

THE COLLEGE LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION AND THE PROFESSION OF LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

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THE COLLEGE LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION AND THE
PROFESSION OF LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

By ELEANOR Q. TIGNOR

President's Address Delivered at the Forty-third Annual CLA
Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, April 23, 1983

The constitution of this association states that each year at our convention the president is to address the membership on "some subject of general or professional interest." Today, I would like to follow up on our thinking on the subject which I posed in a questionnaire to you a few months ago—the subject of the major issues and concerns facing our profession and the role that we of the College Language Association should play in light of these issues and concerns.

Whether one reads the MLA "Report of the Commission on the Future of the Profession," the ADE and ADFL bulletins, *Profession '82*, *American Educator*, *Academe*, *Journal of Negro Education*, the ACTFL statement on language proficiency projects, the NCTE statement against censorship, other professional journals, statements, and recommendations, or—most

important to *me*—your responses to the CLA questionnaire, we all know that our profession is in a state of dis-ease, i.e., it is not functioning as harmoniously as is its potential, and we who love it and, in many cases, dedicate our lives to it are not as comfortable with it as we would like to be. Though I agree with one of you who said in your questionnaire response that it is easier to cite the problems than to find the cures, I will first review some of the problems.

The national condition seems to be summed up in some of these statements by CLA members: “The humanities have lost or are losing their credibility as we move toward the age of the computer.” “We are daily moving toward alienation from a society which continues to minimize the importance of literacy and the humanities and to maximize the money-making skills and disciplines. . . . Obviously such skills are essential and will be increasingly so. But must we sacrifice humanistic studies?” Another member said: “*This* university”—and he might have filled in the names of some others—“needs to reaffirm and sustain the humanistic teachings that *all* present-day and future citizens will need in our society.” Still another wrote: “The emphasis on technology is taking over colleges and universities and pushing out the liberal arts; we *need* both—computer specialists, engineers, and mathematicians need to know how to read critically, how to understand *humans*, including having communication facility in a foreign language, how to write effectively, how to think! We need to re-emphasize the *value* of language and literature for the truly educated person—the person who can handle technology with *people* in mind.”

The MLA report just referred to, in statistically citing the loss of “interest in those fields of the humanities that stress literary traditions,” reminds us that interest in English and foreign languages as majors is declining: from 1971 to today, the number of high school seniors planning to major in English decreased from 4 percent to 0.9 percent, and it is anticipated that the percentage of B.A.’s awarded in . . . English and American literature will drop to 2.7 percent by 1986-87 (from 8.7 percent in 1964-65) and in foreign languages from 2.8 percent

to 1.2 percent.¹ The Commission ended this discussion of pedagogical signals with the mournful statement: "We are, to quote Auden, . . . rapidly approaching the moment when 'laurel and language wither in silence,' at least in our colleges."² Our declining numbers, then, is one specific problem, for shortages are inevitable at some indefinable future time.

What are some even more immediate problems? First, the foreign language area. Some of you who are in colleges or states which are reducing or eliminating the foreign language requirement for entrance or graduation, or dropping some of the majors (about which Barbara Dease spoke so eloquently to this body last year), are, like Barbara and her colleagues at Jackson State University, fighting for survival. There the French concentration has been dropped; only the Spanish remains. And the University Board has also decided that the foreign language degrees will all be B.A.'s in foreign language, not in a particular language. Another CLA foreign language professor was moved to write this strong statement on the situation: "Our foreign language requirement was once two years; then for a while it was abolished. Now we have a semester requirement, which is ridiculous but better than none. . . . We must find a way to reach foreign language insensitive colleagues and parents, as well as students. . . . We must help secondary school teachers to force a reinstatement of foreign languages . . . in the . . . curriculum. We must seek ways to make foreign languages marketable. . . . We cannot go on saying that 'everybody knows English. Why study a foreign language?' That is why we are now the laughing stock of the world." Others of you of the CLA, as well as foreign language program coordinators and directors writing in the *ADFL Bulletin* and members of the ACTFL, have taken the same position: a bewailing of America's disregard for the need for proficiency in other languages and therefore its creation of monolingual citizens lacking a global view.

