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THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
MADISON 6

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
BASCOM HALL

October 26, 1960

Dear JimF

About the Elkins book, I have been of two minds, like yourself. On the one hand, there is much in it with which I disagree-- the idea that slavery in the American South was more brutalizing than in Latin America, for example. Also, the book is not strictly history, certainly not strictly Southern history. On the other hand, it is an idea book, provocative, one that will influence and is influencing historians to take a stand for or against. These are the grounds on which I thought it prize-worthy, but I do not feel like making a strong case, in view ~~of~~ my own doubts.

I should be happy with either the Daniels or the Chambers book. I realize that many in the profession do not share my high regard for the Daniels book (and I too disagree with much in it, as I pointed out in a review for the Greensboro Daily News, but it does add to our knowledge, and it is skilfully written). We could make a strong case for the Chambers book, but we could make a stronger case if Vandiver (and others) had not already written so well about T. J. Jackson. Chambers does supplement and complement Vandiver but whether enough to deserve the award is questionable.

In any case, I will not insist at all on Elkins. In fact, let me withdraw my nomination of it. Consider me as favoring either Daniels or Chambers and as approving wholeheartedly whatever you and Joe Frantz finally agree on.

Again I'm sorry I can't get to Tulsa. But the Beveridge Committee business in Washington simply has to take precedence.

My sympathies and best wishes.

Sincerely,


Richard N. Current