

## POETRY CONSULTANT REAPPOINTED

Acting Librarian of Congress John G. Lorenz has named Stanley Kunitz, Consultant in Poetry for 1974-75, to a second term. Mr. Kunitz' reappointment was announced on May 12 by John C. Broderick, Chief of the Manuscript Division, at the final program of the 1974-75 literary season, at which the Poetry Consultant delivered a lecture entitled "From Feathers to Iron." Mr. Kunitz is the 23rd Consultant since the post was created at the Library of Congress in 1936 through support from the Archer M. Huntington Fund.

Talking to Stanley Jaspoon Kunitz in the sun-



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drenched and antique-filled quarters of the Poetry Consultant on the Library's top floor—tucked away in a corner overlooking the U.S. Capitol—one would be tempted to think that this pinnacle was the poet's ivory tower indeed. But Mr. Kunitz is a man of this world and he thinks it is "more fitting in a democracy that we don't have a poet laureate." Unlike other more hierarchical societies, the United States offers a climate for a richness and diversity in the American poetry scene that is distinctive. "... genius is now dispersed," he said in an interview last year. "Today there may be 12 poets that add up to a Milton, but we have no Milton."

In a flow of easy conversation, Mr. Kunitz takes up many subjects touching on his concerns as the Library's Poetry Consultant—the state of the art in America today, the strong appeal of poetry for students at our universities, the problems of being a poet in Russia, a recording of black poets—all concerns of the real world seemingly far removed from those ethereal quarters. Projects planned and under way include trying to touch base with the poets who have not read at the Library and bring them here, collaborating with poet Michael Harper on a long-playing recording of readings by black poets (which he hopes will be ready by 1976), and, for the Bicentennial, a

possible exchange of six English and six American poets who would tour and read and then gather here in April or May 1976 for a reading. Mr. Kunitz is also very interested in "the sense of crisis in the poetry world" that has been prompted by the fear that publishers, under economic stress, will abandon poetry publishing first.

Mr. Kunitz, who has translated poems by Akhmatova, Voznesensky, Yevtushenko, and Mandelstam, is particularly interested in the state of poetry in Russia. Citing Mandelstam, he notes that poetry is more important to Russians "because poets die for it." The poet, who is always under surveillance and  
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### VIRGINIA DAIKER RECOGNIZED FOR WOMEN'S YEAR AWARD

Virginia Daiker, recently retired Specialist in American Architecture in the Prints and Photographs Division, has been chosen by the Library's Federal Women's Program Committee for recognition in the International Women's Year Calendar, a program calling attention to outstanding women in all areas of endeavor during each month of the calendar year. [See Miss Daiker's retirement story in the May 2 LC *Information Bulletin*, p. 178.]

In her more than 40 years of service to the Library of Congress, Miss Daiker was largely responsible for the growth of the Historical American Buildings Survey, a joint project of the Library, the U.S. National Park Service, and the American Institute of Architects. HABS has sought and preserved for public use in the Library the photographs, data sheets, and architectural plans for nationally significant buildings.

An indexing project she began a number of years ago has been invaluable to readers. It is a three-part index pertaining not only to materials in HABS, but to all still media in the architectural holdings of the Prints and Photographs Division. It is readily accessible by subject, by building title, or by illustration in published works.

Miss Daiker's pioneering work in the field of historical building pictorial documentation earned for her the respect of co-workers and the admiration of researchers who now have easy access to important historical research materials.

Her endeavors have not gone unnoticed. She has been acknowledged in more than 100 books and in 1973, former first lady Pat Nixon presented her with the National Trust for Historic Preservation's special

## KUNITZ REAPPOINTED POETRY CONSULTANT

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frequently suppressed in Russia, is "in return . . . really loved by the population . . . he is their best voice of freedom. In Russia, where the poet is not free, he is esteemed; in this country, where he is free, no one listens to him." In the United States, it is only the academic setting where poetry evokes such a strong response, and the "hope lies with the young, as always, who will take this feeling with them" from the university.

Regarding poetry and the role of the Library of Congress, Mr. Kunitz observes that there is a "beautiful sense of freedom about the Library of Congress, of serenity and dignity, that impresses the poets who come here" to read. He has been particularly interested in the visits of foreign poets, which have allowed them a chance to air their sometimes cloudy views of America and American poetry and allowed him to dispel some opinions about his role as "Poet Laureate."

The Library, he says, is a "good caretaker of the Whittall Fund," which has made possible the impressive list of major American poets who have read at the Library of Congress. Mr. Kunitz' own memories of Mrs. Whittall's role in poetry readings are somewhat more down to earth. He recalls Mrs. Whittall sitting with her earphone at his own first reading at the Library. After he had begun, a high, shrill voice, floating over his own, proclaimed, "That young man reads loud, thank God."

Mr. Kunitz' professional career and his publications are reviewed in a biographical sketch that appeared in the May 2 issue of the *LC Information Bulletin*, p. 175. His latest book, *A Kind of Order, A Kind of Folly: Essays & Conversations*, will be published next month.