

## LOK SABHA DEBATES

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### LOK SABHA

Tuesday, March 7, 1961/Phalgun 16,  
1882 (Saka).

The Lok Sabha met at eleven of the  
Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

11-00 hrs.

#### OBITUARY REFERENCE

Mr. Speaker: The hon'ble the  
Leader of the House.

The Minister of Finance (Shri  
Morarji Desai): Sir, it has fallen to  
my lot to convey the sad news of the  
demise of Pantji this morning at 8:50  
and to make a reference and pay a  
tribute to the great work that he did  
during his long fruitful life of service  
to the country.

During the past few days, Sir, when  
he was lying ill everybody was sad,  
because from the very beginning that  
he got the stroke, it appeared and  
came as a very painful knowledge to  
many that he would not survive this  
attack; and yet his constitution was  
so strong, though his body was frail  
on account of infirmities, that he re-  
mained in coma for fourteen days.  
His services to the country will never  
be forgotten and they will be equalled  
by few.

He had been in public life for about  
forty-five years, as far as I know, and  
as early as 1916 I find he was a mem-  
ber of the AICC, as it was even then  
called. He braved the lathi charge  
at the time of the Simon Commission  
and suffered a permanent injury to  
his body, but his spirit got streng-  
thened even by that lathi charge.

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He came into the legislative field  
in 1923 by going to the Legislative  
Council of then United Provinces and  
became the Leader of the Opposition,  
the Leader of the Swaraj Party. From  
1934 at the end of which he was elect-  
ed to the Central Legislative Assembly  
and became the Deputy Leader of the  
Opposition at the time. And his work  
in those days too was so well known  
that on the Treasury Benches people  
were always nervous when he rose  
to speak. When he marshalled facts  
and presented them there was hardly  
anybody who could equal him in that  
skill.

He went from the Central Legisla-  
tive Assembly to the United Provin-  
ces again to be the Chief Minister in  
1937 which office he adorned until  
1939 and again from 1946 to 1954. He  
managed the affairs of the State with  
the greatest skill and wisdom and then  
he joined the Central Government at  
the request of the Prime Minister in  
January 1955. And from that time  
onwards he was a tower of strength  
to the party and the Government here  
by his wise counsel, his debating skill  
and the great amount of thought that  
he gave to every problem that he  
dealt with. I was always wondering  
how he could remember every point  
without making any notes. People  
who might make written speeches  
might forget something, but he never  
forgot a single point and dealt with  
everything in proper sequence.

He will be missed always in this  
House, in the Government and in the  
Congress where he was a tower of  
strength. The country has lost one  
of the greatest patriots produced by  
it, who gave his whole life to the  
struggle for freedom and after free-  
dom had been obtained, to the work  
of consolidation and bringing pros-  
perity to the country. I never saw

[Shri Morarji Desai]

him ruffled even once. I was connected with him from 1937 from which time I had the privilege of getting his affection and I can never forget the wise counsel that he always gave me always others. I shall always miss him; we shall all miss him, I have no doubt. We can only remember what he has done for all of us and for the country. He lives a rich life and has left us traditions in the matter of wisdom which if we follow, I have no doubt that we will all enrich ourselves.

May I, Sir, request you to put on record the valuable services that he performed in this House and in the other House to the Government and to the country?

**Shri S. A. Dange** (Bombay City—Central): Sir, in paying tribute to the memory of Pantji we pay tribute to one of the stalwarts of the old independence movement led by the Congress and the people in this country against British rule. And throughout his life he carried the sign of the struggle not only in the memory of the people, but on his own personal body. He embodied, in fact, the spirit of independence.

