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PROCEEDINGS
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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Second Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
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ALTOMARE, Nello	Transcona	NDP
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BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, November 17, 2020

The House met at 10 a.m.

Madam Speaker: O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may desire only that which is in accordance with Thy will, that we may seek it with wisdom and know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Madam Speaker: Do we have the honourable Government House Leader (Mr. Goertzen) online? [*interjection*] Oh. Okay.

We will—I will now recognize the honourable Minister for Agriculture and Resource Development. Can the member unmute his mic?

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Acting Government House Leader): There, I'll get used to this yet. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Okay.

Mr. Pedersen: We are going to move to Bill 211, the employment standards code amendment act.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the House will consider second reading of Bill 211, The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act (Unpaid Leave for Reservists).

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 211—The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act (Unpaid Leave for Reservists)

Mr. Jon Reyes (Waverley): I move, seconded by the honourable member for Assiniboia (Mr. Johnston), that Bill 211, The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act (Unpaid Leave for Reservists); Loi modifiant le Code des normes d'emploi (congé non payé à l'intention des réservistes), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Reyes: Today, I virtually rise on the second reading of Bill 211, The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act (Unpaid Leave for Reservists); Loi modifiant le Code des normes d'emploi (congé non payé à l'intention des réservistes).

But before I go on, I want to thank each and everyone in the House who paid their respects to honour the many great men and women in uniform who serve this great country by remembering them, especially last week on Remembrance Day.

Madam Speaker, this bill will amend the current Manitoba legislation in order to align with the federal law and create coherent leave rules for reservist taking part in military training.

But before I go on, I would like for all of my colleagues in the House and listening virtually to know what a Canadian Forces reservist is.

Well, colleagues, there are two types of forces in the Canadian Armed Forces: the Regular Force and the Reserve Force.

This is straight from the Canadian Armed Forces' website: Members of the Regular Force serve full-time protecting Canada and defending our sovereignty. They contribute to international peace and security and work for—the United States to defend North America. They are ready to respond at a moment's notice to threats, natural disasters or humanitarian crises at home and around the world. Where members of the Reserve Force serve part-time in the Canadian Armed Forces, their main role is to support the Regular Force at home and abroad.

Reservists technically serve one or more evenings a week and/or during weekends at locations close to home. Some reservist may volunteer to be deployed to operations if there are positions available. And that's where Bill 211 comes into play here, Madam Speaker.

As a part-time Canadian Armed Forces members, there may be opportunities for reservists to be deployed on active duty or to participate and upgrade the soldier, sailor or airman or airwoman skills and qualifications in military training to achieve and, eventually, earn a higher rank, a promotion.

From my personal experience, I was fortunate to have had a six-month call-out, a full-time contract to work at Canadian Forces Base Lahr in Germany back in 1993, when I was a reservist with the army. I actually started off my military career here in Winnipeg at Minto Armoury.

I was fortunate, Madam Speaker. I actually, at that time, did not work for a civilian employer, so the flexibility for me to go to Germany at CFB Lahr to assist in the base closure was very simple for me to commit to.

Madame la présidente, c'était en Allemagne où mon français a amélioré parce que j'étais entouré par des soldats de la fameuse—le 22e Régiment royal du Canada, qui sont venus de la belle Province du Québec. Et c'est là où j'ai rencontré beaucoup de réservistes qui deviendraient des membres de forces régulières comme moi, une fois que nous retournerions au Canada. Il leur était donné une opportunité de servir en dehors du pays—avance rapide. En tant que législateurs, nous devrions donner aux réservistes la possibilité de leur permettre de s'entraîner et d'aller à l'étranger. Ceci facilite la législation.

Translation

Madam Speaker, Germany is where I improved my French, because there I was surrounded by soldiers from the famous Royal 22e Régiment of Canada—the Van Doos—coming from the beautiful province of Québec. There, I met many reservists who, like me, would become members of the Regular Forces once back in Canada. They were given the opportunity to serve abroad—as rapid advance. As legislators, we should give reservists the opportunity to train and go abroad. This streamlines the legislation.

English

However, in this case of Bill 211, for those that have a civilian employer, this bill would reduce the time that employee has to be employed at their job and therefore make it easier for a reservist to participate in military training.

Why would this benefit a reservist residing and employed in Manitoba, Madam Speaker? The bill would reduce the time that an employee has to be employed at their job from seven months to three months, and therefore makes it easier for a reservist to participate in military training.

We know that we cannot thank our veterans and active military members enough, but by making their

lives less bureaucratic and reducing the red tape that surrounds reservists taking leave, we hope that this can help show our appreciation.

* (10:10)

Personally, I can say as a 20-year-old at the time, having the opportunity to serve my country overseas was a tremendous experience—memories that will last lifetime for me. It was honour to wear the Maple Leaf with pride, and I know reservists who are given that opportunity—and to have it facilitated by Bill 211—would certainly appreciate that our province would be at the forefront by aligning our legislation with the federal legislation, amending the provincial Employment Standards Code by reducing the length a reservist must have been employed from the current seven months to three months. Our PC caucus wants this for our reservists and their employers in order to make taking leave from their full-time jobs less difficult. And I am sure all sides of the House would agree to this.

And we have done our consultation with stakeholder groups, which include the Canadian Forces Liaison Council, which is an organization of more than 140 Canadian volunteers who work in partnership with the National Defence team to engage employers, educational institutions and other organizations to emphasize how valuable our reserve service is to Canadian communities and defence of Canada.

We also consulted with the labour management resource committee comprised of representatives of business and labour, which provides a forum for discussion of labour and management issues. The committee's mandate is to promote a harmonious labour relations climate and to foster effective labour management, co-operation and support of the economic and social well-being of Manitobans. When legislative changes are contemplated by government, the LMRC generally acts as a consultative body, and we consulted with them, Madam Speaker.

When we had explained to both the CFLC and L-R-M-C that Bill 211 would allow reservists to take leave from their current employment for military training without the fear of losing their jobs and that an employer must grant leave for reservists to take leave for military training after they have reached the minimum length of employment, and that under Bill 211 the employer would not be required to pay the reservist's wages while they are on leave—although they may, some contracts and collective agreements

may speak to this situation—we had no objections from both sets of stakeholder groups, Madam Speaker.

Bill 211 will also include an important addition: with the passing of the bill, reservists will be able to take leave from their full-time employment in order to access treatment for their mental health and any other physical health problem that they suffer as a result of their service. We know that there are risks and consequences when you sign a contract for Queen and country, as I once did. And here in Manitoba we want to ensure this addition is also included, Madam Speaker, so reservists who are valuable assets for our Canadian Armed Forces are taken care of should they require the time off for these services.

Madame la présidente, comme envoyé spécial pour les affaires militaires, c'est dans mon mandat d'améliorer la vie des membres des Forces armées canadiennes qui sont mutés ici au Manitoba—ce qui inclut les réservistes—en tant que nos compatriotes manitobains.

Translation

Madam Speaker, as special envoy for military affairs, it is in my mandate to improve the lives of Canadian Armed Forces members who are transferred here in Manitoba, including reservists, as citizens of Manitoba.

English

Madam Speaker, again, I want to thank you and all the members of this House for allowing me to educate everyone on the importance and the role of the reservists who serve with the many reserve units we have here in Manitoba, whether it's at Minto Armoury; the Lieutenant-Colonel Harcus Strachan Armoury, formerly known as the Fort Garry Horse armoury; the units at 17 Wing Winnipeg; Brandon or CFB Shilo. I know reservists will benefit from the passing of Bill 211. And as legislatures and as Manitobans, let us assist in advancing their reservist careers. It's the least we can do.

Again, to all the members of the Canadian Armed Forces and our veterans, thank you for your service.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Questions

Madam Speaker: A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the sponsoring member by any member in the following sequence: first question to be asked by a member from another party; this is to be followed by

a rotation between parties; each independent member may ask one question. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): And it's my pleasure to be asking questions this morning, remotely. And you'll have to forgive some of the noise in the background, but when you're working from home, sometimes there's other things going on.

So, my first question this morning for the member is, you've talked a little bit about this bill and the reservists. Could you be more specific in how this bill will really be beneficial for reservists?

Mr. Jon Reyes (Waverley): Yes. Thank you for the question. It will benefit the reservists when they are working full-time. And after the—once the bill passes, instead of seven months, there'll be three months that they could actually go on military training, and that will advance their career. And from what I've heard there have not been any objections from any employers about this, and we've consulted with the L-R-M-C, so it'll definitely benefit the reservists.

Mr. Scott Johnston (Assiniboia): Can the member indicate if this bill takes into account the mental health of members of the reserves?

