



By a Staff Photographer

Russian Poet Speaks at Authors' Luncheon

Mrs. Albert C. Titcomb, head usher at the Luncheon at the Copley-Plaza, chats with Dr. Vladimir Nabokov, author, poet, and Shakespearean authority.

Failure of Cripps Mission Laid to Britain

Guests at the Fourth Authors' Luncheon sponsored yesterday at the Copley-Plaza Hotel by the Jordan Marsh Company, heard Krishnalal Shridharani, Indian poet and dramatist, place all blame on England for the failure of Sir Stafford Cripps' mission to India. He asserted that "No Indian in his right mind would have considered Sir Stafford Cripps' offer seriously," and warned against "unfair criticism of Indian leaders which will drive some of them into the enemy camp."

He spoke disparagingly of General Wavell and of Britain's policy in every particular. The weak point in the Cripps offer, he said, lay in the implication that the British did not trust the Indians even in the defense of India itself. "We must arm the Indian population," he declared, "otherwise we leave them at the mercy of a ruthless enemy." This was the point, he

said, upon which Pandit Nehru held out, in his insistence upon control of the army.

In Mr. Shridharani's opinion, the initiative for the next move must come from England, or, if not from there, then he feels the United States should step in. It is his belief that "upon India hangs the future of Asia."

"If the British and the Indians cannot come to their senses," he said, "then the American people cannot stand aside but must intervene, either through their President or through the Pacific War Council."

Dr. Vladimir Nabokov, Russian novelist and poet and Wellesley professor, another speaker, said: "Democracy is not really a political formula. Democracy is the subtle balance between the boundless urge of every individual toward individuality, and the strictly equal rights of all."

Dr. Nabokov declared that morally democracy is invincible, but that he believed it foolish to think we could break down the

totalitarians by confronting them with our faith and pride in our ideals. "They have faith and pride in their own ideas; and are not concerned with ours." In his view, a little real snow over Russia is worth far more in the battle for victory than a snowstorm of propaganda leaflets over Germany.

Dr. Nabokov and Mr. Shridharani were among six guest authors who spoke at yesterday's luncheon. With them at the head table were Robert Frost, the poet; Bruce Lancaster, author of "Guns of Burgoyne"; Priscilla Hovey Wright, humorist, who wrote "The Car Belongs to Mother" and "Weeds Are More Fun," and Paul W. Dempsey, author of "Grow Your Own Vegetables." The speakers were introduced by Norman W. MacDonald, assistant director of the Massachusetts Department of Public Safety, who acted as toastmaster. Mrs. Alexander Steinert, President of the Women's City Club, opened the meeting. Mrs. Leverett Saltonstall, wife of the Governor, was an honor guest.