

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Stollery:** Our country stands for freedom of conscience and religion, freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression—

**Mr. Stevens:** How about property?

**Mr. Stollery:**—including freedom of the press and other media communication, freedom of peaceful assembly and association. Canadians will be assured through the charter of the rights to move freely across the country from one province to another, take up residence and pursue employment in any province.

**An hon. Member:** On freight trains.

**Mr. Stollery:** I presume hon. members opposite do not believe in these fundamental freedoms which are being guaranteed in the charter of rights. Certainly they think they are pretty funny; I guess they will vote against them.

Canadians will have legal rights which include the right to life, liberty and security; the right to equality before the law; protection against unreasonable search or seizure, arbitrary detention and imprisonment; protection against denial of counsel, undue delay of trial and cruel or unusual treatment or punishment; protection against self-incrimination, and the right to the assistance of an interpreter.

**Mr. Stevens:** We have all those.

**Mr. Stollery:** Canadians will be protected from discrimination on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, physical or mental disability. Those Canadian citizens of the English or French language minority in a province will have the right to educate their children in that language wherever numbers warrant. The charter recognizes and affirms the aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada.

● (2100)

**Mr. Taylor:** What does it mean?

**Mr. Stollery:** The charter attempts to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians. We will have done all of this to continue the shaping of a free, orderly and humane society, which is the envy of the world, without a civil war or a bloody revolution. In other words, we have done all of this peacefully. You would have to search long and hard, Mr. Speaker, to find another people who can say the same.

Last week the eight premiers, after months of talk and promises, once more attempted to hatch a stone. One of the characteristics of this constitutional debate is the need for those, like myself—and I see a member opposite shaking his head—to continually restate the obvious. It is obvious that the premier's position would be unacceptable to any responsible national government. I add that the Conservative proposal presented tonight would be unacceptable to any responsible national government. For example, it is obvious that you

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cannot have a country if different rights for citizens apply in different provinces of that country. Yet that is what the premiers propose—

**Mr. Taylor:** Why not?

**Mr. Stollery:** The hon. member opposite asks why not.

**An hon. Member:** That is what you do with your amending formula!

**Mr. Stollery:** If the members opposite would show the same courtesy I showed when I listened to their spokesman when he presented his proposal a few minutes ago, I would appreciate it. I think I deserve it. I have listened to this kind of nonsense for five months and I have not taken the opportunity to be as difficult with members opposite as they have been with me. It is called freedom of speech, something members opposite say we have already. But they were not so willing to give it to us two weeks ago when we were not even allowed to debate the question at hand.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Stollery:** If the proposal of the premiers were accepted, it would inevitably lead to disintegration of this country. They propose that if a province does not like some part of the charter, or if in the future a province does not like some constitutional amendment adopted by a formula agreed to by the provinces, then that province should simply ignore that constitutional amendment or right. How could the country possibly survive that? The premier of Newfoundland would apparently like jobs in Newfoundland to be preserved for Newfoundlanders. If Ontario was in economic difficulty, the next step would be that it might decide jobs in Ontario are to be preserved for the residents of Ontario. Quebec, Saskatchewan and Alberta could easily decide the same thing. That is what eight premiers of this country are proposing. It is not far-fetched to believe that some provinces in this country might not be enthusiastic about aboriginal rights. Well, they decide that they will just opt out of that section of the charter of rights so that the native peoples of Canada will have some rights in some provinces and other rights in other provinces. As I said, it seems characteristic in this debate to restate the obvious, to show that that kind of approach to nation building is doomed to failure.

Political rhetoric aside, I know that many members opposite, including members from western Canada, including members from Alberta, think that the constitutional proposal is not such a bad one. What must they think of the antics of their premiers? How can the premiers come out after all these months with virtually the same negative position that they had last September?

**Mr. Taylor:** Speak for yourself.

**Mr. Stollery:** How can they really say that Canadians should not have the same rights in all parts of Canada? How can they seriously propose that provinces should have the right to opt out of any future amendment to the Constitution which