In responding to my question concerning the major issues

¹ "Report of the Commission of the Future of the Profession," *PMLA*, 97 (1982), 948.

² *Ibid.*

and concerns facing the foreign language profession, Richard I. Brod, MLA director of foreign languages, returned a fourteen-point list of teaching concerns of the discipline. It reads, in part:

1. The need to organize and evaluate language study in terms of levels of proficiency rather than by units of time spent in the classroom.
2. The adaptation of the Foreign Service oral interview test for use in schools and colleges.
3. Better understanding of the value and feasibility of various teaching methods now competing for attention.
4. Improving the fluency and language competence of new teachers. . . .
5. Understanding the usefulness and feasibility of intensive language instruction.
6. Methods and materials for the teaching of culture.
7. Methods and materials for the teaching of linguistics for "language awareness."
8. Profitable adaptation and use of computers for language instruction.
9. Appropriate ways of linking language study with internationally oriented programs in other fields, and pre-professional programs.
10. Intelligent use of audiovisual media in language instruction.
11. Improvement in the teaching of literature and developing interest in literature on the part of nonmajors.³

Those of us in English—and I include here reading and the oral communication skills, as well as composition and the various literatures in the native tongue—are concerned, as are those of you in foreign languages, with a decline in enrollment in our literature courses (electives and those for majors), with the too frequent scant offerings of electives (in English) and the dropping of an elective despite its merits if it does not attract a sufficiently high number of students to be *financially* worth it, and with the downgrading of the English major practically to the point of elimination in some colleges.

We are also faced with the problem of adult illiteracy, about which we are reminded without and within the profession.

³ Letter received from Richard I. Brod, 10 January 1983.

Inouye, for example, in speaking for the Democrats in response to President Reagan's "Star Wars" talk, alluded to the fact that millions of adult Americans are functionally illiterate. Within the profession, the MLA Report includes literacy under its first recommendation for action, saying: "We strongly believe that institutions of higher learning should meet the fundamental responsibilities of educating students to advanced levels of literacy. We recommend that our members urge college faculties to develop skills in language and expression, not only in composition and literature courses but across the curriculum."⁴

In citing literacy as a major national problem, one of our members was careful to define it as the "ability to read, write, and think critically or analytically"; another labels as her "greatest concern . . . the low level of reading/thinking skills among college students" and goes on to say: "The problem is ubiquitous, as explained by the latest NAEP studies, and pervades every college level and ethnic group." Others echoed these concerns, with two teachers, from California and Florida, respectively, making these statements: "Increasingly, industry is deploring a lack of employee skill in Basic English as a negative factor in American commerce—national and international. We must continue to remind Black students, especially, that *Standard English* is *THEIR* language, too. . . ." "Today's students' language skills are not what they should be; the state of Florida has passed a law which requires each student at the end of the sophomore year to pass in communication. Failing to do so, the student cannot advance. Hence, unless intense efforts are made to insure that these students acquire the necessary skills . . . , many black students will be 'sophomore drop-outs.'" (These two statements are not to suggest that black students are the only ones having language difficulties, for we know this is not so.)

Better coordination or beginning coordination between either grades K-12 or between high schools and colleges has been recommended by some of you and is recommended in the MLA Report as one way of dealing with the problem.

⁴ "Report of the Commission on the Future of the Profession," p. 951.

Many of you have cited the need for developmental programs, or stronger developmental programs, or modified ones because of reading and writing—and I would add speaking and listening—difficulties of our students. You have suggested (1) a wider range of classes appropriate to students' communication skills levels, (2) ESL programs and strategies for the steadily increasing immigrant and immigrant-descendant populations, and (3) more reading, writing, and oral communication laboratories. Also needed are more writing-across-the-curriculum programs which train faculty in the teaching of course content through a reinforcement of the basic communication skills, such as the ISR program at La Guardia and similar programs, which incidentally will be the subject of a national conference in June (sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, Beaver College, the University of Pennsylvania, the National Council of Writing Program Administrators, and the Delaware Valley Writing Council).

