TO THE HONOURABLE THE SENATE OF CANADA IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

The PETITION of the undersigned, residents of Canada,

Humbly Sheweth:

THAT the majority of Canadians are law-abiding citizens who respect the law;

THAT the crime rate in Canada will not decrease if mandatory registration of firearms legislation is passed; and that stricter penalties on offenders would be a more appropriate solution to crime;

THAT the majority of Canadians are opposed to those measures in the Government Action Plan and in Bill C-68 that impose needless burdens on law-abiding Canadians such as the registration and licensing of firearms;

THEREFORE your petitioners pray that: The Senate of Canada will do all in its power to defeat Bill C-68;

AND as in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

Honourable senators, there are now 4,371 signatures on this petition, as I have added my own to it.

Hon. Gerry St. Germain: Honourable senators, I have the honour to present the following petition signed by 2,500 people from every region in the province of British Columbia from Prince George to Delta and Surrey:

TO THE HONOURABLE SENATE OF CANADA IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

The petition of the undersigned citizens of Canada humbly showeth that Bill C-68, a bill concerning firearms and other weapons, is unwarranted and intrusive legislation which needlessly targets law-abiding firearms owners and which attacks the very foundations of the democratic principles of this country.

Hon. Leonard J. Gustafson: Honourable senators, I should like to present the following petition:

TO THE HONOURABLE SENATE OF CANADA IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

The petition of the undersigned citizens of Canada humbly showeth that Bill C-68, a bill concerning firearms and other weapons, is unwarranted and unnecessary legislation which needlessly targets law-abiding Canadians and which attacks the very foundation of the democracy principles of this country.

There are thousands of signatures here. I have not counted them, but they give some indication of the concern about this legislation, especially in rural Saskatchewan, parts of Alberta and B.C.

Hon. Duncan J. Jessiman: Honourable senators, I have the following petition to present:

TO THE HONOURABLE SENATE OF CANADA IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

We, the undersigned, do not feel that registering and restricting the use of sporting guns will reduce crime in this country. It will only add cost and waste time for honest and responsible gun owners. It will also cost taxpayers a lot of money to enforce. We enjoy the sport of hunting and shooting, and hope our children, too, would get the chance to enjoy it. Additional costs and hassles introduced by further restrictive legislation will no doubt discourage them from taking up the sport.

This petition was signed by approximately 1,000 persons in the province of Manitoba outside the city of Winnipeg.

Hon. Willie Adams: Honourable senators, I have a petition to present with 1,552 signatures from the Baffin region, the Keewatin region and Aklavik, with regard to forcing Bill C-68 upon the Northwest Territories.

QUESTION PERIOD

JUSTICE

SALE OF AIRBUS AIRCRAFT TO AIR CANADA—ALLEGED CONSPIRACY TO DEFRAUD FEDERAL GOVERNMENT—TABLING OF LETTER TO SWISS AUTHORITIES—REQUEST FOR ANSWER

Hon. J. Michael Forrestall: Honourable senators, I invite the Leader of the Government in the Senate to respond to a question I asked of her on November 20 concerning the complexity of tabling a pertinent letter in this chamber. That letter concerned the request of another government to pursue a certain matter.

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have made inquiries. I was advised that, no, it would not be possible to table that letter. That letter is confidential.

Senator Forrestall: Honourable senators, it certainly is confidential; there is no doubt about that. So that the record is clear, could the minister indicate what makes it confidential? Is it confidential because of an agreement that would require the permission of another authority to release it, or is it an internal matter?