After independence, and in particular latterly, he had to discharge heavy duties. Everybody knows, Sir, that it is very difficult to be popular when you wield the Home Ministry particularly. But then he had that peculiar quality that even when he did an unpleasant job, he did not leave bitterness behind. He had the peculiar quality, as I saw him in many surroundings, to bind people together, to synthesize and not to dissipate, even where differences existed. Even when we differed, whenever we differed and parted, we did so not as permanent opponents, and without bitterness. That was the greatest quality which endeared him to all circles. He did not mind even keeping contacts with smaller subjects. I am personally aware of one instance. When I wrote my prison experiences early in 1928 after my prison sentence in the United

Provinces, and the then Government attacked my exposure of prison conditions, he it was who defended me in the Legislative Council at that period. And thus I had not only in the A.I.C.C. but in other ways some personal contact with him and knew him very well. The nation will remember his services not only during the period of struggle for Independence but also during the later period when it was his ambition to develop the country and strengthen its Independence, and a tribute to his memory will ever be given.

**Shri Asoka Mehta** (Mazaffarpur): It is not easy to express in words the sense of loss and grief that we feel. I am reminded of the words that Gandhiji used at the time of the demise of Pandit Motilal Nehru. He said, "The rock of ages has cleft for me". In that way, as our own Prime Minister pointed out the other day, Pandit Pant was the great anchor. In this storm-tossed sea, when our journey is so full of difficulties and dangers, here was someone to whom all of us instinctively turned. We turned to him for security, for guidance. Even those of us who belong to another party would always go to him: his commanding and yet affectionate personality was there before us. I know, as many of my colleagues know, that we used to go to him with our doubts and difficulties, and sometimes with our woes, and we were always assured not only of warm welcome, of wise counsel; somehow or other, we came back after meeting him, with a feeling as if we had left our worries to him. He was willing to carry the Cross for all of us and it is very rare that one can have a person of that kind, massive in body, massive in mind and massive in spirit.

On a number of occasions I had the privilege to see him, I saw in his eyes and in his heart the great agony that he left about many things that are going wrong in the country, many things for which perhaps many of us are responsible. But I also saw that

there was always in him an unshakable faith in the future of our country and in the wisdom of our people. It is that faith and it is that anguish that I hope we shall try to remember.

He was one of the great torch-bearers of the freedom-fighters and one of those who have been privileged to consolidate that freedom. He has been removed, but I hope the torch which has been made brighter by his great personality, by his remarkable services, will be kept aloft by those who will always remember him and cherish him in their thoughts.

**Shri Ranga (Tenali):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with what has been said so far by the Leader of the House and by my hon. friends. On the death of Shri G. B. Pant, many people like me—and I see so many here—feel a terrible loss. We have been together for the last 33 years as colleagues, as comrades, as friends, as almost members of the same family. It was a privilege to be embraced by him. He was a great man, a good man and a wise counsellor. It could be seen from the debates that he did recognise political differences but he never recognised personal differences. He had a tremendous capacity for love, to love everybody. More than anything else, he set an example as a great follower of our great leaders, Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel, and Bhulabhai Desai. You, Sir, were also associated with me and several others in this House—Dr. Govind Das is also here—in those days, and we all worked under his leadership. He and we all worked under the leadership of Bhulabhai Desai. He led us nobly and he helped Bhulabhai Desai to keep the British Government at bay in this House, outside and in the country. On many occasions I received advice from him both when I was with him in the Congress and also outside, and every time he looked at things as I would have expected my own elder brother or father to look at things and gave me just the advice that was needed in the situation in which I found myself, and I am sure that that must be the experience of

quite a large number of our friends who had been associated with him.

He served everybody, more so Uttar Pradesh, and also this Parliament and through our Parliament our country. Ever since he fell ill last time, I began to lose hope, and this time I nearly lost hope and yet I also associated myself with countless millions of people in the country in praying that somehow he should be spared for some time longer. God had kept him for these ten days so that we could think of him and be ready, and even now I do not think that the country is ready to receive the terrible news of this great loss.