Still other concerns are inadequate focus on literatures not in the past thought of as standard (for example, Caribbean, African, Chicano, Native American, Chinese American, East Asian) and the need, therefore, to move away from the old definition of "great works" to a definition which recognizes and includes works by non-Western authors and by minorities. (I shall later comment on the Reconstructing American Literature Project.)

A related national problem—one which touches many of us in the CLA—is the unavailability of sufficient Afro-American texts and other black texts which we need to teach our courses. In addition, some books which are in print continue to be censored in some places, despite NCTE and other professional guidelines.

Problems of class size and workload continue to haunt us—and even more so in times of financial crisis—despite the ADE guidelines that "suggest that composition sections . . . have a maximum of twenty students and literature courses a maximum of thirty-five (if the instructor lacks qualified help) and that college English teachers . . . spend no more than twelve hours per week per semester in the classroom if they teach only un-

dergraduate courses and no more than nine hours per week if they provide graduate instruction.”⁵ (It is recommended by the Commission on the Future of the Profession that these guidelines “be widely circulated . . . and . . . that the ADFL prepare and distribute similar guidelines for its constituencies.”)⁶ Our members made these observations in commenting on their working conditions. One said: “Course loads tend to be too high, compensation too low.” Another teacher pointed to the problem of teaching three or four large classes with 90 percent of her students being developmental and without graduate assistants or secretaries as part of her support system. A CLA member who teaches in a department that once prided itself on keeping its composition classes well within the now-recommended guidelines said: “Our classes are large and miserable.” This is at a historically black college, whose president has written about these problems in the *Journal of Negro Education*. Another teacher in the same department wrote: “Remedial classes can have as many as 35-40 students . . . and there is no tutorial program . . . to help the teacher help the students.” With course and student overloads such as these, how can teachers in such situations find adequate time for research and other faculty development?

The budget cuts exacerbating many of these problems, of course, cannot be disregarded. We are clearly not at the moment in the favor of the executive branch of our government, and many of our legislators are not actively taking our side. As *American Educator* reports:

Since federal aid to education has become a target of the Reagan administration’s budget axe, it has been difficult to attract members to sit on the committees that set the national education agenda. . . .

During the Great Society days when vast new education programs were being created, the House and Senate education committees were considered prime slots for ambitious legislators. Today, however, slots are largely filled by newly elected members who have failed to get their first or second choice of committee assignments.

Of the 100 Democratic House members who requested

⁵ Ibid., p. 954.

⁶ Ibid.

committee assignments for the 98th Congress, at the most ten even mentioned Education and Labor on their wish list. . . .

As one aide put it, "If you can't pass out the goodies, you're not building your constituency." A House staffer noted that while the Education and Labor Committee was once one of the most popular assignments, "now it's kind of an albatross. . . ." Members who serve on the Education Committee reluctantly are unlikely to strive for new ideas and programs.⁷

With the tremendous problems facing our profession, it is obvious that we *must* strengthen our own organization as well as continue our ties and form stronger coalitions with other language associations.

First, how has the CLA cooperated with other organizations—to strengthen itself and the profession—and what are our present plans in this area? All of us know we must, to put it colloquially, be "where the action is" or where *more* action is in order to get involved and in order to make it known that we *want* to get involved.

