

Landing, who pressed him, as it was natural they should do, to have the road brought to that place; but it was not carried there.

Hon. Mr. TUPPER accepted fully the statement made by the hon. the First Minister.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said he would read to the House the following statement which was published in the *Mail* the other day:—

“He (Mr. MACKENZIE) tells us his purchases were in the public interest, that he took advantage of a low market, and that if he had waited to a later date the country would in all probability have had to pay higher prices. This may all be as the First Minister states. The prices which he paid seem reasonable. But if there is any force in the contention upon which he and his party have heretofore so strongly insisted, the question of price is of small consequence in comparison with the question of principle * * *. What right had he then to make the purchase? None whatever. With the taint of oil-well scandals and silver ‘rings’ yet about his skirts, the Premier has surely not yielded to the temptation of enriching another relative by allowing him to purchase these rails for the Government.”

He noticed that article because he wished to dispose of the whole matter once for all. The allusion here was one of the repeated insinuations made in that paper lately, that he had something to do with the noted oil-well swindle known as the Prince Company in Petrolia. All he had to do with it was this—that he sent a telegram which cost him \$50 to Sir JOHN ROSE warning him that the concern was a swindle, and asking him to put his friends on their guard, which he did, and he referred the *Mail* and all others who were circulating such stories to Sir JOHN ROSE or the banking firm with which he was connected, for proof of the fact, that he saved his own friend Sir JOHN ROSE—for he had always been a personal friend—and saved all with whom he came in contact on the Stock Exchange from losing heavily by that concern, which he was now accused of being connected with. In regard to the statement as to a relative of his having been employed to purchase rails, he desired to state to the House that no relative of his had been employed for any purpose good, bad, or indifferent in connection with any Government work, or anything approaching a Government work. Since he had been in charge of the Public Works Department he had never even opened a tender; all tenders were opened

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by the principal officer of the Department. He never looked upon them in any way whatever until a report was made to him as to which was the lowest, and the lowest was invariably accepted as soon as the contractor furnished security; and when the contractor was not able to do so the officer of the Department passed in regular gradation down through the tenders until one was reached and the contract closed. He hoped he would not again be attacked directly or indirectly in connection with that matter, but whenever any member supposed that there was the slightest ground for imputation on the conduct of himself or of any of his colleagues let them at once ask for a committee of the House, and they could have their own committee. Of course he quite admitted that the hon. member for Cumberland did not make any personal charge, but the hon. member would also admit that it was necessary to refer to expressions used by him in reference to this matter. Before leaving that point he would tell the hon. member and the House that the only person whose advice he had acted on was Mr. SANDFORD FLEMING as Chief Engineer, and he would give the reasons why he adhered to that advice. The hon. member stated in his speech the other evening that the distance from Red River to Lake Nipegon was 416 miles. It was quite true that the distance to the upper end of Lake Ellen was 416 miles; but the distance to Red Rock, to which the road would have to go, was 426 miles, and the distance from Koninistiguia River to Red River was only 377 miles. If the road were built to Nipegon it would have to be a railroad all the way from Red River, there being no stretches of water in the intervals which could be used for transport purposes. By constructing a line from Fort William to Lake Shebandowan we at once obtain possession of a navigable route; no doubt it was a long circuit, but it was a navigable route in the summer season, by constructing 45 miles of railway to Lake Shebandowan, in a direct line from this point, and passing Sturgeon Falls at the east end of Rainy Lake, we make nearly a direct line from the Falls to Rat Portage. So we are on a line with respect to which we can construct a railroad all the way, if we like; or we can connect with the line that would pass Lake Nipegon 70 miles from Fort William. The object the Government had in view in