Mr. Reyes: This bill also includes an important addition, as I mentioned. With the passing of this bill, reservists will be able to take leave from their full-time employment in order to access treatment for their mental health and any other physical health problem that they suffer as a result of their service.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Now, yes, I have a question, and it relates to the fact that there is federal legislation in place; some of this ability to have leave would already be possible under the federal legislation.

So what does the provincial legislation actually add in this respect, and when we're talking about leave in terms of mental condition, mental health issues, is—that's not a paid leave, that's an unpaid leave also, is that right?

Mr. Reyes: Yes, that is correct. It's an unpaid leave, and we are aligning the time frame of the bill with the federal legislation. The only difference is that we've added the mental health and physical health benefits for that member to take the time off, if need be. So that's one of the main differences that we have with the federal bill, but in terms of the time frame, it is the same to align it.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Flin Flon, further questions?

Mr. Lindsey: So, you've talked a little bit about that a member of the reservists can take leave from their full-time employment. Unfortunately, what we see with a goodly portion of our jobs nowadays, particularly young people that are struggling so hard, is what's called this gig economy, where more and more people are only working part-time jobs.

So does this bill allow people to take leave from those part-time jobs and be guaranteed that they can have that job when they come back from the reservists or is this very specifically just for full-time jobs?

Mr. Reyes: Thank you for your question, and that's a great question. The—this bill applies to full-time employees who are reservists; however, in the case of part-time employees who are reservists, I'm sure that they could communicate with their employer about that. But this bill specifically is for full-time employees.

Mr. Johnston: Madam Speaker, with the member's extensive military background, could he relay any of the situations that he has experienced in regards to reservists having to deal with these types of challenges that this bill addresses?

Mr. Reyes: Well, speaking for myself, when I was a reservist, again, I was fortunate that I wasn't committed to a civilian employment, because I very young at the time, so I could take a six-month term. In terms of our reservists, at the present moment most of them—a lot of them, actually—are university students and they like to take these opportunities for military training, which is six months or more, and it's going to benefit them definitely, for sure.

Madam Speaker: Does the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) have another question?

Mr. Lindsey: Yes, he certainly does.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Flin Flon.

* (10:20)

Mr. Lindsey: So, I mean, this leave now is only for full-time workers, so it really limits who can access leave to—as you've suggested—better themselves by their military service.

The other question that really comes to mind is if a reservist gets hurt either physical or mentally, I'm grasping—or failing to grasp why exactly it is that the member doesn't think it's important that they should

have paid sick leave. It's something that really is important for all workers, but if we expect people—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Reyes: Thank you for the question. And if a reservist would get injured in a military operation, the Department of National Defence would take care of the situation for the reservists.

Mr. Lindsey: So, you've said that the federal government would take care of the reservists. Could you elaborate on that? How are they going to take care of them? Will they guarantee them full wages for the period of time that they're off, or do they pay them some other lesser amount, or is there a time limit on how long those wages are paid for? Could you please elaborate on what you just said?

Mr. Reyes: Thank you for the question. If a member were to be injured or something were to happen to him, this is where the Canadian Forces Liaison Council comes into play. That's an organization where it's a conduit between the military and the civilian employer. And they would come to an agreement on how to take care of the reservist. So this has—this bill has been thought out through and through. And we want to ensure that we take care of our reservists here in Manitoba with this bill.

Mr. Johnston: Could the member from Waverley please give us a little bit further detail in regards to what the status of reserves potentially taking advantage of this type of bill in other provinces?

Mr. Reyes: Thank you for the question. Based on the other provinces, we would actually be the first province to align ourselves with the federal legislation, so it will definitely benefit reservists who reside in Manitoba.

Mr. Lindsey: So, does the member agree that people that would be volunteering for reservist duty would be more likely to jump on board and participate if they knew that it was guaranteed that they would receive their full wages if they became hurt, disabled physically or mentally, as opposed to leaving it up to some liaison council to try and negotiate with an employer after the fact? Does the member agree that people would be more likely to join knowing that their wages would be protected?

Mr. Reyes: Well, this bill actually defines that an employer must grant leave for a reservist to take leave for military training and they've reached the minimum length of employment. During that time, an employer is not required to pay the reservist's wage while they

are on leave, although they may. Like, as I said, some contracts and collective agreements may speak to this situation—because I know he's very big on labour laws—but in terms of that, that's where—again, that's where I have to stress the Canadian Forces Liaison Council does come into play, advocating for the member.

Mr. Lindsey: So, we've covered off the lack of guarantees for wages.

Can the member from Waverley explain why it was decided that the cut-off period where you'd be able to access this paid—or unpaid leave was set at three months? Why not one month? Why not one week? Why not immediately upon your employment? What's the significance of three months?

Mr. Reyes: As a former small-business owner, it gives you peace of mind when you employ folks to a minimum term so that they are properly trained. So we, as a government, researched this and it was very, very—you know, we wanted to align our law with this—the term of leave with the federal government just so that it would reduce the red tape and other bureaucratic issues that go upon taking leave.

Madam Speaker: The time for this question period has expired.

Debate

Madam Speaker: Debate is open.

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I certainly will be putting a few words out here. Certainly, I'm sure all of us on this side of the Chamber, even if it's the virtual side of the Chamber, support people that are willing to volunteer and participate as reservists and do their duty.

Some of the things that we've explored a little bit during the question period portion of the bill debate this morning leaves me wondering why, once again, the government really wants to give the illusion of doing something while they're really not going all the way. They're prepared to do something only if it doesn't cost them any money, and in this case, this bill doesn't cost the government any money.

Questions get asked. So if we call in reservists, for example, to help out during the pandemic with the short staff that this government has forced on health care in the province, if some of those members now come in contact and then have to self-isolate or they do become sick with COVID, the member clearly states that he doesn't believe they should get paid sick

leave for their duty, which just really flies in the face of what he thinks he's trying to accomplish here.

It really doesn't show proper respect for people that are willing to put their life on the line, for people that are willing to defend our country. I think we can do better than what this legislation has done. I recognize that perhaps it is a step in the right direction and it lessens the amount of time we have to be employed to three months from the existing seven months, but it begs the question why not go all the way?

Why not actually show the respect for these reservists that they deserve, particularly people that become hurt, whether it's a short-term injury or a longer-term issue that can affect so much more than just their employment? But it can certainly have that negative effect on their employment, that perhaps they can't go back to their previous job, perhaps they can't go back to working the hours that they previously had.

So, lacking the provision for any kind of guarantee of pay to cover, like, a compensation scheme seems to be really lacking in this bill.

And the member talks about, well, we'll leave it up to some federal liaison council to negotiate with employers after the fact. Well, I think we all know how negotiations, particularly with some of the things that this government has put in place, will stretch out for longer periods of time, which will leave reservists hanging in the balance wondering are they going to get paid or are they not going to get paid.

And certainly, I believe that it would be beneficial for the member to have added into this bill that if you become hurt, disabled in active duty or during training, that your wages would be guaranteed. So I think this bill could certainly be better.

* (10:30)

One of the other, I guess, issues that we talked about a little bit is this bill only protects those jobs—grants people leave from full-time jobs. So many, particularly younger people in our society nowadays, work in this gig economy that is all part-time jobs. So I am left to wonder why they would not be allowed to take leave. If the member really feels that this bill is important, why is it only important for some people to be afforded leave, why isn't it important for everybody? Why is it the designation that you have to be a full-time employee?

I mean, I would think that this bill, if it guaranteed the leave—even with the unpaid status that the member

has proposed—if it was applied to part-time employees, would certainly allow a lot of people to expand their horizons, volunteer as the member did, take six months and do his duty in a foreign country, which would allow people that are really now struggling at part-time jobs, maybe two or three part-time jobs, to expand their ability to have future full-time employment. But if they can't take leave from a part-time job, it really stops them from having the same opportunity that the member is suggesting that full-time employees should have.

So, while this may very well be a step to try and align with whatever the federal government has done, it falls short of where I believe that the member, in his own heart, thinks that we should land up and show the proper respect for our reservists and allow, really, more people to participate as reservists, because if you're a part-time worker and you knew that your employment would be guaranteed when you came back, I think you might find a lot more people would be willing to participate. It really is a roadblock to participation if it's only afforded to full-time employees.

So those are some of the problems that I see with this. Once again, it's the provincial government and this member giving the illusion, perhaps, of doing something and going partway, just not going far enough. This bill doesn't cost the provincial government anything, there's no guarantee of wages, whether it's a shared compensation type thing, that I'm sure the member could've included, that's shared between the employer and two levels of government to guarantee something for our reservists, or whether it was something that could've been an add-on to whatever this liaison council that he talks about is able to negotiate so that workers knew that their wages would be protected.

