

consulted in countless informal ways that made their overwhelming support for confederation abundantly clear.<sup>62</sup>

We have already seen the staunch loyalty of the vast majority of the participants in the Confederation Debates to the British monarchy and we shall examine below their widespread contempt for republicanism and democracy, especially in their American incarnations. Despite these commitments, both sides in the Confederation Debates revealed a surprising acceptance of the liberal principle demanding popular consent for major constitutional change. Political strategy governs the manner in which this acceptance becomes manifest. The anti-confederationists shout it from the roof tops, while their opponents grumble discretely about the practical problems of implementing in deed the doctrine they will not condemn in principle.

#### The Centrality of Public Administration

Americans following recent constitutional vagaries in Canada were surprised to learn that less than a month after the 1995 Quebec referendum, Prime Minister Chrétien delivered himself of the opinion that “[t]he real problems in Canada are economic growth and the creation of jobs and good solid administration.”<sup>63</sup> That the Prime Minister of Canada would mention “good solid administration” as one of the nation’s three “real” problems in the immediate aftermath of a referendum that nearly destroyed his country must surely have struck interested Americans as extraordinary and perhaps even as bizarre. Public administration is not prestigious activity in the United States. It is inconceivable that an American president in the midst of a great constitutional crisis would turn to administration --good and solid or otherwise--as the path to political salvation. Not so in Canada. Chrétien’s remark was part of a national chorus that evoked the muse of administration to inspire politicians to achieve the high statesmanship needed to bind up the nation’s wounds. Constitutional debates over the very survival of the regime moved effortlessly into detailed discussions of such classic administrative themes as environmental