

later completed, and became known in 1964 as the "Fulton-Favreau Formula", the latter name being that of the Minister of Justice at that time, Guy Favreau. This text was approved by the federal-provincial conference of the Prime Minister and premiers on October 14, 1964.

The Fulton-Favreau Formula provoked varied opposition, particularly to its perceived inflexibility and to the possibility that differences of opinion would arise as to the rule applicable in any particular case. Opposition in the Province of Quebec was particularly strong; some opponents even claimed that the Formula was a "strait-jacket" that would hinder the development of a cherished "special status". Following more than a year of debate and delay, Mr. Lesage, then Premier of Quebec, concluded that his government would postpone indefinitely its consideration of the Formula. With this refusal to sanction the proposal, the unanimous approval of the provinces that Ottawa had sought as a matter of sound political practice (though not legal necessity) was left unachieved.

Constitutional discussions were renewed in February 1968, with the convening of a conference of first ministers, and agreement was reached to embark on a comprehensive review of the Constitution. From that date to June 1971, fundamental questions were examined in six sessions of first ministers, many sessions of ministers on special subjects, and some two dozen meetings of officials. A session in February 1971 indicated wide agreement on a number of matters, including a formula for amending the Constitution, and resolved to discuss draft texts as well as the issue of social policy and income security measures at the seventh meeting of first ministers in June 1971 in Victoria, B.C.

Victoria Conference

Much preparation preceded the Victoria meeting, including bilateral discussions and the deliberations of committees of ministers and officials. From these efforts and the extensive negotiations at the Victoria Conference itself, came the "Canadian Constitutional Charter, 1971", perhaps (in one commentator's words) "the most important product of the nation's attempt at constitutional review and revision". A number of constitutional reforms were proposed in the Charter, certain fundamental political freedoms were entrenched, and a new mechanism for amending the constitution was set down, which would have cleared the way for the "patriation" of the Constitution.

In general, in the nine predominantly English-speaking provinces, public opinion and politicians showed themselves to be in favour of the proposed Charter. However, strong opposition to it quickly deve-