

COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS OFFICE.

# ANNUAL REPORT ON BASUTOLAND

## FOR THE YEAR

1948

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## Chapter X: Public Utilities and Public Works.

### Water:

The Water Supplies in Maseru and other District centres are owned and operated by Government. Its Institutions, Hospitals, Gaols, Police Camps and its African and European staff represent by far the largest consumers.

For the last few years, particularly in Maseru, the water supply has been inadequate. This was particularly noticeable in the last three months of the year when a serious drought stopped the flow of the Caledon River entirely for short periods. In Maseru householders were asked to economise in the use of water and the watering of gardens was prohibited.

A Water supply scheme financed from Colonial Development and Welfare funds was approved in 1946 which when completed will safeguard against the critical situations mentioned above. The existing storage capacity of the reservoirs will be increased from 498,000 gallons, enough for five days normal summer requirements, to approximately 4,000,000 gallons. In addition improvements will be carried out to the existing spring water supply and the pipe distribution system. A new pumping station, sedimentation, filtration and chlorination plants will be erected at the Caledon River.

During the year the work on this scheme continued satisfactorily. Except for the storage and the new service reservoirs, the concrete work has been completed and about one third of the new pipe lines has been paid.

Water supplies at District centres are also being improved. The reservoir at Butha Buthe was completed during the year and a reticulation survey was carried out at Leribe.

In the villages, where springs are the normal source of supply, the usual maintenance work was carried out by Government.

Most of the trading stores in the interior also rely on springs for their water supplies.

### Electricity:

The only Electricity Supply undertaking in the Territory is at Maseru. It supplies electricity to the township and the Leper Settlement four miles distant and until March 1948 was owned and operated under a fifteen year concession by the firm of Reunert and Lenz, Engineers of Johannesburg.

**Typhoid Fever:** 159 cases were notified, of which the majority came from the Maseru and Mafeteng Districts. There were 18 deaths. The infection was water-borne in every case and in many instances it was found that the villagers were using water from dams or soil erosion furrows. Wherever there was a large outbreak, prophylactic inoculation with T.A.B. vaccine was carried out.

**Tuberculosis:** 484 cases of pulmonary tuberculosis with 38 deaths were notified. This shows a decrease of 261 cases in the number reported in 1947.

**Pellagra:** 1802 cases were reported from Government Dispensaries; this shows an increase of 334 on 1947 figures and a decrease of 738 on 1946 figures. The majority of the cases was seen in the north, (Leribe 561 and Teyateyaneng 480).

**Avitaminosis:** 571 cases were reported. This occurred mostly among children and was usually due to protein deficiency resulting from the lack of milk.

**Food Supplies:** These have been plentiful during the year under review, owing to good rains at the end of 1947 and beginning of 1948.

**Water Supplies:** The protection of village springs has continued, 5 new springs having been built and 25 repaired. During the first nine months of the year water supplies were good, but owing to the drought in the latter three months, the position has deteriorated and a great many springs have dried up, with the result that many villagers are suffering hardship in obtaining sufficient water.

**Sanitation:** Generally this is primitive. With few exceptions where septic tanks have been installed, the disposal of sewage in Government reserves is done by the bucket system. In Maseru the contract for clearance by mechanical transport, which was instituted in December 1947, is working well.

The Health Inspector for Maseru, who was appointed in 1947, has carried out great improvements in sanitation generally and in the closer supervision of the Abattoir and inspection of meat.