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Parliament pays rich tributes to Rajaji

NEW DELHI, Feb. 19.

Parliament today paid rich tributes to Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, former Governor General and a member of provisional Parliament.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in her moving obituary reference in the Lok Sabha described him as a 'guardian of human culture'. In his death, she said, the country had lost 'not a person, but a force'.

References were also made on the death of former members Shaikatullah Shah Ansari, Bakar Ali Mirza, Krishna Kumar Chatterji, G.D. Somani, Major General Himatsinhji, Mahadevappa Rampure, and Jiyalal Mandal.

Leaders of various political parties joined the Prime Minister in paying eloquent tributes to Rajaji and others.

The House observed a two minutes' silence before adjourning for the day.

Speaker G. S. Dhillon said that in Rajaji's personality there was a unique combination of a politician, philosopher, journalist and a man of letters. He became an institution by himself by virtue of his sacrifice, simplicity and missionary zeal. He was regarded as an 'outstanding statesman not only in our country, but the world over'. In recognition of his great services, he was awarded the highest honour of 'Bharat Ratna' in 1954.

Powerful intellectual

Mrs. Gandhi said that during the inter-session period of Parliament, death had taken a heavy toll of for-

mer colleagues.

She said Rajaji was the last Governor General and the first and only Indian to hold that office marking the triumph of struggle for independence.

Mrs. Gandhi said that Rajaji had an extraordinary sharp and powerful intellect which was dedicated to the cause of mankind. He served the Congress for nearly 40 years and then founded the Swatantra Party. But no party could really contain him.

Mrs. Gandhi said Rajaji was an eloquent 'exponent of Indian culture' and indeed the 'guardian of human culture'. Many remembered him as one of the greatest parliamentarians the country had produced.

He was a great intellectual with outstanding polemical power. His profound understanding of administrative and political problems would remain a model for others 'We have lost not a person but a force'.

Mrs. Gandhi while offering condolences to bereaved family members said that the loss was not their's alone but of the entire nation.

Tributes to others

Mrs. Gandhi said Dr. Shaikatullah Shah Ansari embodied the values of secular culture. She praised his work as a representative in the International Control Commission on Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia.

She said that Mr. Bakar Ali Mirza served Andhra Pradesh in many activities and was a conscientious parliamentarian. Mr. K. K. Chatterji spent his adult life in the thick of politics. As a youth leader he was closely associated with Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

Referring to Mr. G. D. Somani, Mrs. Gandhi said he took active interest in many institutions of trade.

Describing Maj. Gen. Himatsinhji as a 'large hearted man' deeply concerned with the welfare of the people, she said he commanded high respect as the Deputy Minister for Defence Services.

She said Mr. M. Rampure was the founder of a number of educational and social institutions in Gulbarga. Mr. Jiyalal Mandal devoted greater part of his life in the political and social activities.

Leaders of all opposition parties also joined the Speaker and the Prime Minister in paying tributes to the departed men.—UNI.