As an allied organization of the MLA, we have presented panels at some of the conventions, with the most difficulty arising because of travel expenses for participants when the convention has met in California. One suggestion that has been made is that a CLA-sponsored program be planned with California-based members as panelists. Also, the Executive Committee this year has designated the Foreign Language Member-at-Large (Marian Musgrave) as the program planner. (This does not mean that an English Area panel may not be presented also, for allied organizations may sponsor more than one session.) In addition, CLA members over the years have participated in the diverse programs sponsored by the MLA's Afro-American Literature Discussion Group, founded by CLA Past President Darwin Turner in 1977. The types of programs, summed up by R. Baxter Miller in his 1982 "Proposal of the Afro-American Literature Discussion Group for Division Status as 'Black American Culture and Literature,'" have moved

⁷ "Education: The Poor Relation on the Hill," *American Educator*, 7, No. 1 (1983), 6.

from "an emphasis on exoticism and gothic typology . . . to the critical analyses of regionalism, multi-ethnicity, and scholarly ethics."⁸

Our CLA liaison Past President Thelma Curl, as part of her coordination of the work of CLA and other language and literature organizations, regularly arranges a panel for the CCCC's meeting. This year, when that organization met in Detroit, our session on the stylistic devices of Ralph Ellison and Toni Morrison (with participants Gladys Williams and Anna Shannon, respondent Marie Buncombe, and myself as chair) was one of the best-attended sessions and one of the most provocative. Our ties with CCCC, especially through its Past Chair James Hill, are becoming even stronger; CCCC participated at CLA, in Charlotte, with a writing workshop being given by Kris Gutierrez and Joyce Johnson, and plans to continue this type of program exchange. We are now also working toward a more formal cooperation with that organization. I was also approached by a CCCC's committee person, in Detroit, with an appeal that CLA members become more active on its committees, with an especial concern that we be represented on the Minority Affairs Committee. I am now pursuing that and will serve if appointed.

We have frequently participated in the NCTE programs, and now the English Area Member-at-Large has accepted the responsibility of planning an annual program. For November 1983, Marie Buncombe has arranged a panel entitled "A Sense of Place and Circumstance in Afro-American Literature," with Joyce Johnson, Margaret Reid, and me as panelists and with Member-at-Large Buncombe as chair and CLA Liaison Thelma Curl as associate chair.

We are now involved with ADFL and ADE, the administrative organization affiliated with the MLA. Barbara Dease, chairperson of our Teacher Training Committee—not directly as a CLA member but as chairperson of her department at Jackson State and as one very devoted to our causes—serves

⁸ R. Baxter Miller, "Proposal of the Afro-American Literature Discussion Group for Division Status as 'Black American Culture and Literature,'" *TS*, 28 November 1982, p. 1.

as the only black member on the Executive Board of that organization. She strongly encourages other foreign language departments to join, for "ADFL is a *very* influential voice in the microcosmic world of foreign languages, and its director is wide open to change and creativity, for ALL foreign language departments. In fact, it is the only organization dedicated to accentuating and expanding all the skills needed by foreign language department heads."⁹ While scanning the membership list of ADE, I saw only a few English departments of historically black colleges who hold membership in that organization.

This past year CLA was invited to the MLA convention to participate in an ADE-sponsored program, a panel entitled "Making Connections: Cooperation Among English Associations." Also participating were CCCC, CEA, NCTE, and, of course, ADE. Ora Williams, a long-time member of this association, a professor at California State University (Long Beach), and a member of our Black Studies Committee, made our presentation. The organizations represented considered a continuing cooperation because of their common concerns. Just recently, I received a letter from the ADE director inviting CLA to participate in a follow-up meeting at the MLA 1983 convention in New York at which "the possibility of establishing a coalition of representatives from the various organizations"¹⁰ will be pursued. Our convention was published in the *ADE Bulletin* this time, and it is hoped that we will submit for publication in the bulletin articles on the CLA and on issues of concern to us.

Another group, with which those of you who direct writing programs may wish to develop a link, if you are not presently members, is the National Council of Writing Program Administrators. This group reviews writing programs, makes recommendations for strengthening them when needed, and financially aids in the sponsorship of local conferences. The president, Harvey Wiener, well known in the world of composition and whom we are fortunate to have on the La Guardia English fa-

⁹ Barbara C. Dease, "Make a Wind to Shake the World," Opening of the Convention: First General Session, CLA Convention, Charlotte, 22 April 1982.