And it may be repetitious on my part to keep talking about this, but it's really important, particularly now in the type of climate that we live in where so many people are just part-time employees, and even for a full-time employee to be able to take the leave but have no guarantee that if they were to get hurt, that they would, in some way, be properly and adequately compensated, even through Workers Compensation. I mean, it falls short in many cases of providing proper and adequate compensation for working people that get hurt.

So I perhaps maybe encourage the member to look at, is there some amendments that he could make to this bill, or is there some amendments that he'd be

willing to consider for this bill, to really make it something that has real, true meaning and shows real, true respect for reservists, so that they know that, actually, the government is looking after them, that the government is standing up for them, it's not just a show of words, it's an actual show of respect and doing the right thing to protect people that have volunteered to protect all of us, Madam Speaker. It's a half-way measure, which I guess is better than a no-way measure, but let's go the whole way. Let's do the right thing. Let's show the respect by guaranteeing that folks will be looked after.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Scott Johnston (Assiniboia): It's a pleasure for me to speak in favour of this bill presented from my friend, the honourable member from Waverley.

First I have—foremost, Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize the dedication and commitment that the member of Waverley has demonstrated by his military service to date. Certainly, it's very impressive and it's a commitment that we, as Manitobans and Canadians, are very appreciative of.

The member from Waverley has a proud background servicing—while working in our Armed Forces. He's already indicated a number of the—his experiences within the military. However, I would like to point out he also served honourably on the HMCS Winnipeg, which certainly brings his service close to home.

This member understands the needs of those who serve, Madam Speaker, as he is one of them. The member from Waverley has been most—one of the most active military envoys that this province has seen, certainly in recent history.

I have first-hand knowledge of the commitment and the dedication of the member because I have been associated with him on many occasions based on my representation of St. James-Assiniboia, as 17 Wing is very prominent and very proud in that area.

And it's been my experience, when accompanying the member, that he takes a great deal of time and effort to speak to those individuals in the military and gain a real understanding for what their challenges are and what their needs are. And, Madam Speaker, those individuals include reservists, and when he puts a bill like this together, it's done based on a great deal of due diligence and a great deal of understanding of what those individuals are actually going through because, as I mentioned, he's one of them.

Madam Speaker, it is so appropriate that this bill comes forward at this time, as we have just remembered those who have made a great deal of sacrifice for our country. You know, I've been honoured as a—again I say St. James-Assiniboia, because I was the member for St. James as well as currently Assiniboia, I had the honour of presenting the provincial wreaths at the Cenotaph and Bruce Park in St. James, as well as at ANAVETS in Assiniboia, with my colleague, the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding), and it's always so humbling; it's always so humbling to see the commitment of these people and how much we owe them.

And in chatting with reservists on those occasions, it's very apparent that these individuals really, really want to make even a further commitment and the government should be doing everything it can to allow that to happen, and again, that's why the member from Waverley is presenting this bill.

Our reservists, you know, are basically the unsung heroes of our military and they deserve to be recognized, and this bill does that. You know, whether it's they're called upon for a flood, which is—I think we can all recall the flood of the century as well as other situations that have occurred. The military, as well as the reservists, have been called up to meet our challenges and they've done it without question. So if we can present a bill that is going to further enhance their opportunity to serve in the military, then I'm fully in support of that.

* (10:40)

We know that we cannot thank our veterans and active military members enough. By making their lives less bureaucratic and reducing the red tape, we hope that we can show our appreciation. Our caucus wants to support reservists and their employers in order to make taking leave for their full-time jobs less stressful.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to support the member of Waverley's bill, and I would ask support from the Legislature.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Jamie Moses (St. Vital): It's a pleasure to be speaking on this bill this morning. And I do want to first start by showing gratitude and say thank you to the service personnel in our military who give time from their lives in the reservists role to assist our military personnel—our active military personnel—in what they do protecting our country and being responsible for our national security, and also say

thank you to our regular active members, who day in and day out either put their lives on the line or working diligently, tirelessly in their own respective roles, whether it's here, locally in our province, across our country or internationally abroad to ensure that Canadians are kept safe and that our world is a more peaceful place, daily.

I know many people who are active members in the military or are former members in the military, and I value and appreciate all that they have done. I have a close family member, in fact, who is currently serving in the air force. And I know that he is someone who I trust and respect. And I know that all the effort that he puts in in his job is something that is working towards the best interests of our country.

So this bill, in terms of helping and assisting reservists find a place to both serve in our—provide that service to our country and find that balance of private sector jobs, is an interesting one. And this bill being brought forward today, I think is worthy of our discussion and our debate today, and our time and attention because we want to ensure that those people who are choosing to give back to our country through the role of a reservist can still provide—find value in a provided—in a job that is—that they are interested in seeking outside of their military work.

And it is a difficult decision sometimes for people who are in that role of being a reservist. As the member from Waverley has mentioned, many reservists are young people, you know, young people who are maybe—haven't had opportunity to go and get a full-time career job yet and they're—as the member from Waverley described as himself, you know, a young 20-year-old person and had the availability to go and take six months off. That's—and that is appreciated, those individuals. But not all individuals who are in that role of a reservist are young people. Some of them have had experiences as regular active members and then have made that decision to be—go—you know, kind of slow their career down and become a reservist and go to that role.

Now, those folks are in a little bit of a different boat. Those folks, I think, are often the ones who are looking to continue a career outside of the military and looking for full-time work. They're looking for a career, whether they have a family or connections to a community, and are looking to still keep those connections to their military service life and are willing to transfer from their active service to a reserve role. And those people, I think, will benefit from this type of a bill, where they're able to go find

that full-time job, knowing that they'll have that security of being able to perform their duties in a role with the military and be able to go back to their job—their private employer—as they need it. So I do commend that this bill for be—able to enhance in that value for those individuals, who I know our community values.

In relation to the member from Waverly's earlier points about many young people being reservists, I do want to echo some of the comments that my colleague, the member from Flin Flon, made in regards to enhancing this bill.

Many young people, as we know—and not only in today's economy with COVID-19, but also before this—many young people are working gig work, shift work, part-time work. And, unfortunately, this bill does not benefit those folks. And those folks—those reservists—should be valued just as much as any full-time employed reservist.

There should be some accommodation in this bill for folks who are young people, right, who want to build up their skills through the military reserves and who want to get experience, but also know that they are in a position where their—part-time work is the most realistic avenue for them. They should have some sort of leeway in this bill to allow for those folks to still maintain employment after the military training has completed, whether it's for a few weeks or a few months. And I think that is an essential—should be an essential part of this bill; however, it is missing.

I also want to point out that many young people, as the member mentioned, who are reservists are also in school. And so another thought for the member of Waverly to consider as an amendment to this bill is to consider, perhaps, young people who are reservists are also looking for an educational leave to be supported, and—so that if a young person in a post-secondary institution—a college, training college, university—may have the opportunity to temporarily leave their training program, their university course program, and not be penalized by perhaps missing out on credentials or having to redo courses or having to transfer credits or redo credits, and have a provision in this bill that would be able to make whole any time that a reservist who's in school and looking to further their education may face as part of serving for military training or military service in their reservist role.

So that is another area where the member from Waverly should look to amend and enhance this bill. And as I mentioned, I have family members who are in military serving right now. I have friends who are

stationed out of country right now and I value their—I value what they're doing to help this country.

And I know the sacrifice not only that they have made, but that their families have made in making that choice to serve our country in the military. We know the deployments last for a few years and it's quite frequent and I think it's expected by many members of the military that these deployments will have them move from either one part of the country to the other or from any other—from almost any—to any other country in the world, depending on where they are needed to serve our country. And that does take a—quite a big toll on—not only on the service member, but on their families, their spouse, their children.

And, on occasion, military members might make that difficult decision to give up their active role—their regular position—and go join the reserves. And it's made for different reasons for every service person, whether it be, you know, that they're no longer wanting to be in that active life or it, you know, they've asked their family to sacrifice with a move many times, and maybe it's their time to make a career change.

* (10:50)

Regardless of the reason, when a military person is going to the reserves, they should deserve the respect and be appreciated by our communities. I think this bill does go to enhance that respect for those folks, but at the same time, we have to recognize that having the ability to provide a leave from both full-time and part-time work should be essential.

We know that transition to private sector work is difficult even if you have the great experience that many military members have. And so they might not be able to get that full-time role right off the bat. It does take time to do that. And they may start off with a part-time job before they move to full employment. And so while they're in that part-time job, I will certainly hope that they should be able to get this same type of leave so that they can go back to that part-time role.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I want to speak to this bill. It's certainly timely, coming shortly after Remembrance Day. It is important that we all recognize the incredible contribution that our Armed Forces have made, not just in wars but in peacekeeping, most recently of course in Mali.

Peacekeeping often is under difficult conditions, dangerous conditions. We know that from what we know of the situation in Mali, and we want to express a lot of appreciation for those in our Armed Forces, both the regular Armed Forces and our reservists. Both are really critical contributors.

