

**Mrs. Sarojini Naidu** (Bihar: General): Mr. Chairman, the manner of your calling me is not constitutional. (*Laughter*).

**The Chairman** (Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha): Order, order. No reflection on the Chair please (*continued laughter*).

**Mrs. Sarojini Naidu:** It reminds me of some lines of the Kashmiri poet who said:-

*"Bulbul ko gul mubarak, gul ko chaman mubarak,*

*Rangeen tabiaton ko range sukhan mubarak"*

and today we are steeped in the rainbow coloured tints of speeches in praise of my great leader and comrade Rajendra Prasad. (*Cheers*) I do not know how even poetic fancy can add yet another tint to the rainbow. So I will be modest, emulating the example of Rajendra Babu himself and confine myself, as a woman should, to purely domestic issues. (*Laughter*). We have all been taken in the chariot of oratory by our great philosopher Sir Radhakrishnan who seems to have evaporated from the scene. (*Laughter*).

**Sir S. Radhakrishnan:** No, no. I am here; (*Renewed laughter*).

**Mrs. Sarojini Naidu:** He has poured very eloquent wisdom on us. And also all the other speakers representing different provinces, sects, religions, communities and the gentleman who is asking all of us to quit India after the British, tracing his claim to the original people of this land, have all spoken in their turn, and one thing they have all been unanimous is the question of Rajendra Prasad himself. Some time ago I was asked to compress an epic into an epigram about Rajendra Prasad. I was asked to say a line about Rajendra Prasad, and I said that I could only do so if I had a pen of gold dipped in a pot of honey because all the ink in the world would not suffice to explain his qualities or adequately to pay tribute to his qualities. Very rightly one speaker reminded us, though I agree with one part of it, that both the temporary Chairman and the permanent Chairman were born in Bihar and that both have assimilated some of the qualities of the Great Buddha who was born in Bihar. I say that I agree on one point, not on the other. The point which I wish to agree with is that Rajendra Prasad has certainly descended spiritually from the great Buddha, the embodiment of compassion, understanding, sacrifice and love. For many years, I have been privileged to be associated with him. He is my leader, he is my comrade, he is my brother, but much younger brother. That I knew on his birthday, I found that he is over five whole years younger than I am-and therefore, I am in a position to give him my blessings as well as my tribute of praise. In this House where every one has said with conviction that he would be the guardian and the father of the House. I conceive him not as one with the flaming sword but an angel with the lily which wins victories over the hearts of men, because in him there is essential sweetness, that is part of his strength, there is essential wisdom, that is part of his experience, there is essential clarity

of vision, creative imagination and creative faith that brings him very near the feet of Lord Buddha himself. I see gaps in this House and my heart is sore because of the absence of those Muslim brothers to whose coming I am looking forward under the leadership of my old friend Mr. Muhammad Ali Jinnah. I think if any persuasion were necessary, if any fine wand of magic were necessary to bring them in, it would be the essential sweetness, the essential wisdom, the essential creative faith of Dr. Rajendra Prasad. I am hoping and I believe I am right in hoping that my friend Dr. Ambedkar who is so bitter today will soon be one of the most emphatic supporters of this Constituent Assembly in all its purposes and that through him his adherents of many millions will realise that their interests are as safe as the interests of more privileged people. I hope those that call themselves the original masters of this land, the tribal people will realise that there is no distinction of caste, creed, ancient or modern, status in this Constituent Assembly. I hope the smallest minority in this country will, whether represented politically, or I do not know by what other means they may be represented,--I hope they will realise that they have a jealous, vigilant and loving guardian of their interests who will not permit the more privileged to encroach by, a hair's breadth on their birth-right of equity and equal opportunity in this country. I hope also that the Princes of India, many of whom I count among my personal friends, who are so hurried, so anxious, so uncertain or so afraid today, will realise that the constitution for India is a constitution for the freedom and emancipation of every human being in India, whether Prince or peasant. I want that realisation to be carried home, and in no better manner, in no more convincing manner can it be carried than through the guidance and guardianship of Dr. Rajendra Prasad. I have been asked to speak-for how long? But I believe that I must disprove the age old proverb that woman has not only the last but the longest word. I have the last word not because I am a woman but because I am acting today as the hostess of the Indian National Congress which has so gladly invited those who are outside its fold to come and participate with us in framing the constitution, that is to be the, immortal charter of India's freedom.

Friends. I, do not praise or command Rajendra Prasad. I affirm that he is the symbol of India's destiny to-day. He will help us in framing that charter that restores to our Mother-our Mother still in fetters,-her rightful place as torchbearer of liberty, love, and peace

Standing in the immemorial house with its roof of snow and walls of sea, once again in the history of humanity she will rekindle her lamp of wisdom and inspiration to illuminate the world on its onward march to freedom. So. will she be justified of her children and the children be justified of her.