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19 JUL 1967

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Ramparts: John Garrett UNDERHILL Jr.,  
Samuel George CUMMINGS, and  
INTERARMCC

1. Ramparts of June 1967, Vol. 5, No. 12, pp. 28-29, contains the following passages about subjects:

"The day after the assassination, Gary Underhill left Washington in a hurry. Late in the evening he showed up at the home of friends in New Jersey. He was very agitated. A small clique within the CIA was responsible for the assassination, he confided, and he was afraid for his life and probably would have to leave the country. Less than six months later Underhill was found shot to death in his Washington apartment. The coroner ruled it suicide.

"J. Garrett Underhill had been an intelligence agent during World War II and was a recognized authority on limited warfare and small arms. A researcher and writer on military affairs, he was on a first-name basis with many of the top brass in the Pentagon. He was also on intimate terms with a number of high-ranking CIA officials--he was one of the Agency's 'un-people' who perform special assignments. At one time he had been a friend of Samuel Cummings of Interarmco, the arms broker that numbers among its customers the CIA and, ironically, Klein's Sporting Goods of Chicago, from whence /sic/ the mail-order Carcano allegedly was purchased by Oswald.

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"The friends whom Underhill visited say he was sober but badly shook. They say he attributed the Kennedy murder to a CIA clique which was carrying on a lucrative racket in gun-running, narcotics and other contraband, and manipulating political intrigue to serve its own ends. Kennedy supposedly got wind that something was going on and was killed before he could 'blow the whistle on it'. Although the friends had always known Underhill to be perfectly rational and objective, they at first didn't take his account seriously. 'I think the main reason was,' explains the husband, 'that we couldn't believe that the CIA could contain a corrupt element every bit as ruthless--and more efficient--as the mafia.'

"The verdict of suicide in Underhill's death is by no means convincing. His body was found by a writing collaborator, Asher Brynes of the New Republic. He had been shot behind the left ear, and an automatic pistol was under his left side. Odd, says Brynes, because Underhill was right-handed. Brynes thinks the pistol was fitted with a silencer, and occupants of the apartment building could not recall hearing a shot. Underhill obviously had been dead several days.

"Garry Underhill's chilling story is hardly implausible. As a spy apparatus the CIA is honeycombed with self-contained cliques operating without any real central control...."

2. A check of Agency records has yielded the following information about John Garrett UNDERHILL Jr.

- a. DPOB: 7 August 1915, Brooklyn.
- b. Attended high school in Brooklyn and was graduated from Harvard in 1937.
- c. Died 8 May 1964.

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d. Was a pictorial journalist for Life, 1938-1942.

e. Ordered to active duty with MIS, Washington, as a second lieutenant, on 8 July 1943. Served with MIS for 2-1/2 years, working on technical and photographic headings for MIS publications, evaluation of intelligence, and enemy uniforms, insignia, weapons, etc. On 9 October 1945 received a War Department staff citation for superior work in military intelligence. Left active duty in May 1946.

f. CIA memoranda of February and October 1949 show that there was interest by the New York office of CO, Contacts Division, in using Subject as a contact for foreign intelligence. Name checks were conducted with various military members of the intelligence community, but these yielded insufficient information, and CO was advised that contact should be developed with caution, on a limited basis, and that Subject was not to receive information classified higher than confidential.

g. On 12 March 1957 national agency checks were again requested on Subject because of interest by the Office of Security.

h. A UP article of unknown date cites an article written by UNDERHILL for Esquire. The article described the U.S. Army as shockingly weak. The UP piece stated that UNDERHILL served in military intelligence in World War II and Korea. UNDERHILL said that he had served as a consultant (probably in 1956) to an Army coordinating group.

i. A report of 6 August 1954 from the Office of Security, Department of State, concerns contacts between UNDERHILL and one Herman AXELBANK, who was trying to sell photographs of Soviet military subjects. UNDERHILL reported these contacts to the FBI and to CIA. In November 1949

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UNDERHILL visited Washington to call the attention of CIA to certain AXELBANK pictures and was advised that Colliers might be interested in some of them for an article on Russia. UNDERHILL discussed AXELBANK with [ ] of CIA.

3. On the basis of the foregoing an inquiry was made of director, Domestic Contact Service, whose office provided the attached reply.

4. A check of Agency records has yielded the following information about Samuel George CUMMINGS, 201-178343.

a. DPCB 4 February 1927 Philadelphia.

b. President and sole owner of INTERARMCO, "probably the largest international arms dealer in the world". (DIR-01282, 16 September-1960.)

c. Was a staff employee of CIA from December 1950 to November 1953. HVCW-2756, 5 August 1957, as well as other references, list him as a former staff employee who has no present CIA affiliations but who continues to act as an FBI source.

d. Other intelligence contacts: State, DIA, and the West German BND.

e. The INTERARMCO firm has been used by CIA to acquire and dispose of weapons, ammunition, etc. CIA had no control of the firm and no proprietary interest in it.

f. An entry of 1 June 1967 states that Subject has been terminated without prejudice.

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5. Agency records contain numerous references to INTERARMCO.
6. It is noted that Subjects have not appeared to date in any public or classified reports of the Garrison investigation in New Orleans.

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