It's also important to mention the important contribution that they have made and are making on an ongoing basis in respect to emergencies within Canada. Floods, as we have considerable experience here in Manitoba, the Armed Forces have been incredibly helpful, knowledgeable and made an extraordinary difference.

More recently, of course, in Ontario and Quebec, the military have played a major role in stabilizing the situation in a number of care homes—personal-care homes which got COVID-19 infections. And basically, the infections were completely out of control and it was a disaster. We, of course, had such a situation here where we've had two personal-care homes out of control with COVID infections, and we may yet have to bring in the military to address these.

What the reservists provide—and I think it's an important concept for us to think about and to understand—what the reservists provide is essentially surge capacity. We know that in a time of war or in time of an emergency, we not only need the regular military, but we need this surge capacity, because we need people who have had the training, the people who can come to the fore and participate and make a major contribution.

Putting in place this surge capacity is really, really important in dealing with emergencies, and it's something that we, in Manitoba, should remember and give some thought to when we're dealing with emergencies like we're dealing at the moment.

And it's not just good enough to have a health-care service which is there for the regular times; it's very important to have a group of what are equivalent to reservists in health care who can come in and can fill critical spots. And at no other time has this been more important than now, when we're having a lot of critically—staff who are themselves getting infected, and we need to replace critical people, front-line people very quickly. And we've seen this in the Maples care home and in Parkview Place. So it is something that we should give consideration to in some of the activities that we're looking at in Manitoba and particularly in the health-care area.

It is tremendously important that we have the Armed Forces there. And it is significant that what is being done today is paying attention to reservists, is providing a matching bill to the terms of—in the bill at the federal level and, in addition, to provide some coverage of people who are reservists who need leave because of PTSD or other health conditions. I think that this has the potential to be quite important.

It will also be important that the details of this are worked out well so that employers are really on and contributing and making sure that people do get welcomed back. Too often in the past people have had leaves of one sort or another and come back to find that other people have been hired to take their position, and it's actually quite difficult to get back, even though they have the right to and are able to. They may be given positions which are less stature and less pay. And so these sorts of things become quite important when you're actually working out the details of how this would be operable.

It also has been mentioned: important to pay attention to people who are part-time workers. Now, making sure that part-time workers are included in a bill like this, it's important to recognize, is a challenge. This is not something that we do regularly, but certainly the Armed Forces and the reservists would be a good place to start looking at this, because the Armed Forces, in many ways, have played an important leadership role, and this could be a situation where some leadership from our government in Manitoba could look at how best to incorporate people who are engaged in part-time work into this effort. I think it will require quite a bit of consultation with employers and working with employers as well as with reservists and the Armed Forces. But I think it could be done, and I think it's something that we should aspire to do.

We have argued, in terms of the surge capacity for personal-care homes starting in May, that we need to develop the surge capacity with a rapid response team which is highly trained, able to go in immediately and assess the situation, and then be able to have the capacity to replace staff when you've got a lot of staff who are infected with COVID and you have a very serious situation of crisis at the time when you're losing staff. We feel good about the government finally implementing *[inaudible]* after the fact when it should have been there. But it will—important it be—to have it there moving forward, and I think it—make a difference. And, as I said, the parallel between the surge capacity needed in health emergencies and those in military emergencies certainly is there and we need

to recognize how really critical reservists are in terms of our emergency response, whether it's peacekeeping or at war.

I think it's also important to recognize that the situation with reservists is that they are learning a lot, they are bringing back new skills and they are making a contribution.

Madam Speaker, I—those are the words I wanted to say. I stop now so there can be a vote if people want.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 211, The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act (Unpaid Leave for Reservists).

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 4—Inclusion of Sergeant Tommy Prince on the \$5 Bill

Madam Speaker: The hour is now 11 a.m. and time for private members' resolutions.

The resolution before us this morning is the resolution on Inclusion of Sergeant Tommy Prince on the \$5 bill, being brought forward by the honourable member for Selkirk.

* (11:00)

Mr. Alan Lagimodiere (Selkirk): I move, seconded by the honourable member for Waverley (Mr. Reyes),

WHEREAS Sergeant Tommy Prince was a great Indigenous Canadian who embodied duty, courage, bravery, and patriotism; and

WHEREAS a member of the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation in Manitoba, Sergeant Prince repeatedly tried to enlist in the military but was initially refused until he was finally accepted into the Canadian Army in 1940; and

WHEREAS Sergeant Prince became a founding member of the elite 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion and the Devil's Brigade during the Second World War; and

WHEREAS Sergeant Prince was called to Buckingham Palace to receive medals from King George VI; and

WHEREAS Sergeant Prince would go on to contribute to the stalwart defense of Hill 677 in the Battle of Kapyong during the Korean War; and

WHEREAS Sergeant Prince's eleven medals make him one of the most decorated Indigenous war veteran in Canada; and

WHEREAS military service had taken a heavy toll on his health and he faced a difficult return to civilian life in Manitoba, enduring discrimination, illness, and poverty; and

WHEREAS Indigenous war veterans experienced racism from the Federal Government upon return to civilian life, and were denied many of the benefits that other non-Indigenous veterans received; and

WHEREAS Sergeant Tommy Prince died alone and homeless at a Winnipeg Salvation Army shelter in 1977; and

WHEREAS it is the responsibility of every Canadian to understand the injustices of the past and to resolve in their spirit that now is the time to make a statement in support of reconciliation.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba acknowledge the well-deserved tribute made to Sergeant Tommy Prince and support the bid to include this Canadian war hero on the \$5 bill.

Motion presented.

Mr. Lagimodiere: I want to start by acknowledging we are on Treaty 1 territory, in the homeland of the Metis Nation.

In January, the Bank of Canada announced it is looking for recommendations for the new face on the \$5 bill. Last week, the federal government announced it had selected its list of top candidates, which contains the names of many, many great Canadians. I am hopeful there's still room for another great Canadian and ask all members to support the resolution and reach out to the federal government to reconsider Sergeant Tommy Prince.

Thomas George Prince, a non-commissioned officer, was a Canadian military hero. He was awarded 11 medals, including the Military Medal and the US Silver Star. Thomas Prince was born in 1915 in the Petersfield area of Manitoba. He was a proud great-great-grandson of the famous Chief Peguis who drafted and negotiated Treaty 1, which had allowed settlers to share the Indigenous territory.

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

While growing up, Tommy Prince became the perfect hunter, able to track, stalk and move without being seen or heard. He could spot the slightest movement or change in texture or colour and hear the slightest noise. These skills would serve him well in his later years as a soldier in the Canadian Army. Tommy Prince's first taste of military life came while attending residential school, where he was in the Army Cadets. Tommy stated that as soon as he put the uniform on, he felt like a better man.

With the onset of World War II, Prince, at the age of 24, enlisted. In 1942, he was accepted into the First Canadian Parachute Battalion and went on to become a member of the first special service force, a special military force intended to raid and sabotage Nazi-occupied locations in Europe.

Prince was described by his platoon sergeant as an ideal recruit for his unit: atheletic, clever and intelligent. He knew how to live off the land, track and walk without making a sound. Prince could scout a route to avoid enemy patrols, mines and would quickly return with information on enemy placements. His fellow soldiers stated he would carry a pair of mocassins in his bag. He would slip out at night under the cover of darkness, never telling anyone where he was going.

To the enemy, Prince became known as a legend, a ghost, the devil. His unit became known as the Devil's Brigade. The incandescent aura he exuded showed his fellow soldiers he was, in every sense of the word, a true warrior.

His determination and bravery earned him the first of many medals at the Battle of Anzio, 35 miles south of Rome. German tanks and artillery were inflicting heavy damage on Allied forces. Prince set out on a lone reconnaissance mission. Under the cover of darkness, he ran a telephone line over a kilometre and a half and set up an observation point in an abandoned farmhouse a couple of hundred metres from the enemy front line. From here, he transmitted information as to enemy positions.

Around noon the next day, he suddenly lost his connection. He used his ingenuity in what was later described as a bold, audacious and courageous act. He put on some old farm clothes and went outside in full view of the enemy. He pretended to be the Italian farmer, inspected the chicken coop, grabbed a hoe to weed the crops and pretended to tie his shoes as he repaired the line under direct enemy observation.

He re-established communications and, after transmitting enemy positions for 24 hours, he returned to his unit. His actions allowed the Allies to destroy four enemy positions. He was awarded the Military Medal for exceptional bravery in the field.

On the 21st of August, 1945, the warrior Tommy Prince received his discharge from the army and returned to his home, where he found his skills as a hunter, that made him a great soldier, had no value and finding a job proved difficult.