¹⁰ Letter received from Phyllis Franklin, 13 April 1983.

culty, has offered to give a session on the WPA if invited to one of our conventions.

Because one of the major objectives of our association is to encourage scholarly research in and the teaching of black literatures and cultures, and because this association has for many years viewed Langston Hughes as one of its own—as evidenced in a Hughes special issue of the *CLA Journal* and a collection of Hughes essays edited by Therman B. O'Daniel—we are most pleased to have as perhaps our strongest organizational link that of the newly formed Langston Hughes Society, which has held its two luncheon meetings with us and will present a Hughesonian panel this afternoon.

The CLA is fortunate, also, to have close ties with the National Endowment for the Humanities. Maben Herring, assistant director in the Division of Fellowship and Seminars of the NEH and a member of our Research Committee, did an NEH Fellowships Opportunities Workshop at the 1981 Convention and will give a similar presentation this afternoon. As a result of the interest and inspiration of my last summer's Yale NEH Summer Seminar Director, Michael G. Cooke, and with the support of the NEH, three members of that seminar (entitled "Modern Fiction: Portraits in Black and write"¹¹) presented a panel yesterday. Our treasurer, Robert A. Smith, as part of his report, will speak of the NEH Challenge Grant application which we submitted last summer.

CLA is also involved in the Reconstructing American Literature Project, sponsored by the Feminist Press. Marian Musgrave is on the advisory board, as was George Kent. Houston Baker and Henry Louis Gates, Jr., were lecturers at the RAL Institute last summer at Yale; as participants in the Institute, Chester Fontenot and I continue our involvement as the group works toward publication of syllabi and an anthology in "an effort to transform the teaching, and thus the canon, of American literature,"¹² to include more texts written by women and

¹¹ The panelists were Carol Bachman (Tunxis Community College, West Hartford, CT.), Charles Fishman (State Univ. of New York, Farmingdale), and George McCartney (St. John's Univ., New York).

¹² The Feminist Press, *Reconstructing American Literature* (Old Westbury: The Feminist Press, 1982), p. 1.

by minorities. More black scholars should be involved in this reconstruction, for out of a total of about fifty participants and lecturers at the Institute, only eight persons were black: including those just named, three other participants, and one of the co-directors, Mary Helen Washington. What *all* CLA members who teach introductory American literature courses (and some other courses, such as writing through literature) *can* do is to make use of the anthology when it is published—for it will be strong in minority literature. We shall invite the Feminist Press to exhibit both books when they become available.

I have gone into such detail on our involvement with other groups because I think it is important that you, as the membership, know that the CLA is not working in a vacuum and that the Executive Committee realizes that the organization is enriching and is enriched not just by members appearing on various programs but by what comes from that participation.

Finally, in light of the difficulties facing the profession (as defined by you and by others), in continuation of the steps we have taken so far in cooperation with other groups with whom we share common concerns, and in following the constitutional definitions of our standing committees and the president's right to name other committees, I am asking that the standing committees (along with the other activities they have set for themselves) take the following recommendations (most of which are from the questionnaires) into consideration when they meet this afternoon. (I have already given these lists to the chairpersons or their representatives.)

The Curriculum Committees—English and Foreign Languages—should consider these suggestions: overall, research innovative curriculum developments and disseminate this information to CLA faculty in the appropriate disciplines; use our journal and the ADE and ADFL bulletins as ways to disseminate innovative teaching approaches geared to certain identified types of students (also suggested for the Teacher Training Committee); prepare bibliographies and bibliographies of bibliographies on teaching strategies and materials (also suggested for the Teacher Training Committee); submit teaching strategies, lessons, syllabi to ERIC; study the required Eng-

