

Sunday night  
September 30

Dear Sylvia,

I finally tracked down that issue of Look yesterday and you were right -- it does give you a nice sense of the political milieu in which G. operated, but as far as anything new: not much. I was really a bit surprised that Rogers wasn't able to run down anything more substantial on a Mafia connection; what he had seemed so minor to be almost laughable. Undoubtedly, there are truly substantial connections; he simply wasn't able to nail them. One point he made seemed rather good to me: that a bunch of Cuban exile types would prove to be about as organized as a kindergarten fire drill. The more time passes in this case the more it seems to me one has to ascribe the crime to a very well-organized and ruthless organization... something like the Mafia or the CIA, until a better candidate comes along. And then, of course, the question arises as to whether G. and Co. may have been cleverer than anyone realized. I know it seems crazy in light of the "sincerity" ascribed to G. by Popkin and company -- to them he's a perfectly sincere, maybe a bit nutty guy, who made a mistake. He could also be a prosecutor bought by the Mafia to put on a circus and thus close the case forever. The more one thinks of Ruby, Ferrie, Marcello, et al. the more one gets interested in the Mob connection. Maybe I've ~~become~~ simply become too suspicious in my old age, but there is obviously something very odd going on in New Orleans.

I got a letter from that kid Roffman about a month ago asking for information. I didn't answer it. I'm thoroughly bewildered by what's going on about this screwy cartridge case, but it's clearly strange that this kid has never mentioned it to me (the only significant find he's made). Even in his letter written in July after Bernabei had been in touch with him he failed to mention it. The Archives sent me a couple of cartridge photos which are singularly uninformative. I haven't thought about this for so long that I've forgotten just what the evidential issue really was. 743 (or whatever the number was) is still a damn peculiar cartridge case.

I'm having great fun, Sylvia, writing this biography. In the total sum of things I suppose it's not very important to write a biography of Søren Kierkegaard. But clearly it's a job that needs doing, and is proving to be great fun. For the novelist manque, biography is a great genre. One can employ a lot of the novelists' tricks and techniques, but finally one is dealing with fact: the plot of the novel is not one's own invention. And there is a fascination to the story. A father poisons his son's life with melancholy, and the melancholy finally emerges at the end of the son's life in the form of Christianity. And I could go on and on.

Hope your job isn't proving too demanding. You deserve some of the leisure I'm getting over here in such abundance. Let's keep in touch.

Affectionately,

10/3/69  
Sent letter dated 7/19/69  
with handwritten P.S.  
Bethel no show, USA's book,  
GA treadmill.

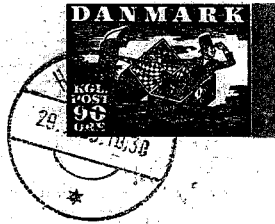
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