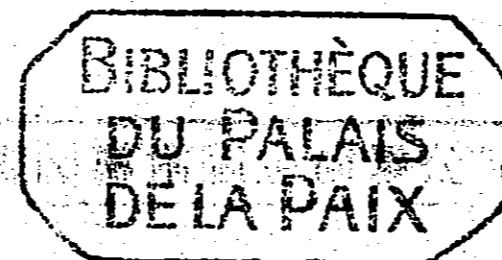




RURAL WATER SUPPLIES

Memorandum by the Minister of Health
and the Secretary of State for Scotland
explaining proposed Financial Resolution.

*Presented by the Minister of Health to
Parliament by Command of His Majesty,
January, 1934*



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RURAL WATER SUPPLIES.

Memorandum explaining proposed Financial Resolution.

1. The purpose of this resolution is to authorise the Minister and the Department of Health for Scotland to make contributions in aid of the provision or the improvement of water supplies in rural localities, subject to such conditions as the Treasury may determine.

2. The resolution provides for contributions not exceeding in total £1,000,000 by the Minister and £137,500 by the Department of Health for Scotland.

3. In England and Wales, Local Authorities may under the general law make charges on consumers for water supply, and if the income from such charges is insufficient to meet the annual charges in respect of the scheme, the deficiency is treated, in a rural district, as special expenses chargeable on the parish concerned, except in so far as the rural district council out of its general fund or the county council contribute to the cost in exercise of their powers under Sections 56(1) and 57(1) of the Local Government Act, 1929. It is not proposed that the Exchequer assistance shall supersede the provisions of these sections. Owing to the great difference in the circumstances of different rural localities, it is not possible to lay down any definite rules according to which assistance may be granted. It is contemplated that contributions shall be made only when without assistance the provision of water supplies would not be practicable and shall be limited to the amount of assistance, if any, which may be necessary after allowance has been made for reasonable charges on consumers and the maximum contributions which can reasonably be expected from the County Council and Rural District Council under the above-mentioned section of the Local Government Act, 1929, regard being had to the financial position of those Councils and of the parish for whom the supply is intended.

4. In Scotland expenditure on water is normally met out of rates levied by Town Councils in burghs and by County Councils in special districts formed for water supply in the landward area. Water rates are also leviable by a number of Water Boards or Trusts in their area of supply under local Acts. Charges may be made for water supplied by meter or contract for purposes other than ordinary domestic purposes. Under Section 33 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1929, contributions may be made by the County Council from the proceeds of the public health general assessment leviable in the landward area towards the expenditure

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on water supply in a special district. In distributing the Exchequer assistance, it is contemplated that each case shall be considered on its merits and that regard shall be had to the amount of the rate contribution made under Section 33, and to the financial position of the local authority of the area for which the supply is intended.

5. The contributions to be made by the Minister or by the Department of Health for Scotland will normally be by way of a lump sum contribution towards the capital cost of the works, but in exceptional cases—for example, where the expenses are in respect of periodical liabilities under a lease or hiring agreement or contract for the supply of water—they may be by way of an annual payment for a period not exceeding 20 years.

6. It is proposed that the Minister or the Department of Health for Scotland shall have power to withhold or reduce a contribution towards the expenses of a scheme if the manner of the execution of the works has been unsatisfactory or any default has been made in carrying out the transaction.