



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
EMPOWERING OUR NATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 8, 2021

AMC statement on National Indigenous Veterans Day

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) issues this statement to mark National Indigenous Veterans Day 2021 which has been observed on November 8th since 1994. Canada now recognizes and commemorates the thousands of First Nations and Indigenous veterans who fought and died defending this country's liberties and freedoms. It was not until 50 years after World War II that First Nation/Indigenous peoples were permitted to lay Remembrance Day wreaths at the National War Memorial to remember and honour their loved ones and comrades. First Nations citizens who signed up to for military service lost their Indian Status. They were enfranchised, treated like second class citizens, and were not provided with equal veteran's benefits by Veteran's Affairs Canada once their service to the country ended. Most First Nations veterans who lost their Treaty and Indian status never regained it. Yet First Nations continued to serve and to this day, still answer the call when the peace, safety and security of our country have been threatened.

Grand Chief Arlen Dumas said, "On behalf of all First Nations in Manitoba and all their citizens, I acknowledge and pay tribute to all our First Nations Veterans on National Indigenous Veterans Day 2021, including those who are still with us and especially those who have passed on to the spirit world. We remember and honour the thousands of First Nations veterans who fought in World War I, World War II, and the Korean Conflict and who paid the ultimate sacrifice for this country. We give our respect and thanks to those that are serving this country today. "

"I would be remiss not to acknowledge on National Indigenous Veterans day one of our greatest warriors and one of Canada's most decorated veterans, Sergeant Tommy Prince of the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation," said Grand Chief Dumas. "We remember Sgt. Prince not only for his heroic efforts on the battlefield but for his advocacy for the fair treatment of First Nations veterans in this country. It is through the tireless efforts of veterans such as Sgt. Tommy Prince, Elder Joseph Meconse, Melvin Swan, Wanbdi Wakita, and other members of the Manitoba Indigenous Veterans Inc., that our veterans are now more fully respected for their contributions. On this day, I encourage you to take the time to remember those First Nations who have served and are serving. Our thoughts are with you. Lest we forget," concluded Grand Chief Dumas.

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About the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

The AMC was formed in 1988 by the Chiefs in Manitoba to advocate on issues that commonly affect First Nations in Manitoba. AMC is an authorized representative of 62 of the 63 First Nations in Manitoba with a total of more than 151,000 First Nation citizens in the province, accounting for approximately 12 percent of the provincial population. AMC represents a diversity of Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Nehetho / Inineew (Cree), Anishinew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.