

Montréal, April 23, 2024

## Media Statement

# PolySeSouvient Responds to CBC story re Canada Post Letter Refusing to Participate in Buyback of Assault Weapons:

**PolySeSouvient** is deeply disappointed with **Canada Post's** [refusal](#) to support the implementation of the law and this key public safety measure to protect **Canadians** from gun violence and save lives.

**Canada Post** - a crown corporation owned by the federal government - has deep experience providing protective conveyance of millions of parcels every year, including the delivery of guns sold by manufacturers and retail stores. Given these facts, it is unacceptable for **Canada Post** not to readily provide its expertise for the federal government's buyback program, which a majority **Canadians** [support](#).

**Canada Post's** [refusal to participate](#) in the buyback program based on "concerns about its employees' security" with respect to "conflicts with gun owners" is undermining a key **Liberal government** commitment and, if left to stand, will make communities across **Canada** more at risk of gun violence. We question these concerns.

We are calling on the **Public Services and Procurement Minister, the Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos**, and the **Public Safety Minister, Dominique LeBlanc**, to work with **Canada Post** to resolve any safety concerns as quickly as possible and no later than the scheduled start of the buyback program, in the coming months.

There is no sound reason for the federal government to be unable to deliver on its long-standing promises to implement the buyback program. The Liberal government has had four years to figure out how to roll out this program. While political obstacles from some key stakeholders were predictable, it never occurred to us that a block would come from a federally owned corporation which is accountable to the federal government.

### WHERE EXACTLY IS THE SAFETY RISK?

Based on the process outline in [this report](#) as well as **Canada Post's** [current firearms delivery process](#), the notion that the buyback endangers staff is questionable:

- **Why would Canada Post be afraid of owners of the prohibited weapons?** ... who would attack clerks (behind the counter) who have no power and don't even know what's inside the parcels? In fact, owners who will sign up for the program and go to the post office branches will be those who want to comply and receive their payment...
- **Do they think the pro-gun lobby could direct their followers to harass - or other fanatics would harass - their employees?** How would these individuals go about it, exactly?... go into

small stores and yell at the poor clerks behind the counter who are just earning a living? Find and threaten top executives in their private offices in corporate head offices that have security? Go after executives on social media, as has happened to other gun control vendors or supporters? That said, is it legitimate for a government agency to give in to this kind of pressure/threats, if any, especially in relation to a public safety issue? If the risk of such behaviour is real, shouldn't the government look at who would be making or encouraging such threats (media reports that the Canadian Coalition for Firearms Rights (CCFR) [has encouraged](#) this kind of campaign in the past... but given widespread condemnation, it's doubtful they would repeat this).

Other potential safety concerns:

- **Are that many of these boxes in one place represent a risk?** No one will know how many of these boxes are in a location, not even the clerks. The boxes will undoubtedly be neutral from the outside, so they can't be singled out (unless someone inspects the destination on the label of each parcel in a branch or on a truck!).
- **Are firearm transfers dangerous in and of themselves?** It turns out that Canada Post has the most expertise and the greatest capacity among all delivery services for this kind of delivery: right now, they're doing this kind of transfer every day, all over the country, and in much larger numbers than the buyback program... According to available information, the buyback would use the SAME process that currently exists.

The failure to implement the buyback program will not only allow tens of thousands of fully functional assault-style weapons, capable of inflicting massive injury and deaths, to remain in circulation, it will also seriously jeopardize the partial 2020 ban on assault weapons, as a future pro-gun government could simply render these models legal again.

This statement can be attributed to **survivor and PolySeSouvient spokesperson Nathalie Provost.**

## Background information:

Background information on previous harassment of employees:

[https://polysesouvient.ca/Documents\\_2024/DOCU\\_24\\_04\\_18\\_Harassment\\_CieEmployees.pdf](https://polysesouvient.ca/Documents_2024/DOCU_24_04_18_Harassment_CieEmployees.pdf)

The **Liberal Party** committed to banning assault weapons in all three of the last federal elections: in **2015**, **2019** and **2021**, including a specific promise for a mandatory buyback in 2019 and 2021. 80% of Canadians [support](#) a total ban on assault weapons. Senior **Liberals** like **Montreal cabinet minister Mélanie Joly** credited their party's strong gun control commitments on assault weapons as a [deciding factor](#) in the 2021 election, allowing them to regain momentum after a weak campaign start.

And yet, tens of thousands of assault weapons prohibited in 2020 remain in the hands of their owners (including an [estimated 90,000 AR-15s](#)), while hundreds of arbitrarily exempted models [stay legal](#), and [new ones](#) continue to hit the market. With respect to models prohibited in 2020 destined to be part of the buyback program, their number is evaluated at [between 125 000 and](#)

200 000 (in addition to 10 000 to 15 000 in commercial inventories), although this remains an estimate since many of the targeted firearms were previously non-restricted and therefore not registered at the time they were prohibited. Industry projections are much higher.

Studies show that in active shooter situations semi-automatic rifles [wound and kill twice as many people](#) as those using weapons that don't self-load, and fatality rates from gunshot injury [increase significantly with the caliber](#) of the firearm. Research also shows that attacks involving large-capacity magazines [result in](#) a much higher average death toll, with jurisdictions that allow these devices having twice as many mass shootings as those that [ban](#) them. Moreover, the **RCMP** has repeatedly [alerted the federal Minister of Public Safety](#) as to the risk posed to public safety by the availability of these weapons.

The new definition of "prohibited firearm" in **C-21** only applies to models of assault weapons [that had not yet been invented at the time of its adoption, and is easily circumventable](#). Hundreds of [models](#) remain legal (and non-restricted), and magazines that surpass five rounds remain [widely accessible](#). **Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc** [committed](#) last October to introducing a new **Order in Council** to complete the 2020 ban and to eliminate magazine loopholes, but so far there has been no detectable progress. The **Canadian Firearms Advisory Committee** that was supposed to deliver recommendations, [before August 31, 2023](#), to review the classification of existing firearms [has yet to be revived](#).

To deliver on its promise to **Canadians** to [ban assault weapons](#) and [deadly accessories](#) before the next election, the **Liberal government**, needs to:

1. ban current assault weapons by eliminating the arbitrary exemptions in the 2020 Order in Council,
2. roll out the buyback without delay and complete it by October 2025,
3. eliminate the [loopholes and exemptions](#) that make a mockery of the rules aimed at banning large capacity magazines, and
4. implement a robust pre-authorization process before new models hit the Canadian market in order to prevent [misclassifications](#).

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