rule the room should be rearranged into seminar fashion. However, I will await action by the F.A.C. before having the change effected. I would be happy to discuss the room arrangement with any faculty who teach in Guthrie 301.

BJB:hj

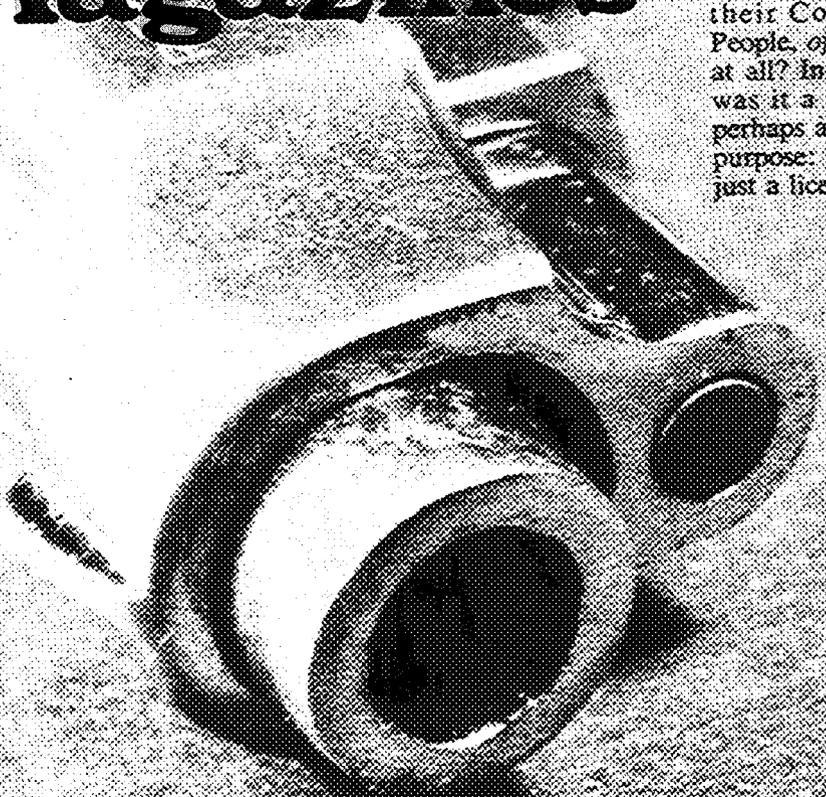
After Oil, Everything:
Looking Back: Kopkind on I.F. Stone/SL

Ramparts

The End of Muckraking Magazines

TERRORISM AND THE LEFT

... In whose name
and on whose behalf
did the SLA execute
Superintendent Fos-
ter? In what sense was
their Court of the
People, of the People,
at all? In what sense
was it a court? But
perhaps all this has a
purpose: perhaps it is
just a license to kill.



I first heard of *Ramparts* when I was an apprentice newspaper reporter in San Francisco in the mid-1960s. I often sat in the city room listening, over the clatter of news tickers and the squawks of the police radio, to the older reporters talk about all the stories they couldn't get into the paper. There were dozens, all told with a bitter humor: a multi-million dollar sewer construction swindle, embarrassing remarks by a candidate for mayor the paper was backing, six months of a reporter's research on a tax official's misdeeds. I was surprised and disappointed all this could not be reported; in college I had imagined myself a crusading reporter, and moreover had thought this would be a fine way to be a part of the movement for civil rights and social justice which had begun in the Kennedy years.

Ramparts was an exciting alternative in those days. In 1966 it had broken such stories as how Michigan State University had helped train the South Vietnamese secret police; it also published an autobiographical account by Don Duncan, a former Special Forces sergeant, documenting practices like torturing prisoners and killing civilians—things no longer news now, but which were then. And the San Francisco-based *Ramparts* did all this with a dazzle totally unlike the earnest greyness of the serious liberal or radical magazines. Major stories were written with the liveliness of detective novels; on the cover of the issue with his story was a color photo of Master Sergeant Duncan with all his medals, under the headline "I Quit!" (Michigan State's role in Vietnam was illustrated by a cover of Madame Nhu as a MSU cheerleader.) A little flashy,

Adam Hochschild was a writer for Ramparts.

perhaps, but it leapt out at you from the newsstands, and more and more people were paying attention.

I went to work as a staff writer for *Ramparts* in the fall of 1966. Each month brought some new exposé. The most important, which will remain a small landmark in the history of how Americans lost their innocence in the Vietnam era, was the disclosure that for years the CIA had financed a number of supposedly private organizations, including the National Student Association (NSA). I helped work on the story in a very small way, and still remember the tension that built up in the office as the deadline approached: the meetings held in restaurants so no one could overhear, the dashing out to phone booths to get away from tapped telephones.

The story was front-page news all over the world. Its publication followed a pattern which for some months worked marvelously: find an exposé major newspapers are afraid to touch, publish it with a big enough splash so they can't afford to ignore it (as, for example, they had ignored various aspects of the CIA/NSA story disclosed in previous years by a congressional committee, by *The Nation*, and by an SDS pamphlet), and then publicize it in a way that plays the news media off against each other.

To do the last, *Ramparts* would leak the story in advance to *The New York Times*. If it checked out, the *Times* would run it. And once certified as bona fide news, there would be the familiar sight of a row of station wagons from the San Francisco TV stations lined up outside the office when we came to work the next morning. For a week after the CIA story first broke, the *Times* and other leading newspapers competed to see