In 1946, he was asked by the Manitoba Indian Association to serve as their vice president and spokesman due to his reputation as a war hero. He believed his role as a leader was to unite the Indigenous people of Manitoba. He traded his rifle for words.

In 1947, Prince presented before the special parliamentary joint committee established to look into the Indian Act. His speech was described as 'unequivocal', bold, visionary. He called on the government to abolish the Indian Act and honour the intent of the treaties.

Prince left Ottawa disillusioned, frustrated and bewildered by the legal verbiage used to counter his arguments. He was convinced the myth of Indigenous peoples being backward, simple-minded, inferior, lazy and unmotivated had to be shattered before a change could occur.

Prince believed the future of Indigenous people lay in giving Indigenous people their confidence and self-sufficiency back through teaching them to help themselves and make their own way in life and not to become reliant on the government. He wanted returning Indigenous veterans to take a leading role and lead by example. He called for action, not rhetoric. However, he found that this was not possible since the Indigenous veterans' grants were paid directly to the minister of Mines and Resources and not to the Indigenous veterans themselves.

In 1950, Tommy Prince enlisted again in the Canadian special forces because he felt he owed something to his friends that had died in World War II. Prince was quickly advanced to sergeant and led his men in the most famous Canadian battle—the Korean War. Outnumbered and isolated, they repelled wave after wave of assaults. As the enemy advanced, panic spread and eroded morale. Prince held fast, keeping his cool under fire. His courage was an example for all. His leadership and his

ability to boost morale while others panic are credited with contributing to the victory at Kapyong.

In October of 1951, Prince was relieved of active duty after physical exam revealed he suffered from varicose veins and a severely arthritic knee. Prince continued to see himself as a representative of the people and believed the only place he could demonstrate his leadership was on the battlefield.

He re-enlisted in October of 1952 for a second tour in Korea and vowed to win the Victoria Cross. However, occupying front-line positions appeared to take its toll on Sergeant Prince.

After receiving 11 medals for his courage and bravery in World War II and the Korean War, Prince had lost control. His psychological fitness had deteriorated and he had reached his breaking point. Prince would not see battle again. He was honourably discharged in 1953.

On his return home, he was a fallen hero. He struggled to find employment. He held menial jobs and was scorned by his fellow white workers. The supports needed to return the bold, audacious and courageous warrior to civilian life were not provided. He descended into alcoholism brought on by physical injuries and psychological trauma.

He and his wife separated. He was accused of abuse and his five children were taken by social workers and placed in foster homes. In retrospect, Prince displayed all the signs that are now described as PTSD. Instead of receiving supports, Prince was labeled with the stigma of a drunk.

The horrors of war he experienced placed him on a path to be fated to spend the balance of his years penniless, homeless, living in shelters and on the streets of Winnipeg.

By 1976, Prince had slipped into obscurity, living out of the suitcase at the Salvation Army. He had sold his medals. His only possessions were reported to be newspaper clippings honouring him on Remembrance Day. His children eventually found him, and with their help, he was moved to the Salvation Army hostel. He overcame his alcoholism but was unable to conquer his PTSD. He died in 1977 at the age of 62 at Deer Lodge hospital.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, from humble beginnings, Prince held high expectations for himself, both as an Indigenous soldier and as a leader. Sergeant Tommy Prince made a legendary reputation. He became the most decorated non-commissioned officer in

Canadian military history. He was awarded 11 medals in all. He was an exemplary soldier.

Prince is a prime example of the important contributions our Indigenous people have and continue to make to the Canadian war and peacekeeping efforts. Prince's postwar story is tragic, tragic in that his commitment to his country and his people was never matched by his country and his people's support and commitment to him.

* (11:10)

Although it is too late to help Mr. Prince, who became a tragic victim of bias against Indigenous peoples, it is not too late to acknowledge the man for who he was: a decorated war hero, an Indigenous leader who had a bold vision calling for the abolition of the Indian Act and a stop to racism, a man who undertook a personal crusade to restore Native pride and honour the only way he knew how; by demonstrating courage, heroism and determination.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have an opportunity here today to do our part by supporting this resolution and ask the Bank of Canada to reconsider and provide the opportunity for Canada to give recognition to a man who gave so much and received little in return.

Thank you.

Questions

Mr. Deputy Speaker: A question period up to 10 minutes will be held, and questions may be addressed in the following sequence: the first question being asked by a member of another party, any subsequent questions must follow a rotation between parties, each independent member may ask one question. And no questions or answers shall exceed 45 seconds.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Can the member tell us this morning whether or not he consulted with any of Tommy Prince's family on bringing forward this resolution this morning?

Mr. Alan Lagimodiere (Selkirk): Well, I thank the member for that question.

And my history with Tommy Prince goes back to a person I met in 1986 when I first moved to Selkirk, and that was Val Prince [*phonetic*]. I had discussions with her prior to her death regarding this, over many years.

I also spoke to Jim Bear, who is the nephew of Sergeant Prince. Unfortunately, I was unable to find any direct descendants of Tommy Prince to speak to.

I would've liked to have spoken to his family about his condition when they found him in the Salvation Army; and his battle with the alcoholism and how he was able over—he was able to overcome this and move on in his later years in his life.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Mr. Jon Reyes (Waverley): Can the member from Selkirk tell us why the Bank of Canada should reconsider their shortlists for the \$5 bill and having Tommy Prince on there?

Mr. Lagimodiere: You know, there are many great Canadians on the shortlists. In fact, our very own Terry Fox who was born here in Manitoba is also on the list. I think it's important for Manitobans and Canadians to know Sergeant Prince fulfills all five of the guiding principles and should be considered for the shortlist.

Yes, he was a residential school survivor who became a war hero. He was the—one of the most decorated non-commissioned officers in Canadian military history. He was Indigenous leader who had a bold vision, who called for the abolition of the Indian Act in 1947. And he was an Indigenous leader—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Ms. Fontaine: Can the member for Selkirk tell us which PTOs did he consult with on this resolution this morning?

Mr. Lagimodiere: Thank you for the question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in coming up with this resolution, which—it was originally the idea for including Tommy Prince was brought forward by two members of Parliament from Manitoba, Mr. James Bezan, and it was supported by Mr. Marty Morantz, who brought the recommendation forward initially. And in reaching out, I tried to reach out to everybody that I could think of that would have a connection to Mr. Tommy Prince.

And, actually, the other day I was really thankful to be able to have conversations with people who actually worked with—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Mr. Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail): Can the member inform the House as to how many service awards Sergeant Prince was awarded?

Mr. Lagimodiere: As I had said in my discussion here, Sergeant Prince was the recipient of 11 awards during his time in service. The first medal, as I had said, he was awarded for his heroic efforts at the Battle of Anzio, where he received the Military Medal of honour following his contributions there. He also received the Silver Star, the star of Italy, the star of France, the star of Germany, the Defence Medal, the War Medal, just to name a few.

And my colleague from Waverley, who's waiting in the queue, will explain more on the significant medals that Prince was awarded throughout—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Ms. Fontaine: The member failed to mention any PTOs that he consulted with on this resolution.

Can the member, then, provide us with any NIOs that he has consulted with on this resolution?

Mr. Lagimodiere: Once again, Madam Speaker—or, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm sorry, I have reached out to as many individuals as I could. I was attempting to say when I ran out of time a minute ago that I was able to finally reach people who had worked with Sergeant Tommy Prince on his return to Winnipeg, and the description they gave me of this man gave me a lot more insight into exactly who he was.

He was described as a jokester with the people that he worked with. He liked to buy—they said he was very clever, very intelligent and liked to play little jokes on the people that he worked with, very devoted to his—

Deputy Speaker: The member's time is up.

Mr. Reyes: What kind of advocacy was Sergeant Tommy Prince involved in as a veteran?

Mr. Lagimodiere: Sergeant Tommy Prince, as a veteran, when he returned home and—actually in 1947 he was invited to be the vice-president of the Manitoba Indian Association and with that he testified in Ottawa to a special parliamentary committee on the Indian Act. At that meeting he called for the abolition of the Indian Act and the need to see change to give Indigenous peoples their confidence and self-sufficiency back so that they could make their own ways in life.

Throughout his life, he seemed to be an individual who said that Indigenous people needed the confidence and self—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Ms. Fontaine: Again, I've asked the member a couple times whether or not he had any consultation with PTOs and with NIOs. I'm not sure if the member actually knows what those stand for. They're for provincial territorial organizations and national Indigenous organizations of which, across the country, there are many and certainly many here in Manitoba.

And so I'll ask the question again: Did the member consult with any PTOs or NIOs in bringing forward this resolution?

Mr. Lagimodiere: Well, once again, thank you for the question, and I did consult with as many people as I could find that knew anything about Sergeant Tommy Prince.

