

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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SUMMER CAPITALS

The well-known practice in India of transferring the seat of government annually back and forth between a lowland and a highland location has prevailed for two generations and is said to be amply justified on economic grounds. Simla, 7,000 feet above sea level, provides an ideal climate for government officials and their families during the hot season in spring and the rainy season in summer. Increased efficiency and reduction of expenses arising from illness are among the strong arguments in favor of this practice, which was imitated in the Philippines soon after the Americans acquired the islands, a summer capital being established at Baguio (altitude 4,640 feet), about 170 miles by road from Manila.

Because the summer climate of Washington is hot and humid, the idea of a similar transfer of United States government offices to a cooler location in summer has been canvassed informally for many years. The annual migration of the President to a "summer White House" in a cooler part of the country has been customary under some administrations, though not under the present one. Probably, however, Washington is destined to remain the year-round seat of government, now that the artificial cooling of buildings is coming rapidly into vogue. Cooling plants are already installed in the White House and the Capitol and will be included in most of the new federal buildings now under construction.

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