

The Government of Federal Capitals*

by
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Every federal state faces a difficult task in trying to decide how its national capital should be governed. The problem of governing any capital is difficult because there is always a conflict of interests between the central government and the people who live in the capital city. The central government wishes to control and develop the capital in the interests of the nation as a whole, while the people of the city naturally wish to govern themselves to the greatest extent possible. In addition, the governing of a federal capital presents a special problem which is inherent in the very nature of federalism: if the national capital of a federal union comes under the government of any one state of the union, that state is in a position to dominate the federation's capital, and the central government does not have control over its own seat of government.

John Hamilton Gray, one of the fathers of the Canadian Confederation, foresaw this problem very clearly, and in 1872 gave the following eloquent exposition of it:

At the time of the [Confederation] Convention, one mistake occurred: no provision was made for creating a Federal District for the capital, and withdrawing it from the exclusive control of the local legislature of one of the Provinces. That which was designed to be the capital of the Confederation, might fairly rest its claim for support on the people of the Dominion. Its order, well being, sanitary arrangements, police regulations, adornments and improvements are essential to the comfort and security, not only of the repre-

sentatives who attend parliament, but of all those who are compelled to resort to it as the capital of the country in the discharge of the various duties attendant upon the administration of public affairs. Its reputation should be national, not provincial. It belongs no more to Ontario than it does to New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec or any of the provinces constituting the Confederation... [yet] the legislation for the capital in all civil matters is entirely under the control of one province, differing in its laws from the others...

Thus we see that the character of a national capital, the security of those who attend it, the elimination of sectional and provincial interests in its government, the preservation of the national public property, the protection of the public interests, and the maintenance of the national reputation of its status, are too important to be left to local councils, however good they may be.

Americans have their capital, Canadians have no capital for their country. They borrow a municipality from Ontario, and whether they come from the Provinces of the Atlantic or the Pacific, or whether from Quebec or Manitoba, their representatives in the Dominion Parliament have no power to legislate on any matter touching the property or civil rights of the so-called capital of the Dominion, however great the wrong to be redressed or the evil to be remedied. This should not be (1).

It was this line of reasoning, then, that was the basis for the federal district idea — the proposition that a federal capital should be governed within a federal district or territory under the exclusive jurisdiction of the central government. The early creation of the District of Columbia in the United States was a recognition of this principle that the federal capital should not be governed for state and local purposes by only one of the states of the union. The South American federations, which were

* This article is a revision of the Introduction and Conclusion to a book which I have edited, *The Government of Federal Capitals*. The book contains essays on individual capitals by different authors, and is being published in 1971 by the University of Toronto Press. Some of my discussion appeared in an earlier article, "The Problems of Governing Federal Capitals", *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 1, no. 3 (September 1968, 345-356). I should like to thank the publishers for permission to reproduce the material. My analysis is based on information given in the book, and also on a recent study-tour of all federal capitals except Lagos and Yaoundé. I should like to thank the Canada Council for a Senior Fellowship and a research grant which made the study-tour possible.

(1) *Confederation of Canada* (Toronto, 1872), 108-10.

The Government Of Federal Capitals

Prabha Chopra



The Government Of Federal Capitals:

The book delves into The Government Of Federal Capitals. The Government Of Federal Capitals is an essential topic that needs to be grasped by everyone, ranging from students and scholars to the general public. This book will furnish comprehensive and in-depth insights into The Government Of Federal Capitals, encompassing both the fundamentals and more intricate discussions.

1. The book is structured into several chapters, namely:
 - Chapter 1: Introduction to The Government Of Federal Capitals
 - Chapter 2: Essential Elements of The Government Of Federal Capitals
 - Chapter 3: The Government Of Federal Capitals in Everyday Life
 - Chapter 4: The Government Of Federal Capitals in Specific Contexts
 - Chapter 5: Conclusion
2. In chapter 1, the author will provide an overview of The Government Of Federal Capitals. The first chapter will explore what The Government Of Federal Capitals is, why The Government Of Federal Capitals is vital, and how to effectively learn about The Government Of Federal Capitals.
3. In chapter 2, the author will delve into the foundational concepts of The Government Of Federal Capitals. The second chapter will elucidate the essential principles that need to be understood to grasp The Government Of Federal Capitals in its entirety.
4. In chapter 3, this book will examine the practical applications of The Government Of Federal Capitals in daily life. The third chapter will showcase real-world examples of how The Government Of Federal Capitals can be effectively utilized in everyday scenarios.
5. In chapter 4, the author will scrutinize the relevance of The Government Of Federal Capitals in specific contexts. The fourth chapter will explore how The Government Of Federal Capitals is applied in specialized fields, such as education, business, and technology.
6. In chapter 5, this book will draw a conclusion about The Government Of Federal Capitals. The final chapter will summarize the key points that have been discussed throughout the book.

The book is crafted in an easy-to-understand language and is complemented by engaging illustrations. This book is highly recommended for anyone seeking to gain a comprehensive understanding of The Government Of Federal Capitals.

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The Government Of Federal Capitals Introduction

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