

have great trouble with the Indian tribes, and you will remember that this was seven or eight years before the United States had a sort of Isandula of their own, when Custer and his force were annihilated by hostile Indians within a short distance of our newly-acquired territory. It was, in fact, making that worst of all mistakes in business or in politics, taking the second step before one had taken the first, and I am rather of the opinion that had not Sir John been very much weakened by the effects of a severe illness which overtook him about that time, he would never have consented to the union on the terms finally agreed upon.

REPORTER. What were these?

SIR RICHARD. The first, and in a material point of view by far the worst and most improvident, was the obligation to build and operate a railroad across the continent over a tract of country three thousand miles in length, not a mile of which had been surveyed and of the greater part of which we knew absolutely nothing. Scarcely less objectionable, politically speaking, was the proviso which assigned British Columbia six members in the House of Commons and declared that that number should never be reduced. This was in direct defiance of the spirit, if not the actual letter, of our constitution, and was done for a very dishonest purpose.

REPORTER. For what purpose?

SIR RICHARD. Sir John was quite aware that he was likely to lose heavily in Ontario at the next general election, and he made no secret of the fact that he expected to offset his losses there by the votes he would gain in British Columbia. Then he calculated that it would be a good election cry to say that he had extended our Dominion from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and furthermore that he would direct attention from the events which had occurred in the Red River valley. But his action in assigning to British Columbia a representation of six members in a white population of 10,586 and a total, Indians included, of 36,247, was the most outrageous violation of the principle of representation by population it is possible