



Survivors & Victims' Families Stunned by Incomplete and Ineffective Amendment Purportedly Banning Assault Weapons

Weaker amendment to Bill C-21, replacing withdrawn amendments G-4 and G-46, a victory for the gun lobby

Montreal, May 1, 2023 – Victims' families, witnesses and survivors of the 1989 **Polytechnique** mass shooting who have fought over three decades to ban assault weapons in **Canada** say they are stunned by what they perceive to be a total capitulation of the **Trudeau government** to the **NDP's duplicitous stand** on banning assault weapons.

"The amendment that is being proposed by **Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino** in no way constitutes a ban on assault weapons, a measure that both the **Liberals** and the **NDP** have committed to delivering. They are proposing a watered down definition that applies only to future models and can be easily circumvented [see [Appendix C](#)] and are dropping the plan to ban the thousands of **assault weapons in circulation today** – those that were arbitrarily exempted in 2020," said **Nathalie Provost, a survivor of the Polytechnique mass shooting** who was shot four times by the gunman. "This is yet another betrayal of all the victims of mass shootings – **Polytechnique, Dawson, the Quebec Mosque** – who have dedicated years of their lives to fight for a ban on military-style weapons, as well as the **overwhelming majority** of **Canadians** who don't want these firearms in their communities.

While **NDP leader Jagmeet Singh** repeatedly stated on April 25, 2023 that he and his party unequivocally support banning assault weapons, he refused to answer repeated questions from reporters [at [17:18](#), [19:20 \(SKS\)](#), [19:39](#), [20:30](#) and [21:33](#)] regarding his stance on those that are currently on the market. Amendments G-4 and G-46 would have eliminated the exemptions in the 2020 OICs that allowed these weapons to remain legal and **added 482 models** to the list of prohibited weapons as reflected in amendment G-46.

"We can only assume that that **Mr. Singh's** lied last week **when he said** his party supports banning assault weapons and that the **Liberals** succumbed to the **NDP's** covert refusal to support such a ban when faced with the opportunity to do so," said **Provost**

"In 2022, I believed them. We all believed them. Despite **the past**. That is why we supported Bill C-21. Who can we believe now? Who will actually stand up for the safety of all Canadians in the face of an ever-expanding gun market, escalating social tensions and an expanding gun rights movement? Are the daily **mass shootings** in the US not a sufficient reminder that we need to get this right? Once and for all? I am devastated," adds the **PolySeSouvient spokesperson**.

"An ineffective ban on future assault weapons and no ban on current ones means that new models will continue to enter the market and tens of thousands will remain legal and non-restricted, including the **infamous SKS**, a Soviet military weapon that has been involved in several recent mass shootings in **Canada** and which was used to shoot 11 police officers in the last seven years, **killing six**," highlighted **Boufeldja Benabdallah, Cofounder of the Quebec Mosque**.

“My family and I have fought for three decades to ban these weapons. I lost my husband Jim who was never able to witness the end of our fight. We thought we had won in the fall of 2019 when the Liberals announced with much fanfare that they would ban and buyback all of these killing machines. They lied back then, and they lied again in 2023 when [they promised to amend C-21 in order to deliver](#) a comprehensive ban. The **Bloc Québécois** supports a total ban so if the **Liberals** wanted to do it, they could, cause they have the votes. Instead, they have chosen political expediency over the public’s interest,” said **Suzanne Laplante-Edward, mother of Anne-Marie** who was shot and killed at **Polytechnique**.

“Rather than keep their [campaign promises](#) to **Canadians** to ban assault-style firearms, **Justin Trudeau** and **Jagmeet Singh** have decided to leave these weapons of mass murder in our communities, [doubtless](#) for their own personal political gain: **Trudeau** to retain support for his government from the **NDP** in a minority Parliament, and **Singh** to appease the demands of his MPs who represent rural and northern ridings, where a campaign of [disinformation](#) by the gun lobby has made a ban on assault weapons controversial,” said **Meaghan Hennegan**, who survived the **Dawson** shooting.

“These watered-down amendments are a win for the gun lobby. Owners of prohibited assault weapons that are destined to be bought-back will simply take that money to buy new ones, and a future **Conservative** government will have a much easier time legalizing assault weapons again, as thousands will already be in private hands. This weakened amendment essentially mean that assault-style weapons will remain in cities and towns across **Canada** for decades to come. As a consequence, whether in a classroom, place of worship, shopping mall or anywhere else in their communities, **Canadians**, including police officers, will remain at higher risk of being murdered or seriously injured by assault style weapons. These watered-down amendments are a failure of the avowed leadership from **Prime Minister Trudeau**,” concludes **Nathalie Provost**.

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