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## Martin Duberman to Mr. Silver, 29 March 1963

Martin B. Duberman

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PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

Department of History

March 29, 1963

Dear Mr. Silver,

Thanks so much for your letter; I was very pleased that you expressed at least tentative interest in contributing to the volume. The difficulties in the way of this, can, I hope, be resolved. The deadline, for example, is quite a ways off. Originally I had hoped to gather in the essays by the end of summer, but two or three contributors have found themselves so tied by earlier commitments, that I have had to put "due" date off till around the first of the year. My hope is that this is sufficiently distant so that it will give you all the time you need.

As to topic, I like very much your suggested subject of the use abolitionists made of Southern extremists. I prefer it, (as do you, I gather) to the reverse--the southern use of abolition material. This latter topic has, I think, already been given some attention, whereas the former one has not. Of course I have to confess that as it stands the subject is so broad that ~~different~~ I'm not sure we are both attracted to the same aspects of it! It seems to me there are (at



three

least) ~~two~~ major possibilities: 1. how the extreme actions of certain Southerners gave the abolitionists "propaganda" ammunition  
2. how the intransigence of certain Southerners drove the abolitionists from moderate ground (moral suasion; gradual emancipation) to "extremism."  
3. how the effort to stifle the abolitionists drove others into a more pronounced antislavery position because of the "civil rights" connotation the struggle had now taken on.

Were any of these three themes the one you yourself had in mind? Or possibly a combination of any of them? If something different entirely, I would not be surprised, since the topic has so many ramifications! In any case, the general theme seems to me a most interesting one, and so far as I know (some of the topics are still tentative) none of the other contributors will be working in this area. It is, needless to say, your essay entirely--by which I mean that the above "possibilities" are certainly not meant to be limiting; the final subject is, of course, completely up to you.

Since we have 15-20 promised essays, I think it would be well to keep the length of each to something like 20 double-spaced typed pages. But this is certainly flexible. If you need a little more--or less--space to develop your theme properly, by all means take it.

I hope very much you will feel able to join us; your name would, I know, add great distinction to the volume.

Sincerely,  
Walter Dubuque