When I first moved to Selkirk in 1985, I knew absolutely nothing about Sergeant Tommy Prince or his background. It was through my close association with Val Prince [*phonetic*] who, the very first Remembrance Day, who I—who we worked closely with, who started telling me about Sergeant Tommy Prince and how proud she was of him as a relative in her family.

So those connections meant a lot to me and that was, like I say, followed up—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Mr. Lagassé: Can the member for Selkirk, in his opinion, touch on why sergeant price was such a successful service member?

Mr. Lagimodiere: Well, thank you for that question, and I think it goes back to the Prince's growing up where he grain—he gained a lot of traditional land-based knowledge.

He was an individual who could live off the land. He was described as an excellent hunter. He learned to read wildlife signs, could use the wind to his advantage to sneak up on wildlife, which allowed him to sneak up on enemy troops. When he was in the battlefield he could spot 'irregularities' in the environment that most people would not notice.

He is able—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

* (11:20)

Ms. Fontaine: Could the member of Selkirk tell us this morning how many of his members, his colleagues in the PC caucus, took an opportunity to go and visit the teepees that were set up in respect of the theft of money from Indigenous children by his Premier (Mr. Pallister)? Can he tell us how many members went and visited the folks that were camped outside?

Mr. Lagimodiere: I guess I'm not surprised that the members opposite would try and deter and detract from this important resolution that's before us here today. It seems what they usually do.

I would like them to try and focus on the fact that the resolution before us today is to honour Sergeant Tommy Prince and request that the Bank of Canada and the Government of Canada reconsider our request to have them put Sergeant Tommy Prince back on the shortlist and consider him again to be put on the—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up and time for question period has expired.

Debate

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The debate is open. Any speakers?

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): I am pleased to put a couple of words on the record in respect of the resolution for the Inclusion of Sergeant Tommy Prince on the \$5 bill. Certainly, I think—as an Indigenous woman, as an Indigenous member of this House, I think that we can agree that Tommy Prince is more than deserving to be on the \$5 bill. I don't think that that's what is up for debate here this morning.

As a granddaughter of an Indigenous soldier who was only 17 when he enlisted immediately after getting released from residential schools in Sagkeeng First Nation and was captured by the Nazis at the age of 18 and spent nine months as a POW, I can appreciate and honour another relative—an Indigenous relative who served Canada fighting for what should be our freedoms, and the role that this plays in actually allowing me as an Indigenous woman to be in this Chamber here this morning. And certainly that's not at debate.

I think what is important to recognise this morning is really the hypocrisy of bringing forward a resolution such as this. Why is it hypocrisy for any member of the PC caucus to bring forward anything that has to do with any Indigenous peoples or any

Indigenous issues? It is because of the record that the Pallister government has since it took office in 2016.

Let's review what the Pallister government has done since it got elected in respect of Indigenous peoples. I think it's important for Manitobans to know what this Premier (Mr. Pallister) and his whole caucus have done.

We know that they have failed to adequately and fully and robustly consult with First Nations on the Lake St. Martin outlet. We know that the Premier himself uses very racialized language when discussing Indigenous peoples. For example, while I have repeatedly said it in this House, not to—for any member opposite to call—to say our Indigenous peoples.

We don't belong to you. We're not your wards of state. We are sovereign, independent, self-governing, autonomous people who are the original peoples in these territories. And yet the Premier and members opposite—some members opposite—choose to continue to say our Indigenous people.

We know that when the Premier, a couple of years back, decided to go on what he called a reconciliation bike ride—none of us knew what the heck that meant, but it was just a bike ride. And he failed to meet with one single Indigenous person. He failed to meet with one single Indigenous leadership.

And yet, under the guise of this, like, reconciliation bike ride, he managed to—he had time for a PC fundraiser. I don't know how those two things go together, but in his mind, that's what he thought was a reconciliation ride. It's certainly not, Deputy Speaker.

We know that the Premier attempted to establish some type of conflict between Indigenous peoples and the rest of Manitobans when he used very charged language in respect of night hunting. We know that he described Indigenous young males as—what did he call them again—Indigenous men with criminal records.

And I've said it in the House here before as an Indigenous mother to two amazing young Indigenous men, I am particularly offended by that, but I'm offended for all of our—all Indigenous moms who are raising good Indigenous men and who are protecting them as best as we can. For the Premier to utter those words is absolutely grotesque and it is a testament to how he believes and what he thinks about our people.

The Premier, again, in his language—which we know, Deputy Speaker, language is so important. The

discourse that we use informs the way that we understand or view a particular situation. And he used language like, in the last little bit—I think in August 2019, he said, unlike most premiers in the last 60 years I actually grew up next to a reserve.

I don't understand how that has anything to do with anything. Growing up next to a reserve does not mean that you know anything about Indigenous peoples and our cultures and our traditions and our ways of being. But somehow the Premier of Manitoba thinks that because he kind of lived a little bit close to a reserve somehow that gives him excuse for his racism.

We know that the Premier continues with his discourse, again, trying to pit Indigenous peoples here in Manitoba against—or Manitobans against Indigenous peoples when he talks about, you know, to not stand back on a two-tiered justice system when there were land defenders and protectors defending our lands from coast to coast to coast.

In fact, he's used it here quite often in the House to try and attempt to construct me as some, you know, illegal blockader, not realizing I'm proud to stand with my people. I'm proud to stand with people who are protecting the lands, not only for our people, but for all Canadians, and he continues to use that language as well.

I think—the other piece that I think is, and I—we've made no, you know, hiding our disdain and loathe for what the PC caucus and the Premier did in the last couple of weeks, which is, again, under Bill 2, it is now legal for the Premier to steal Indigenous peoples'—Indigenous children's child special allowance, which is earmarked for children for extra-curricular activities, clothes, computers if they need it for school, you know, putting money aside for when children age out of care. The Premier and his caucus all sat by while this occurred, and to add insult to injury, the Premier legislated the constitutional rights of Indigenous children to sue the Premier for those dollars.

And so it is hypocrisy, Deputy Speaker. It is the definition of hypocrisy for any member in the PC caucus to then get up in this House and, once again, try to act as if they are Indigenous saviours, they are the saviours for Indigenous people.

We don't need this government or any single member of the PC caucus to think that they're working in the best interests of Indigenous people when only a couple of weeks ago they voted, they all stood up in

this House and they all voted in favour of stealing Indigenous children's money and legislating the rights of Indigenous children away.

* (11:30)

And so, as I said a couple of weeks ago, you know, it's not enough to tweet support for Tommy Prince or tweet support on Orange Shirt Day or tweet support on October 4th in respect of MMIWG2S. It is absolute hypocrisy tweeting and saying this stuff and getting up in the House on member's statements or ministerial statements or, in this case, resolutions when, on the other side of your mouth, you're voting, you're standing up in this House using the power and the privilege that you have because you're government to get up in this House and vote on legislation and legislate so many egregious things on behalf of Indigenous people.

And so, as I said a couple of weeks ago, take Indigenous people's names out of your mouth. Do not come up with any more bills or resolutions or member's statements. We don't want to hear it, as Indigenous peoples. You—the members of the PC caucus talk outside both of their mouths. We're on to them and they need to stop.

Miigwech.

Mr. Jon Reyes (Waverley): Again, thank you for the opportunity for allowing me to speak on this resolution, which was put forward by my good friend and honourable member from Selkirk.

As a Manitoban who was proud to don on the uniform to serve in the Canadian Armed Forces, as many of you are aware, I did serve as a reservist in the Canadian Army in the regular force with the Royal Canadian Navy.

It gives me great pride and pleasure to know I come from a province that has produced many great decorated war veterans, which includes the likes of Canadian First World War fighter ace and Victoria Cross recipient William George "Billy" Barker, the most decorated serviceman in the history of Canada, from Dauphin, Manitoba; Andrew Mynarski, an airman and a recipient as well of the Victoria Cross from Winnipeg, Manitoba; and Thomas George Prince, or better known as Sergeant Tommy Prince, an Indigenous Canadian war hero and one of Canada's most decorated First Nations soldiers, serving in World War II and the Korean War, from Petersfield, Manitoba.

I've had the pleasure to serve with many from our country, including Indigenous soldiers. I'm very proud of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Those three names alone shows you the significance of Canada's military history right here, coming from our province. I was not surprised that Manitoba's very own Sergeant Tommy Prince is being considered being on the \$5 bill, along with many other deserving Canadians on the short list.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, to be honest with you, I did not know 'til years into my military career about the likes of Billy Barker or Tommy Prince. I did recognize the name Andrew Mynarski because I know of the junior high school named after him close to the high school I attended. I know the significance in the name of Valour Road in the West End of Winnipeg, but I was really taken aback when I found out about the history of Sergeant Tommy Prince.