**Shri Siva Raj (Chingleput—Reservé—Sch. Castes):** I wish to associate myself both on my own behalf and on behalf of the Parliamentary group of the Republican Party with the sentiments expressed by the Leader of the House and by other speakers. The first time I came into contact with Shri G. B. Pant was in the year 1945 at a conference which was popularly known as the Wavell Conference at Simla. In the few days we sat together, I gathered the impression which I had no reason to change since—on the other hand that impression has been strengthened—that Shri G. B. Pant was a man of great ability, endowed with clarity of thought and lucidity of expression. Even at the Wavell Conference, he chirped in on many important occasions to make useful suggestions to other equally intellectual giants like Rajaji and others at the conference, and very curiously,—I do not know for what reason—I seemed to have attracted his notice. While dispersing on one of the days in the conference, he came to me and asked very many personal questions of me. Further, he said: "If you, Mr. Sivaraaj, want at any time any help from me, you can come to me." At that time, he was the Chief Minister of the then United Provinces which is now called Uttar Pradesh.

Without wasting the time of this House or reiterating the very sentiments about the way he has worked,

[Shri Siva Raj]

sentiments which have been expressed by the speakers, I only wish to add one thing which I had noticed recently and of which I had the opportunity to know, namely, the approach that he made to the solution of the many problems that were brought before him both by individuals as also by certain institutions. He also gave expression once in this House and elsewhere that a sort of human approach and a kind approach above everything else should be made to solve many problems and also to the redress of grievances. That has impressed us very much, and the so-called backward classes, the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes who were lucky to be in his charge during the period of his administration had had the benefit of that approach in the solution of their problems. I am glad that in that respect, he had set a very great and noble example for his successors to follow in the solution of these problems.

With these words, I request you, on behalf of our party, to convey our sincere condolences to the bereaved family. r

**Shri Frank Anthony** (Nominated—Anglo-Indians): Mr. Speaker, Sir, as my friend, Shri Asoka Mehta has said, on an occasion like this we seem to search a little inadequately for appropriate words. I have had the opportunity and the privilege of working closely on many occasions with Pantji for about 20 years. We had our differences, but in that not negligible period, inevitably perhaps; I came to regard him not only with the highest esteem, but with deep affection.

One finds it impossible to describe and pay a tribute even inadequately to his many and multi-faceted gifts, but I would like to refer to two outstanding examples of his work, with which I was closely associated. The House will remember the vitally important States Reorganisation Bill. The more I saw him work the more

amazed was I. Some of us were conversant with some of the provisions, but not one of us except Pantji was conversant with every provision. I think he was flanked by four Secretaries in our deliberations lasting about a fortnight. I do not think he referred to them once. He was seized not only of every provision, whether it was legal, administrative, financial or constitutional, but he was seized of the nuance and meaning of every word.

Again, he presided over the parliamentary committee on official language. Never in my fairly long public life have I been in a committee which was bedevilled by such fierce conflicts. I say this that perhaps none but Pantji, with his skill, his patience and his unruffled nature could have brought its deliberations to any conclusion. It is not for us to attempt to assign a place to Pantji. I have no doubt history will do that. I also feel that it will assign to Shri Govind Ballabh Pant a place in Indian history perhaps greater than what we have assigned to him today. May God rest his soul in peace.

**Acharya Kripalani** (Sitamarhi): I associate myself with all that has been said here about our beloved leader. I have been associated with him personally ever since the national movement started under Gandhiji. There are innumerable occasions which come to my mind. It is, therefore, not only a national loss, but a personal loss to me and at such time, words are not adequate to do justice to the great qualities of head and heart that he had.

In him we have lost a great patriot, a great guide and a great parliamentarian, a man who was never ruffled and who always had a sweet word for everybody. Therefore, our loss is very great and I pay my humble tribute of reverence to his memory.

**Shri Mahanty** (Dhenkana): I wish to associate myself and the party which I represent in this House with all that has been said from both sides of this House. In the face of death,

petty barriers of parties and partisanship disappear. Therefore, I pay my tribute to his memory as a man and a citizen.

