

## LETTER TO SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD

Dear John: I'm still here  
and halfbreed,  
after all these years  
you're dead, funny thing,  
that railway you wanted so badly,  
there was talk a year ago  
of shutting it down  
and part of it was shut down,  
the dayliner at least,  
"from sea to shining sea,"  
and you know, John,  
after all that shuffling us around to suit the settlers,  
we're still here and . . .

We're still here  
after Meech Lake and  
one no-good-for-nothin-Indian  
holdin-up-the-train,  
stalling the "Cabin syllables / Nouns of settlement,  
/ . . . steel syntax [and] / The long sentence of its exploitation"<sup>1</sup>  
and John, that goddamned railroad never made this a great nation,  
cause the railway shut down  
and this country is still quarreling over unity,  
and Riel is dead  
but he just keeps coming back  
in all the Bill Wilsons yet to speak out of turn or favour  
because you know as well as I  
that we were railroaded  
by some steel tracks that didn't last  
and some settlers who wouldn't settle  
and it's funny we're still here and callin ourselves halfbreed.