

nization of individuals with common and insistent priorities.

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#### ***PMLA* and Politics**

To the Editor:

In one respect of some importance, the announcement of an open "Forum" for comments and criticism on anything published in *PMLA* came in the May 1970 *MLA Newsletter* at a very appropriate time, in my view. For in the May 1970 issue of *PMLA* itself there appeared two essays of a kind not usual for the Association's highly regarded scholarly journal: Henry Nash Smith's "Something Is Happening But You Don't Know What It Is, Do You, Mr. Jones?" and Rima Reck's "The Politics of Literature."

I do not feel that articles of this kind have a place in the Association's scholarly journal, a feeling on my part which has a basis almost expressed in the very title of Professor Reck's article. The political affairs of

the Association as an organized group of scholars are not the kind of subject matter traditional for the journal nor the kind indicated as suitable for it in its own statement of editorial policy: "distinguished contemporary scholarship and criticism in the modern languages and literatures." The entire world community of scholars looks to *PMLA* for just such scholarship and criticism as stipulated in the statement of editorial policy. Shall it begin to find there instead discussions of the Association's internal affairs?

I do not suggest that such discussions are unimportant and have no place. I suggest, rather, that the proper place is not *PMLA*. If the Association wishes to provide a forum for such matters, perhaps it should expand the *Newsletter* or else establish some other appropriate publication. I feel—and I hope that this letter is but one of many which you will receive with similar sentiments—that the *PMLA* should be reserved for "distinguished contemporary scholarship and criticism in the modern languages and literatures."

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