

3. Without prejudice to the generality of the powers under this Act, the Board of Trade shall obtain from all available sources information as to the nature, extent, and development of trusts, companies, firms, combinations, agreements, and arrangements connected with mining, manufactures, trade, commerce, finance, or transport, having for their purpose or effect the regulation of the prices or output of commodities or services produced or rendered in the United Kingdom or imported into the United Kingdom, or the delimitation of markets in respect thereof, or the regulation of transport rates and services, in so far as they tend to the creation of monopolies or to the restraint of trade, and the Board of Trade shall, for the purposes of this section, utilize the powers of investigation and of appointing committees conferred upon them by this Act.

4. The Board of Trade may, if they think fit, authorise local authorities, subject to such conditions as the Board may impose, to purchase and sell any article, or articles of any class, to which this Act applies, and any local authority so authorised shall have all necessary powers for the purpose, but such conditions shall, as far as possible, insure that any local authority so purchasing and selling shall proceed on a commercial basis and not by way of subsidy at the expense of the ratepayers.

5. The proceedings before the Board of Trade or any committee or tribunal under this Act shall, unless in special cases the Board of Trade otherwise direct, be held in public, where such proceedings are founded on a complaint.

Save as aforesaid, information and documents required to be given or produced to the Board of Trade or to a committee or tribunal under this Act shall be treated as confidential, except in cases where the person giving or producing the same otherwise agrees, and in cases where legal proceedings are taken, for the purpose of such proceedings:

Provided that nothing herein shall be taken as preventing the Board or any committee or tribunal from publishing their findings and decisions. Any investigation under this Act shall, for the purposes of the law relating to libel and slander, be deemed to be proceedings before a court exercising judicial authority.

6. The powers of the Board of Trade under this Act shall, in relation to articles of food or drink to which this Act applies, be exercised jointly or in agreement with the Food Controller.

7.—(1) The expenses of any local committees established by local authorities under this Act shall be defrayed by the local authorities out of such fund or rate, and in such manner as may be directed by the Board of Trade; and any expenses of the Board of Trade under this Act to an amount not exceeding seventy-five thousand pounds, shall, subject to the approval of the Treasury, be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament.

(2) Such expenses may in either case include such payment to the chairmen and members of committees and tribunals, in respect of their travelling expenses and loss of time, as appears to the Board reasonable and is approved by the Treasury.

(3) Any fines imposed at the instance of a local committee established by a local authority under this Act shall be applied in aid of the fund or rate out of which the expenses of the committee are required to be paid under this Act, and any other fines imposed under this Act shall be paid into the Exchequer.

8.—(1) This Act may be cited as the Profiteering Act, 1919.

(2) This Act shall continue in force for six months and no longer, unless Parliament otherwise determines.