

SOME OUTSTANDING WOMEN I MET IN TRINIDAD

By Janet Jagan

The highlight of my recent visit to Trinidad to witness the inaugural ceremonies of the West Indies Federation was the opportunity of meeting some exceptional women.

One of the most outstanding of these was Mrs. Eslanda Robeson wife of the famous singer Paul Robeson. I had the opportunity of hearing Mrs. Robeson lecture at Port of Spain Free Library and was deeply impressed by this very

exceptional woman, as indeed, was the rest of the very large audience.

Her understanding of human beings and her sympathy with the cause of all those who suffer, place her as a person of great humanity and perception. Physically and mentally Mrs. Robeson is capable of amazing activity. She claims that her speed in walking comes from having to keep up with her husband, who has a long stride.

I was very impressed in meeting

Mrs. Norman Manley wife of the Chief Minister of Jamaica. Edna Manley is not only the wife of a leading West Indian statesman and a woman of great charm. She is a great artist.

I had the opportunity of seeing her artistic achievements at an art exhibition in Port of Spain and found her sculpturing magnificent. A bold and beautiful head of a horse, towering above all the other exhibits, dominated the art show.

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OUTSTANDING WOMEN

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Mrs. Joshua of St. Vincent is also the wife of a very important West Indian political figure, the Hon. E. T. Joshua, leader of the People's Political Party of St. Vincent - sister Party of the P. P. P. of British Guiana.

Like myself, she also takes a leading part in the political life in her country, and is a legislative member as well as an activist in the Party. Mrs. Joshua has her feet firmly planted on the ground and knows well the problems of her people, their way of life, their agonies and sorrows. It is her mission to help change the pattern of colonialism.

EFFICIENT MINISTER

I was frankly surprised at meeting Mrs. Alfrey, the

first woman cabinet Minister in the West Indies Federation. She was not at all what I had expected.

Mrs. Alfrey is a tiny, soft-spoken lady, gently-mannered, but determined. After speaking with her, I have the impression that she will handle her Ministry of Social Affairs efficiently and in the interest of the people. Mrs. Alfrey is the elected member for Dominica and President of the Dominica Labour Party. She is a relative new-comer in West Indian politics, having spent much of her life in England and in the production of several novels.

Meeting these four outstanding women made me more conscious of the need for more of our Guianese women to come into public life.

M. KHAN