

(d) INDUSTRIAL PLAN COMMITTEES

75. There are five Industrial Plan Committees established under Part II of the Act to assist with the administration of industries. The position of the four main industries involved is briefly summarized below :—

(i) *Radio Manufacturing Industry*

76. During the year further consideration was given to the survey of this industry, which had been carried out the previous year and which showed that a considerable expansion of this industry had taken place during the war years, and that most of the factories were also engaged in making a wide range of products not subject to licensing, such as intercommunication equipment, electrical apparatus, carpet-sweepers, tricycles, electric fires, and ballasts for fluorescent lighting. In addition, some of the licensees also service radio sets and engage in the retail sale.

77. After fully considering the survey the Bureau recommended to the Minister that as the industry was well established there seemed little purpose in maintaining the control under the Act. The Radio Plan Industrial Committee found no cause for disagreement with the Bureau's recommendation, but felt that the industry should be consulted first. At this stage it seems that the licensees are equally divided on the question whether licensing should continue. During the year several licences were granted to discharged servicemen who had the necessary technical knowledge and experience.

(ii) *Flax-milling (Phormium tenax) Industry*

78. The world shortage of hard fibres and the critical position of jute-supplies from India has rendered it more than ever necessary to effect a much-needed stimulus to the growing and milling of phormium in the Dominion. This industry has been declining steadily over the past ten to fifteen years. In 1930 there were 57 mills operating, and at present there are 19 only.

79. Production figures of fibre and tow for the past five years are :—

1941-42	3,371 tons.
1942-43	3,961 tons.
1943-44	6,637 tons.
1944-45	4,969 tons.
1945-46	3,496 tons.

These figures are for the period 1st July to 30th June, and may vary from previous figures given due to change in period of calculation. Indications are that this year's production will not reach that of 1945-46.

80. To meet the needs for manufacture of woolpacks, rope, binder twine, lashings, and fibrous plasterers and upholsterers, approximately 4,300 tons of fibre and tow are required annually in addition to the normal requirements of sisal and manila. As manila is almost unprocureable at present and sisal importations are on a quota equal only to about five-eighths of our requirements, it can be seen that a very critical supply position has been reached.

81. To meet this position Cabinet has now approved measures for the rehabilitation of the industry, and these measures are in the process of being carried out. They include—

- (1) That the Government guarantee the purchase of the total annual production of phormium fibre at prices fixed from time to time :
- (2) That finance be made available to approved millers in amounts and on terms and conditions as approved by the Minister of Finance on the recommendation of the Minister of Industries and Commerce :
- (3) That improved conditions of wages and accommodation for workers be given consideration, together with the training of young men to fill key positions at the mills.