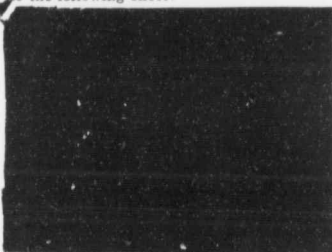


The statement that there are 24,000 acres is about as correct as every other statement that gentleman has made in regard to this transaction, because 15,000 acres only and not 24,000 were sold. This is from the man who negotiated the treaty under the instruction of his minister responsible for the affairs of the Indian Department. I claim that nothing more is needed to show that the government was responsible for this outrageous surrender, knew that the Indians would sell their lands to the few speculators then on the ground ready to bargain for them, and that under the protection of the government which had warned the general public off by a letter written by Mr. Pedley to the Indian Agent, which I shall read in order that the House may have some conception of the ingenuity of the men who were carrying out this surrender. After the surrender was secured a large number of people in Selkirk who realized the great value of these lands were anxious to secure portions of that reserve, and as soon as they began to negotiate with the Indians a letter arrived from Ottawa to the following effect:



Almost immediately on receipt of this letter the Indian Agent heard of his instructions and made known the contents of this letter wide and far. He went into the Indian reserve and warned every Indian that he had nothing to sell until his patent came. In the town of Selkirk almost every man who approached him—I sent men to approach him myself to find out—they were told by the Indian Agent that the Indians had nothing to sell until the land was surveyed and the patents issued. That was the proper course, and if the government had adhered to the spirit of that letter I would not be standing in my place exposing what I believe to be one of the meanest transactions that has taken place under this government during the fourteen years it has been in office. What occurred? As soon as it became known that the Indian had nothing to sell until his patent issued, the average citizen, Liberal and Conservative alike, hung back, refused to give the Indian a dollar on his land, refused to nego-

tiate with him; knowing the Indian nature as well as they did they did not want to deal with them all except four men. One of these was William Frank, whom I have named in this House before, a large real estate dealer in Winnipeg, a supporter of the present government, who came to Ottawa himself and interviewed somebody here, I do not know whom. I met that gentleman myself on his return at Beausejour, fifteen miles east of Selkirk, and we rode in the train together. He then said to me: I am going to buy the Indian lands, I am going to take the chance, if you like to come in with me, it is all right, it is quite safe. He gave me the tip; I did not take it. He said he had been to Ottawa. I asked him whom he had seen; he did not tell me, but the result was, as is very evident from what has since transpired, that that man had the tip from the proper source. He immediately started to work to negotiate with the poor Indian to buy these lands, he and three others. One of these was Fred Heap, a lawyer in Selkirk, a man who drew \$1,800 in fees in connection with this very surrender. Another was George Tracy, a drayman in Selkirk, who conducted one of the most scandalous transactions ever perpetrated in the west in connection with these Indians. Another was a man named Funk, an American. These four men negotiated and dealt with these Indians and bought out of 21,000 acres that the Indians had, about 18,000.

How did they conduct these negotiations? The very first move these men made was to secure the co-operation of the chief and councillors. They bought the chief and the councillors' land, and in addition they bought the chief and the councillors to assist them in carrying out the negotiations with the rest of the Indians, in bringing the Indians to them, and in bargaining with them for the balance of the land. They caused these councillors and the chief to circulate a rumour all through the reserve in conformity with the letter I have read to the House that the Indians had nothing to sell until his patent came, but that these patriotic gentlemen were just going to advance them a little money until their patents came. They said to them: Your land is worth about \$15 or \$20 an acre, but you will get an advance of \$4 or \$5 an acre now, and when your patents come we will give you the balance of the money. That is the way these poor people were misled. Then they brought the Indians up to Selkirk and they purchased their lands and made their own bargains. That the whole transaction was arranged for a few party favourites who got these lands, I think, is evidenced, first, by the fact that the surrender was secured at the request of Mr. S. J. Jackson, then member for the county of Selkirk, a supporter of the pre-