I did not know about how the elite 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion's nickname, the Devil's Brigade, is mainly attributed to Sergeant Tommy Prince's own daring courage and bravery. This special operations unit was famed, among other achievements, for Sergeant Tommy Prince's infiltration and scouting feats in Italy, which seem too impressive to be done.

In the mountains of Italy, Sergeant Tommy Prince, carrying his famed pair of moccasins, would infiltrate enemy camps and steal or leave items just to let the enemy know that he was able to sneak past lines and sentries. These acts won him a promotion from corporal to sergeant, as well as fame amongst the Allied troops.

The epitome of his qualities can be described by a battle occurring near Rome in 1944. After breaking through and establishing a beachhead just south of the capital, the Devil's Brigade defended the contested flank. In one battle involving enemy artillery, Sergeant Tommy Prince used his abilities to sneak through occupied territory to within 200 yards of the front lines carrying a long telephone wire to an abandoned farmhouse.

Here, on the cusp of enemy lines, he was able to use telephone wire to communicate important information with his battalion to aid in winning this crucial battle. At one point, the telephone line was cut by enemy shellfire. So what did Sergeant Tommy Prince do? Instead of considering the job well done already and sneaking back to the battalion, he promptly dressed himself in farmer's clothes and, with the enemy watching, fixed a telephone wire while tending to his crops.

After the war, Sergeant Tommy Prince stated that he simply set up an artillery post and got rid of a few enemy placements, but his actions obviously took so much more courage than his downplayed explanation. This daring act won Sergeant Tommy Prince the Military Medal award for his inspiring courage and bravery. This was only the first of many medals that Sergeant Tommy Prince would receive over his military career.

In fact, Veterans Affairs declared that Sergeant Tommy Prince is one of Canada's most decorated Indigenous soldiers. I did not know that Sergeant Tommy Prince was one of the only three Canadians to ever receive both the Military Medal and Silver Star and had the distinction of having them both awarded to him by King George VI in person.

I would also learn by the end of World War II, Sergeant Tommy Prince would accumulate six other service medals. These were: the 1939-1945 Star, the Italy Star, the France and Germany Star, the War Medal and the Defence Medal, all awarded by the United Kingdom, and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal award.

After his tenure with the Devil's Brigade, Sergeant Tommy Prince rejoined the army in 1950 to serve during the Korean War. As a sergeant, he inspired new recruits with his impassioned attitude, stories from World War II and especially leading by example.

During the most famous battle in the Korean War, the Kapyong offensive, Sergeant Tommy Prince halted a panic-induced retreat with his strong leadership and morale boost. As his unit was instrumental to Canadian infantry's victory during this battle, the unit was awarded the United States presidential citation. Sergeant Tommy Prince further showed not only how elite a fighter he was, but how strong a leader he was by being the commander of the only Canadian unit to ever be given this award.

By 1952, Prince—Sergeant Tommy Prince accumulated 10 service medals—more than any other sergeant in the Canadian Army. However, despite this unparalleled achievement, he fell into obscurity here in his birth province following the Korean war. Historians have since deduced that he likely suffered from an acute case of PTSD, which wasn't used as a classification until 1980.

After his service, he received little support from the government and was therefore unable to acclimatize to a civilian's lifestyle. The historic

practice of transferring Indigenous soldiers' veterans grants directly to the minister of Mines and Resources didn't help either, as it actively stole Sergeant Tommy Prince's well-earned living.

I have been to his grave site at Brookside Cemetery. We honoured him a few years ago by unveiling a plaque to recognize and commemorate his service and displaying it right here in the Hall of Honour of our very own Manitoba Legislature. To have him recognized on the \$5 bill would be a great way—another step in reconciliation with all First Nations peoples across Canada, and for Canadians to know who Sergeant Tommy Prince was, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

That is why I support this resolution. Lest we forget.

Thank you.

House Business

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): Mr. Deputy Speaker, on House business.

Pursuant to rule 33(11), I'm announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private members' business will be the one put forward by the honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Lamont). The title of the resolution is Call for an Inquiry into the Provincial Government's COVID-19 Second Wave Response.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It has been announced by the Government House Leader that, pursuant to rule 33-11, I am announcing that the private member's resolution being considered for the next Tuesday of private members' business will be one put forward by the honourable member for St. Boniface. The title of the resolution is call for the inquiry into the provincial government's COVID-19 second wave response.

All in order.

Mr. Ian Bushie (Keewatinook): It gives me great pleasure to be able to rise today to put a few words on the record in regards to the PMR, which is the inclusion of—and asking for the inclusion of Sergeant Tommy Prince to be included on the \$5 bill.

* (11:40)

When I hear that—the members opposite speaking about this issue—and my colleague from St. Johns, who spoke about this issue, who did not in the

remotest way question the need for Sergeant Tommy Prince to be included on the bill. Her comments, her questions and her concerns are raised on the integrity of the Conservative government bringing this forward and their lack of integrity on Indigenous issues to be able to bring this forward.

Instead, the comments that I hear back and forth from the Conservatives in response to the concerns and the questions raised by an Indigenous member of our caucus, an Indigenous woman of our caucus, is that—to question why we disagree with this inclusion on this bill. And that couldn't be any further from the truth.

This is something that we wholeheartedly are in support of, but I question the honour and integrity of the PC caucus and the members of this government bringing forth this bill and claiming to speak for and on behalf of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous rights, Indigenous issues in this province.

With Sergeant Tommy Prince, we talk about the honour and—the honour that he brought to his family, to his people, to his country. And nowhere did I hear from this PC government in this resolution the honour that he brought to the province of Manitoba.

Instead, what I hear is how he was—Sergeant Tommy Prince was discriminated against, was put down, was let down by the federal government. He, in fact, was also let down by the provincial government; the provincial government of the day of his time when he was alive and to this day disrespecting the honour and what he stood for as an Indigenous person and—Indigenous person here in Manitoba.

Sergeant Prince is a role model, and most people, when they're alive and in the moment, do not realize that what they are doing is role modelling. They just go about their lives and that's the normal, everyday this - is - how - I - am -this-is-what-I-do-this-is-what-I'm-meant-to-do kind of mentality and kind of thinking. So Sergeant Prince led his life that way.

And today, where—we are now recognizing his achievements. We are recognizing what he brought to Indigenous people, what he brought to these communities, his family, the country and the province. But again, nowhere in the discussions here does the Conservative government talk about the responsibility of the province to Sergeant Tommy Prince.

So the question that was asked by my colleague from St. Johns to the member from Selkirk is exactly who was consulted on this matter, who did you talk to

on this matter. And instead, it was—it's a simple question. It's a simple question. It shouldn't be all that difficult to answer. You know, did you speak to the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, Tommy Prince's home community? Did you speak to his family? Did you speak to his descendants to say this is what we're thinking about doing?

I understand that Brokenhead is in the riding of Selkirk, but so are a lot of other issues and things that go on in that community. So I don't know—and I see that Conservative government on that side likes to knock on wood and say we knocked on doors and point out and say, did you knock on the door? So I also ask the member from Selkirk, did you go knock on those doors and did you truly get a sense of who Tommy Prince was and what he meant to his community and what he meant to his people? Or did you just pull out a book and say, this is what I want to do, I want to look like we're having and we're representing Indigenous rights, representing Indigenous peoples and we want to do what's right by Tommy Prince?

Well, if you want to do what's right by Tommy Prince, then why don't you do what right by what Tommy Prince stood for, what Tommy Prince fought for? Tommy Prince fought for equality. Tommy Prince fought for the rights of his people, the rights of his community, the rights of himself. And he was continuously beat down, disregarded.

And when he returned home from fighting the fight for something that we take for granted everyday, was he rewarded? Was there a parade for him when he came back? Was his life celebrated in that moment? No.

Instead, like all other issues with this Conservative government, Indigenous peoples are afterthoughts, are just—there's a token appreciation given to our communities and given to our people to say that this government is actually speaking and representing our people, our beliefs, our rights, and that couldn't be further from the truth.

So when I hear the word honour and integrity come from this Conservative government in regards to First Nation issues and, in this case, Sergeant Tommy Prince and what he brought, you have no right to talk about questioning the honour and integrity of family members speaking on the behalf of Tommy Prince, people that have lived the life of Sergeant Tommy Prince, because there's people that are living Tommy Prince's life today. And what's happening to those people today? They're being disregarded, being

pushed aside, just like Sergeant Tommy Prince was in the prime of his life. He was disregarded. He was pushed aside. He was an afterthought.

We—you talk about his struggles that he had just to be able to go and fight for the country, fight for the province, fight for his people, fight for non-Indigenous people, and he was just turned away. He was shunned to be able to say, you have no right to do that. But as Indigenous people and as a strong Indigenous leader of his time, he still said, you know what? I don't care what you say. I'm going to fight this fight. I'm going to fight as much as I can with all that I have and with all that I am and bring my abilities to best represent my people and my country.

