

Medicare

during which the stage was set for the greatest era of expansion and development that we in Canada will ever know. He brought Saskatchewan and the prairies to the national scene. Canada will never be the same again.

Mr. Winch: I'll say.

Mr. Nasserden: Politics in Canada will never be the same again. This fact has escaped the Prime Minister who neither understands nor appreciates the changing complexion of our national life. The measure now before us is another monument to his failure to comprehend the elements of national unity and purpose. The Prime Minister's preoccupation for over three years with the theory of a state within a state has set back for more than a score of years the work of national unity in our country.

That is why the Prime Minister is presenting this measure to parliament without agreement among the provinces. That is why confusion and consternation rule the Liberal party today. That is why this crippled government seeks to hold on just a little bit longer, hoping something will happen to destroy the effectiveness of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in the House of Commons.

But I say to the hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Cashin) that John Diefenbaker has not departed this party yet, nor this parliament. I say this too—that when that time comes—

● (7:30 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member's comments are very interesting, but I have some serious doubt whether they are relevant to the bill which we have before us at the moment. I am not sure whether the hon. member himself is certain that the speech he is making now has any reference whatsoever to the bill which is being studied by this house.

Mr. Nasserden: On the contrary, Mr. Speaker; I am very confident that the point I am trying to make is very pertinent to the bill before us. Were it not for the fact that the Prime Minister of this country has failed to reach an agreement with the provinces, we would not be in the position of having a bill of this nature before us now. I am trying to establish one of the factors which has entered into this mealy measure, which is not of the magnitude we would expect from a government which in successive years promised it would give Canada a national health plan. Now the government comes up, because of

[Mr. Nasserden.]

the failure of its leader, the Prime Minister, with this measure which does only part of the job which has to be done.

Before I was interrupted I was dealing with the impact that the Leader of the Opposition has had on this parliament and this nation. I say that, long after he has gone, Canadians will continue to reap the benefits of the legislation which has been passed by him and the ministers he has gathered around him through the years. I think of Saskatchewan, and when I think of Saskatchewan I have in mind the irrigation project that was placed there. I think of the name that was given to it only a few days ago.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have to interrupt the hon. member again to remind him that he should at least at one point in his speech refer to the bill which is under consideration at the moment.

Mr. Nasserden: Mr. Speaker, I know it may be difficult for you to realize the point I am trying to make, but as I look at the clauses in this bill before us I cannot help but feel that it is important to impress upon this house the failure of the Prime Minister to secure the acceptance by the provinces of the important facets of a national health plan.

I was referring to one of the things that was done some years ago in respect of the development of this nation, the South Saskatchewan River dam as it was then called. It was called another name by the government the other day. I am one who does not take exception to the name. When the people of Saskatchewan hear that name they will be reminded of the battles that were waged in this House of Commons by a former Liberal minister of agriculture. His name on that project in our province is a monument, utterly unforgettable, a symbol of the futility of sending Liberal members and Liberal ministers to Ottawa.

The members from Saskatchewan are not unmindful of the role that the family doctor played in the development of our communities. We know he shared in that pioneering that built our province. The Medical Society of Saskatchewan has earned an enviable record. Individual members of that profession in our province have made that achievement possible. We make no apology to the renegade from Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Douglas) for our concern and for our defence of the doctor-patient relationship which has been a