



Industrial Courts Act 1919

1919 CHAPTER 69

PART II

COURTS OF INQUIRY

4 Inquiry into trade disputes

- (1) Where any trade dispute exists or is apprehended, the Minister may, whether or not the dispute is reported to him under Part I. of this Act' inquire into the causes and circumstances of the dispute, and, if he thinks fit, refer any matters appearing to him to be connected with or relevant to the dispute to a court of inquiry appointed by him for the purpose of such reference, and the court shall, either in public or in private, at their discretion, inquire into the matters referred to them and report thereon to the Minister.
- (2) A court of inquiry for the purposes of this Part of this Act (in this, Act referred to as "a court of inquiry") shall consist of a chairman and such other persons as the Minister thinks fit to appoint, or may, if the Minister thinks fit, consist of one person appointed by the Minister.
- (3) A court of inquiry may act notwithstanding any vacancy in their number.
- (4) The Minister may make rules regulating the procedure of any court of inquiry, including rules as to summoning of witnesses, quorum, and the appointment of committees and enabling the court to call for such documents as the court may determine to be relevant to the subject matter of the inquiry.
- (5) A court of inquiry may, if and to such extent as may be authorised by rules made under this section, by order require any person who appears to the court to have any knowledge of the subject-matter of the inquiry to furnish, in writing or otherwise, such particulars in relation thereto as the court may require, and, where necessary, to attend before the court and give evidence on oath, and the court may administer or authorise any person to administer an oath for that purpose.

5 Reports

- (1) A court of inquiry may, if it thinks fit, make interim reports.
- (2) Any report of a court of inquiry, and any minority report, shall be laid as soon as may be before both Houses of Parliament.
- (3) The Minister may, whether before or after any such report has been laid before Parliament, publish or cause to be published from time to time, in such manner as he thinks fit, any information obtained or conclusions arrived at by the court as the result or in the course of their inquiry :

Provided that there shall not be included in any report or publication made or authorised by the court or the Minister any information obtained by the court in the course of their inquiry as to any trade union or as to any individual business (whether carried on by a person, firm, or company) which is not available otherwise than through evidence given at the inquiry, except with the consent of the secretary of the trade union or of the person, firm, or company in question, nor shall any individual member of the court or any person concerned in the inquiry, without such consent, disclose any such information.