Pandit Pant was a great patriot and a distinguished administrator. The urbanity, charm, courtesy and dignity that he brought to bear upon the heated debates in this House were indeed a tribute to his high forensic ability. This is an occasion when small forgotten incidents in the cupboard of our memory are apt to assume most poignant dimensions. I remember one such incident. That was years ago when I was harrassed by a State Government other than my own. I was at my wits' end what to do. I approached him and knowing fully well that he was undergoing the risk of interfering with the normal flow of law, he spared no pains to see that political differences were settled not in a legal plane, but on a political plane. Indeed he was a man great by every standard. We pay our tributes to the man who was great by every standard. It will not be an exaggeration to say that light has gone out of our public life and to that extent light has gone out of this Parliament.

**Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri (Berhampore):** In associating myself and my group with the sentiments and grief expressed in this House by all sections, irrespective of party and political affiliation, I only want to put on record one thing about him, which is not so very well-known. Those of us who were in the past partisans of the underground revolutionary movement had the opportunity of knowing the largeness of his heart which was combined with warmth of affection and largeness of his vision.

He never agreed with us; he often chided us for our activities, but we were never denied any help in respect of our cause. Of course, as a follower of the Father of the Nation and a follower of the philosophy of non-violence, he never agreed to our ways. Even then, we were assured

that here was someone to whom we could go in our difficulties. Sir, his place is assured in history and if he were here today he would not have liked us to say that the void created by his death would never be filled up. But, even then, those of us and those of his co-workers and colleagues who had contacts with him would never be able to forget the loss they have suffered by his removal by the inevitable hand of death.

**श्री बजर्राज सिंह ( फिरोजाबाद ) :**  
 प्रव्यक्ष महोदय, आज हम इस सदन में घने अन्धकार की छाया में एकत्र हुए हैं। मुझ जैसे लोगों को, जिन्होंने इस दुनिया में जन्म उस वक़्त पाया जिस वक़्त पंत जी राष्ट्रीय आन्दोलन के एक खम्भ के रूप में थे, यह जान कर विशेष दिक्ता होती है कि राष्ट्रीय आन्दोलन के खम्भ एक के बाद एक उठने चले जा रहे हैं। पंत जी एक बड़े संगठनकर्ता, संसदीय विशेषज्ञ और प्रशासक थे। एक ऐसे महान् पुरुष थे, जिनको कभी कोई व्यक्ति, जिससे उनका सम्पर्क हुआ हो, भूल नहीं सकता। मुझे आश्चर्य होता था उनकी स्मरणशक्ति को देख कर कि इतने महान् पुरुष हर सम्पर्क को कैसे याद रख सकते हैं, और यह बात न केवल मैं कह रहा हूँ, बल्कि उत्तर प्रदेश के वे सभी लोग जानते हैं जिन पर उन्होंने दसियों वर्षों तक मुख्य मंत्री के रूप में काम किया। पंत जी को उत्तर प्रदेश के हर घर में जाना जाता था। मैं समझता हूँ कि महात्मा गांधी और हमारे प्रधान मंत्री के बाद दूसरे ऐसे व्यक्ति शायद पंत जी ही थे जिन्हें कम से कम उत्तर प्रदेश के हर घर के लोग जानते थे। मैं तो समझता हूँ कि शायद सारे भारत में ही यह बात रही हो।

जिस वक़्त उन्हें पहला बच्चा लगा आज से १५ दिन पहले, तभी देश में इस तरह की आसंकार्ये प्रकट की जायेंगी कि सम्भवतः वे अपनी इस भयानक बीमारी से छुटकारा न पा सकें, और तभी मैं

[श्री बजराम सिंह]

