

# Sculpture and painting enrich art collection

A sculpture by Jamaica's Edna Manley, of two seated women in conversation draws the eye of visitors to the stately ground floor rooms of London's Marlborough House, home of the Commonwealth Secretariat. This sculpture and a painting by Canadian Dorothy Knowles of the coming of spring to the prairie landscape, are the newest additions to a collection of Commonwealth art being built up at the Secretariat.

Gifts from the respective governments, they join four other examples of the artist's and craftsman's vision from the Commonwealth: a Kashmir carpet from India, a portrait of the Queen by Australian painter Paul Fitzgerald, a floor-standing ceremonial brass lamp from Sri Lanka and a traditional kente cloth from Ghana.

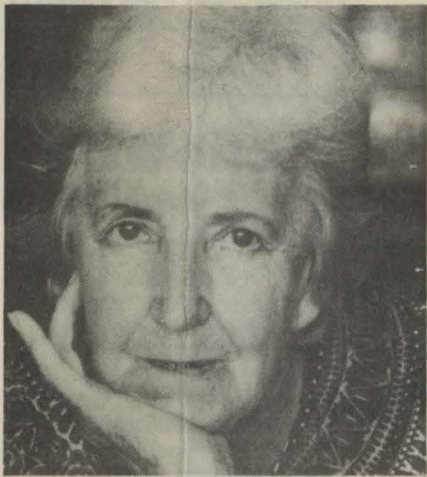
On the inspiration for the sculpture which she has called *The Message*,

Edna Manley has written: "I was sitting in the market and my eyes were brought into focus on two women crouched beside each other on the ground, talking secretly, quietly, totally absorbed, absolutely unaware of the bustle and noise around them. They were so still, so out of time, out of place, sharing some experience. The bigger, older woman, of about 60, was telling some ageless, endless truth to the younger.

It was something that translated the temporal, physical world into a timeless, spiritual truth."

The doyene of Jamaican artists, and mother of Jamaica's Prime Minister, Edna Manley was born in 1900 in England of English and Jamaican parents. She studied art in London (St Martin's School and with the sculptor Maurice Harding) and went to Jamaica in 1922, after marrying

Bottom left: Spring break up viewed by  
H. E. The Hon. Paul Martin, Canadian High  
Commissioner in London and Shridath  
Ramphal, Commonwealth Secretary-General  
Right: 'The Message Below: Edna Manley



Norman Manley who was to become  
the first Premier of self-governing  
Jamaica.

Mrs Manley has been exhibiting her  
work, sculptures and drawings,  
since 1924, mainly in Jamaica,  
Britain and the United States. *The  
Message* is her most monumental  
work in recent years. Made of  
cement fondue, the sculpture weighs  
three quarters of a ton. Edna  
Manley has been a key figure in  
Jamaica's cultural life. She helped  
to establish the Jamaica School of Art,  
and to launch literary and public  
affairs journals.