And what did he ask in return? Did he ask for a parade? Did he ask to be included on the \$5 bill? Did he ask for buildings to be named in his name? No, he didn't. But that is something that is absolutely owed to him. That is something that every person, not just Indigenous people in this province, owe to Sergeant Tommy Prince; they owe this recognition to him. They owe that honour to him. They know that that honour to his legacy and what he stood for, not as a false token of appreciation, which is what this PMR is representing.

There's been governments and there's been Conservative governments before this day today. Why wasn't that mentioned then? Why is this all of a sudden being mentioned now?

Sergeant Tommy Prince, if he was alive today, would've been out in that teepee, those teepees that are outside, supporting what's going on for his community, supporting what's going on for his people. Would he then, if he was alive today, be there? Would he be called a blockade, an anarchist, somebody who's just pushed aside?

But, instead, today, because he's not here to speak, to speak his mind, to speak what he fought for, instead what do we have? We have a Conservative government speaking for him, putting words that they think they know what he's saying. They think you know what Aboriginal people and Indigenous people are saying, and that's just hypocritical of this government to be able to do that.

So when we talk about supporting Sergeant Tommy Prince, there is supporting Sergeant Tommy Prince, who he was an Indigenous leader, and then there's also supporting Tommy Prince for what he stood for as an Indigenous leader, and he stood for the rights of Indigenous people, the rights of his

community and the rights of all Canadians, which is being trampled by this government, which is being trampled at all levels by this Conservative government in whatever aspects, in whatever programs that Sergeant Tommy Prince fought hard for, ultimately gave his life for.

Did he give his life on the field of battle over in war? To a certain degree, yes, he did. Ultimately, he succumbed his life living in the province. So he went out and fought for a better life for his community, for his people, but when he came back here, did he get to experience that better life? No, he did not. He was shunned. He was pushed aside. He was homeless. So there was no celebratory parade. There was no, here, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you. There was none of that. Instead, it's an afterthought.

So when we talk about supporting Sergeant Tommy Prince on this bill and what we want to do, we absolutely want to do that. But this government has no right to be able to do that and speak on his behalf.

So, Sergeant Tommy Prince, miigwech, and thank you—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

* (11:50)

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): It is a pleasure to put some words on the record. I think one thing that hasn't been mentioned today is that Tommy Prince was a direct descendant of Chief Peguis. In fact, chief—the former chief of Brokenhead, Jim Bear, is Tommy Prince's nephew.

And one thing that Peguis and Tommy Prince and so many other Indigenous leaders, including Louis Riel and Elijah Harper, have in common is that they all stood up and they protected the rest of us. And that is an incredibly important thing to recognize when we talk about reconciliation.

The fact is that there are—and when we talk about treaty acknowledgements and talk about what we get from our relationship—very one-sided and unfortunate relationship with Indigenous people, how they've been mistreated over the years—is that we should be grateful for the fact that we have a life to life and a place to live because of hospitality of Indigenous people who have literally, in many cases, saved the lives of settlers who came to this place.

It's also important to recognize the abysmal treatment of Indigenous veterans that lasted decades.

I know that when Tommy Prince's medals came up for sale that Jim Bear and Bill Shead helped secure them again to bring them back to Manitoba. They were in the Manitoba Museum, where I was lucky enough to work about 15 years ago. And his fight for rights is incredibly important.

I will note that he was actually in Manitoba Liberal government, I think, in 1953 that very belatedly made it possible for all First Nations to vote in provincial elections.

And I did—Jim Bear and his wife, who are friends, reached out to me to say that this is an initiative that should be supported. There are some really truly outstanding individuals who are—who are being considered for the banknote. It's unfortunate that Tommy Prince is—was not on the list. The other people on the list are outstanding, are really incredible people as well, including Terry Fox.

I just want to say, the thing about Tommy Prince is that his—he was an exceptional person in so many ways, an exceptional leader. But the experience that he had was one that was all too common, which is that as an Indigenous person he went to fight for a country and free people in another land only to return home to find he was treated as a second-class citizen and denied the very rights that he helped fight for in Europe.

And I will say that the tragedy of Indigenous people ending up in forced poverty is not new. It continues. The fact that Tommy Prince ended up at the Salvation Army—there are many people at the Salvation Army today who as the consequences of policies, which I will say they're really are forced poverty.

The decisions of provincial and federal governments to force Indigenous people to live in a way that denies them their self-reliance, that denies them their ability to—and access to opportunity, there's no question that that is something that is—that is the history of—that is the history of Canada and the history of Manitoba in treating Indigenous people. As one person put it, it's as if we've been forcing First Nations people to live under lockdown for 150 years. They're forced to live in austerity and forced—and denied those things.

So this is, in many ways, if we were to understand all of Tommy Prince's story, it would be—it certainly would be incredibly important for Manitobans and Canadians to understand. There are other individuals—again, Peguis is one—who helped the first settlers, the

Selkirk settlers, made—live through the first winter. There's also the story of John and Betsey Ramsay who helped Icelandic settlers live through their first winter.

There are literally tens of thousands of people alive today because of Indigenous leadership, because people stood up and helped and reached out a hand to settlers. And in terms of—when we think of that gratitude that we should show and to think about reconciliation of what is required, that we have an obligation to return that hospitality and return that generosity and protect people who have been our neighbours for so many decades and to return—essentially return the hospitality that we failed to do so.

So I will say I do think that there are some positive aspects. This is a bill—this is a proclamation that we can support, but we need to do much more than make essentially symbolic gestures. We have to back these things up with action and words.

I do agree with the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine) that—and I said this the night the budget passed—it is very difficult when this government has passed a bill, a budget bill, to strip people away—to strip the constitutional right of children to access money that was theirs, that was taken from their—wrongfully. This is something that, as I said at the time, is a very serious line to be crossed and it, frankly, undermines any—it undermines the moral authority of this government whenever people want to talk about being friendly to Indigenous people or reconciliation.

So with that, Tommy Prince absolutely deserves recognition. Like I—as I said, there is—are other excellent people on the bill, he deserves—and his story deserves to be told because people need to understand the terrible sacrifices that Indigenous soldiers made, going back decades, only to be slapped in the face and treated as second-class citizens when they returned. We have a lot of work to do.

Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for Dawson Trail (Mr. Lagassé). The honourable member for Dawson Trail? Or—is your mic off?

Okay, then we'll go on to the honourable member for Union Station.

MLA Uzoma Asagwara (Union Station): I appreciate having a couple of moments to put some words on the record in regards to this resolution.

I think, you know, on this side of the House, we certainly understand the importance of Sergeant Prince being recognized for his tremendous sacrifice and contributions to our communities, not just here in Manitoba but certainly, you know, within the—this country as a whole.

I take very seriously—as a member of this House, as a member of our communities in Manitoba and as a citizen of this country, I take very seriously anti-racism work. I take very seriously the realities of how racism impacts black and Indigenous and people of colour.

And I think it's really important for someone like myself, a black person living in Manitoba, to speak up and challenge anti-Indigenous racism when I see it and when I hear it. It is incumbent on non-Indigenous people to speak up and call out anti-Indigenous racism. It should not be the sole responsibility of Indigenous folks to push back and fight against anti-Indigenous racism.

And so with the little time that I have, I want to make sure to explicitly state in this House that, since the Premier (Mr. Pallister) took office, he has espoused anti-Indigenous racism time and time again. It is deplorable, it is harmful. We know concretely that racism kills. We see this with MMIWG2S. We see this in how systemic racism manifests in our health-care system, in terms of housing, poverty.

We know this. It's fact. It's backed by evidence and research. And so it is critically important that the

person who holds the most power in office in this province be responsible in the way they use language. And this Premier—a smart, informed, educated person—has intentionally espoused anti-Indigenous racism time and time again and has, in fact, delivered and passed, through all members of his PC caucus, racist legislation in this House.

And so, in identifying the tremendous accomplishments and contributions of Indigenous people from our province and the legacies that they leave us with—the amazing legacies that they leave us with—we must also recognize the people within systems of power who perpetuate the very harms against Indigenous peoples that they are fighting to overcome. And this Premier and that entire PC caucus have participated in just that.

And so, part of my responsibility and the responsibility of all members of this House is to recognize that—is to stand against it and to commit to performing our duties from a place of anti-racism, and recognizing that some people in this province experience greater challenges and barriers based on discrimination—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. When this matter is before us—again before the House, the honourable member for Union Station (MLA Asagwara) will have seven minutes remaining.

The hour being 12 p.m., the House is recessed and stands recessed until 1:30 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, November 17, 2020

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