मुल्क में चिन्तायें थीं इस बारे में कि कहीं हमें ऐसे महान् व्यक्ति से हाथ न धोएँ पड़ें। आज हमें वही खबर सुनने को मिली कि पंत जी दुनिया में नहीं रहे। मैं यही कह सकता हूँ कि पंत जी के उठ जाने से देश के राष्ट्रीय जीवन में जो क्षति हुई है वह सम्भवतः भरी नहीं जा सकेगी। दुःख है कि राष्ट्रीय आन्दोलन के सम्भवतः एक के बाद एक उठते चले जा रहे हैं तो उन के स्थान को भरने के लिये उमी स्तर के लोग उठ नहीं रहे हैं। एक दिन तो सभी को जाना होता है। लेकिन देश की उन्नति के लिये उत्थान के लिये यह आवश्यक होता है कि जो आत्मायें हमारे बीच में से उठें उनका स्थान भरने के लिये हमारे लोग भी तैयार रहें। वास्तव में मुझे दुःख है कि अपने राष्ट्रीय आन्दोलन की उस परम्परा को आज के विकास के युग में हम पूरा नहीं कर पा रहे हैं। मैं अपनी और अपनी पार्टी की ओर से दिवंगत आत्मा के लिये अपनी तुच्छ श्रद्धा-जलि अर्पित करता हूँ और ईश्वर से प्रार्थना करता हूँ आप के द्वारा कि वह दिवंगत आत्मा को स्वर्ग में शान्ति प्रदान करें।

श्री बाबूरेयी (बलरामपुर) : अध्यक्ष महोदय हिमालय के समान दृढ़ और समुद्र के समान गम्भीर पंडित गोविन्द बल्लभ पंत भारत की उन महान् विभूतियों में से थे, प्रागे प्रागे वाली सभ्यता जिनके जीवन से सदैव प्रेरणा प्राप्त करती रहेगी। संघर्ष में या शान्ति में उन्होंने सदैव राष्ट्र का सफल नेतृत्व किया। पहले प्रदेश में और पश्चात् सम्पूर्ण देश में अपनी प्रसाधारण प्रतिभा से अपने प्रकांड पांडित्य से और प्रशासन कुशलता से उन्होंने हमारे सामने एक आदर्श उपस्थित किया और शरीर का कण-कण तथा जीवन का

क्षण-क्षण राष्ट्र की सेवा के लिये ही समर्पित कर दिया। उनका जीवन हमारे लिये मार्ग दर्शन का काम करेगा। स्वतंत्रता की प्राप्ति और स्वतंत्रता को अमरत्व प्रदान करने में उनका महान् योगदान इतिहास में स्मरणीय रहेगा। उनके चरणों में विनम्र श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करते हुए परमेश्वर से मैं यही प्रार्थना करता हूँ कि उनके अग्र्ये कार्य को पूरा करने के लिये हमें शक्ति प्रदान करें।

Mr. Speaker: I fully associate myself with all the sentiments that have been expressed on the life and services of Shri Gobind Ballabh Pantji. In him we have lost one of the main architects of India's freedom. My association with Pantji started as early as 1935 when, for the first time the Congress resolved to contest seats in the Central Legislature and both of us were returned Members of the then Legislative Assembly. He became the Deputy Leader of the party and the Government of the day always paid the greatest regard for his words. He proved very easily to be one of the greatest parliamentarians. Without offence, rancour or bitterness and with an easy-flowing style he would meet all the arguments of his opponents. He was invincible in his argument and even his opponents developed great regard and respect for him. After coming here to our Parliament he became an asset to us and on all crucial matters Parliament looked up to him for an answer. In spite of his poor health he never hesitated to undergo any amount of sacrifice and service for the country's freedom. As the Home Minister sometimes he had very unpleasant duties to do but he was strong and, at the same time, good. We deeply mourn his loss. I am sure the House will agree with me that we may send our condolences to the members of the bereaved family. May

I now request hon. Members to stand in silence for a minute?

*The Members then stood in silence for a minute.*

**Mr. Speaker:** As a mark of respect, the House will now stand adjourned

for the rest of the day and will meet again tomorrow at 11 A.M.

**11-39 hrs.**

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, March 8, 1961|Phalguna 17, 1882 (Saka).*

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