lish and foreign language courses in two-year and four-year college programs; study writing-across-the-curriculum programs; explore the idea of using foreign languages in nontraditional programs; explore the idea of combining foreign language courses with more skills-oriented programs; discover which of our members' colleges would like consultants in these or other areas to offer workshops or seminars on their campuses and, in conjunction with the Research Committee, discover who among our membership will/can serve as consultants; make recommendations for ways to expand the canon of literature to be taught, especially ways to further integrate black literature into curricula and syllabi; take a position on class size and workload (the English Area Curriculum Committee may wish to prepare a statement in support of the ADE guidelines if CLA supports them, and the Foreign Language Area Committee may wish to make recommendations for publication since that group as yet has no suggested guidelines); recommend ways to further emphasize literature at a time when reading and writing test scores are receiving more attention; become involved in work on critical reading skills projects; prepare a position paper on what might be done to improve the performance of minority students on national standardized tests; prepare a position paper on what might be done to improve the communication skills of minority students; take a position on the proper recognition of the importance of languages and literature in the undergraduate curriculum. The final three tasks may be assumed by ad hoc committees if the Curriculum Committees so desire.

The Teacher Training Committee, which I ask the Constitution Committee to consider renaming and redefining as *Teacher Training and Other Careers*, should consider the following activities: make the membership aware of new career opportunities for English and foreign language majors; explore ways to attract more English majors with exceptional ability in writing; define or redefine the kind of graduate we are seeking to create; draw up a list of criteria for the selection of textbooks; formulate theoretical and practical descriptions and prepare model programs for teaching black students (first-generation college students in particular).

Recommendations for the *Research Committee* are these: promote research in the teaching of composition at historically black colleges by teachers in those colleges; provide a directory of members with their areas of specialization or expertise noted, so that these persons can be tapped, if willing, to serve as consultants; fulfill or continue to fulfill its prime role: "compile an annual annotated list of scholarly publications and creative projects of all members for publication in the December issue of the *Journal*, which shall serve as one source for investigation and study by the Committee on Awards."

These are considerations for the *Black Studies Committee*: assist the Constitution Committee in defining itself; take a strong stand in pressuring publishers to reprint or continue to print Afro-American and other black texts, to publish scholarly works by CLA members, and to exhibit at CLA conventions; promote the sustained study of the linguistic aspects of African-American cultures; continue to promote research in black literature and culture.

It is suggested that the *Membership Committee* do the following: recruit black faculty who are now active or more active in other language organizations; recruit undergraduate and graduate students; recruit two-year college faculty (this faculty population usually has the same credentials and teaches the same types of courses which are offered in the first two or three years of a four-year college program, and these faculty members are often forced to find even more innovative ways of teaching than four-year college teachers because many of their students are not as well prepared; in addition, with the increase in the number of black students now enrolled in two-year colleges,¹³ the CLA should want to reach these students through their teachers); make available to the Curriculum Committee a list of members in each of the two disciplines; fulfill or continue to fulfill the task of preparing annually (preferably immediately following the convention) an accurate and

¹³ At the close of the 1970s fifty percent of all black students in institutions of higher education were enrolled in these colleges. See James E. Blackwell, "Demographics of Desegregation," in *Race and Equity in Higher Education*, ed. Reginald Wilson (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1982), p. 36.

all-inclusive membership list to be made available to other committees; continue to work with the treasurer in soliciting dues and in requesting contributions (of life members).

The Constitution Committee has already been referred to the minutes of business sessions at which constitutional amendments were suggested. In addition, it may wish to consider the addition of a Graduate School Committee. It should review the descriptions of all of the standing committees and should consider whether any of the standing committees should be dropped.

To promote the importance of writing, the *Creative Writing Committee* should consider sponsoring essay or creative writing contests with undergraduates as participants. *The Placement Office* is asked to consider aiding in the recruitment of black graduate students and black faculty for programs and teaching appointments in predominantly white colleges and universities.

The Program Committee, along with the 1984 Host Committee, is asked to take the following suggestions into consideration: send convention notices to CLA members who are currently financial as well as to those who need to be reminded of lapses in membership; mail calls for papers to a wider number of English and foreign language departments throughout the country (but make clear at the same time that all program participants must hold membership in the organization); mail a tentative convention program to all CLA members shortly following the October meeting of the Executive Committee; especially reach out to young black scholars teaching at Northern and Midwestern colleges, encouraging them to present papers; provide these sessions: a workshop or other session on how to increase the awareness of the need for proficiency in foreign languages; a session on the use of the computer in the teaching of composition, literature, and languages; a session with a "known" name in composition, linguistics, and rhetoric as the major speaker; a critical reading workshop; a session at which undergraduate language and literature majors present papers; a session on the status and problems of modern languages, including English—with national specialists (government or other) as speakers; hearings or other discussions on

CLA goals, concerns, issues, problems; a session on the writing of grant proposals.

No tasks other than those stated or implied in their descriptions are being asked of the Nominations, Awards, and Time and Place Committees. I am asking, however, that three persons here who teach in the same geographical area as the committee chairperson and who have a burning interest in the work of a particular standing committee (with the exception of the Program Committee) volunteer for that committee.

I am setting up two ad hoc committees and asking them to meet at the same time as the standing committees. These came about as a result of the questionnaire responses. Eight persons is my suggested number, all from the same region, in order to encourage frequent dialogue. Each committee is being asked to assume as its initial assignment a year of work, with an interim report to be prepared prior to the Fall Executive Committee of the Association, which will be held in Baltimore on October 6 and 7, 1983, and the end-of-the-year report to be submitted by March 1, 1984, in time for review prior to our Forty-fourth Annual Convention in Nashville. The first—the *Committee on the CLA and Historically Black Colleges*, to be convened by Karen Moore of Dillard University—is asked to consider these suggestions and to make its own recommendations: that CLA continue to publicize and promote the importance of historically black colleges and universities, that CLA become the training ground for younger scholars who teach in these colleges and universities, that CLA promote more networking among the departments at these institutions, that CLA establish a network of support for these colleges and universities to ensure their continued success in serving black communities, that CLA let black parents know the need for their support of predominantly black colleges, and that a position statement be written to the presidents of these institutions to announce our stand on the teaching of modern languages and our continued support of black writers and black literature. The second—the *Committee on the CLA's Cooperation with Elementary and Secondary Schools*, to be convened by Thelma Thompson of the University of the District of Columbia—is asked to consider these suggestions and to make its own recom-

mendations: that CLA play a role with elementary and high schools in local areas to ensure that students become literate in communication at an early age and that CLA be a force in trying to raise standards in language preparation—English and foreign languages—from the elementary grades through the secondary level.

A third ad hoc committee—the *CLA Archives Committee*—was recommended by the Executive Committee over a year ago. Since that time our secretary, Lucy Grigsby, investigated and gained approval for the use of the Special Collections and Archives Division of Atlanta University's Robert W. Woodruff Library as our repository. We are now ready to begin the gathering of materials from past officers and other members. The present members of this committee are Robert A. Smith, CLA Treasurer, who will convene the meeting of the committee; A. Russell Brooks, who has volunteered to aid in the collection process; Past *Journal* Editor Therman B. O'Daniel, current *Journal* Editor Cason L. Hill, Past Presidents C. Hugo Curl, Thelma Curl, and Wilbert Roget, and Secretary Lucy Grigsby. Other members, especially those with materials to be collected, are invited to work with this committee.

I have spoken at such length because I firmly believe that we *must* become more visible. More visible means active—within and without the Association—and more active means more aggressive. Our Constitution says that we will meet annually in conferences, and we must, but as some of your questionnaire responses indicated or affirmed, we must also do much more than meet annually as a body. We have without a doubt accomplished much. But now that we have our feet in doors and in meetings where we did not have them in 1937 (the date of our founding), and *now* (to paraphrase W. E. B. Du Bois in the reverse) that our calling cards have been accepted or at least have been taken and the Veil partly lifted, we *must*, in the words of the persona of Milton's "Lycidas," "turn to some fresh Woods and Pastures new." With each other's support, these good works can be done.

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