

SAORSTÁT EIREANN.

BILLE CHUN PRAGHSANNA DO RIALU, 1932. CONTROL OF PRICES BILL, 1932.

*Mar do leasúidh i gCoiste.
As amended in Committee.*

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SCHEDULE.

SAORSTÁT EIREANN.

BILLE CHUN PRAGHSANNA DO RIALU, 1932.
CONTROL OF PRICES BILL, 1932.

BILL

5

entitled

AN ACT TO MAKE PROVISION FOR CONTROLLING THE
PRICES OF COMMODITIES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE OIREACHTAS OF SAORSTÁT
EIREANN AS FOLLOWS:—

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PART I.

PRELIMINARY AND GENERAL.

1.—This Act may be cited as the Control of Prices Act, 1932. **Short title.**

2.—In this Act—

Definitions.

15 the expression “the Minister” means the Minister for Industry
and Commerce;

the expression “protected commodity” means a commodity
which if imported into Saorstát Eireann would on importation
be liable to a customs duty or a commodity the importation of
which into Saorstát Eireann is prohibited or restricted by law;

20 the word “specification” when used in relation to any com-
modity means such detailed particulars of such commodity as may
be required for the identification of such commodity for the pur-
pose of ascertaining the value thereof;

25 the word “prescribed” means prescribed by regulations made
by the Minister under this Act;

the word “inspector” means a person authorised in writing by
the Minister to exercise the powers conferred by this Act on an
inspector.

30 3.—(1) Each of the following commodities shall be a scheduled
commodity for the purposes of this Act, that is to say:—

**Scheduled
commodities.**

(a) the several commodities mentioned in the Schedule to
this Act;

35 (b) any other commodity which is by order of the Executive
Council made under this section declared to be a
scheduled commodity for the purposes of this Act.

(2) The Executive Council may by order under this section
declare any commodity of common use to be a scheduled com-
modity for the purposes of this Act.

40 (3) Every order made under this section shall be laid before
each House of the Oireachtas as soon as may be after it is made
and if a resolution is passed by either such House within the
next subsequent twenty-one days on which such House has sat
after such order is laid before it annulling such order, such order
shall be annulled accordingly but without prejudice to the validity
of anything previously done under such order.

Prosecutions
by the Minister.

4.—Save as otherwise expressly provided by this Act, any offence under any section of this Act may be prosecuted by or at the suit of the Minister as prosecutor.

General
regulations.

5.—The Minister may by order make regulations in relation to any matter or thing referred to in this Act as prescribed or to be prescribed. 5

Laying of
orders and
regulations
before Houses
of Oireachtas.

6.—Every order and regulation made by the Minister under this Act shall be laid before each House of the Oireachtas as soon as may be after it is made, and if a resolution is passed by either House of the Oireachtas within the next subsequent twenty-one days on which that House has sat annulling such order or regulation, such order or regulation (as the case may be) shall be annulled accordingly, but without prejudice to the validity of anything done previously under such order or regulation. 10

Expenses.

7.—All expenses of carrying this Act into execution shall, to such extent as may be sanctioned by the Minister for Finance, be paid out of moneys provided by the Oireachtas. 15

PART II.

PRICES COMMISSION AND CONTROLLER OF PRICES.

Establishment
of Prices
Commission.

8.—(1) As soon as conveniently may be after the passing of this Act, there shall be established a Commission (in this Act referred to as the Commission), which shall be known as and styled the Prices Commission, to fulfil the functions assigned to the Commission by this Act. 20

(2) Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Commission shall consist of five members (in this Act called ordinary members) of whom at least two shall be women and of whom one who may be a woman shall be a person representative of agricultural interests. 25

(3) The ordinary member who is required to be a person representative of agricultural interests shall be nominated by the Minister after consultation with the Minister for Agriculture and the other ordinary members shall be nominated by the Minister. 30

(4) Every ordinary member shall hold office during the pleasure of the Minister. 35

(5) Whenever it appears to the Minister that on account of illness or for other sufficient reason an ordinary member of the Commission is temporarily unable to discharge his duties as such member, the Minister may appoint a person to act as an ordinary member for such period (not exceeding the duration of such inability) as he shall think proper, and every person so appointed to act as an ordinary member of the Commission shall during the period for which he is so appointed be an ordinary member of the Commission in the place of such first-mentioned ordinary member. 40

Additional
members of the
Commission.

9.—(1) The Minister may from time to time for the purposes of any particular investigation by the Commission appoint such and so many persons (not being ordinary members) to act as additional members of the Commission as he thinks fit. 45

(2) Every additional member so appointed shall for the purposes of the investigation for which he is appointed be a member of the Commission. 50

Chairman
of the
Commission.

10.—(1) The Minister shall appoint one of the ordinary members to be Chairman of the Commission and the ordinary member so appointed shall hold office as such Chairman during the pleasure of the Minister. 55

(2) Where at any sitting of the Commission the Chairman of the Commission is absent, the members of the Commission present at such sitting shall appoint one of such members to act as such Chairman at such sitting.

11.—Any member of the Commission may, if the Minister for Finance so directs, be paid such remuneration and allowances as the said Minister shall determine. Remuneration of Commission.

12.—No member of the Commission shall act as such member for the purposes of any investigation by the Commission under this Act if such member is, in the opinion of the Minister, substantially interested in any industry, trade or business with which such investigation is directly concerned. Prohibition of interested person acting as member.

13.—The proceedings of the Commission shall not be invalidated by reason of the existence of any vacancy amongst the members or any defect in the appointment of any member. Validity of proceedings of the Commission.

14.—(1) As soon as conveniently may be after the passing of this Act, the Minister shall appoint a person (in this Act referred to as the Controller) to be known as and styled the Controller of Prices. Controller of Prices.

(2) The Controller shall act as secretary to the Commission and shall discharge the other functions assigned to him by this Act.

(3) The Controller shall hold office upon such terms and be remunerated at such rates and in such manner as the Minister for Finance shall direct.

15.—The Minister, with the consent of the Minister for Finance, may appoint such and so many persons as he shall consider necessary to be officers of the Commission, and such persons shall hold office upon such terms and be remunerated at such rates and in such manner as the Minister for Finance shall direct. Staff of Commission.

16.—The Commission shall make regulations for the governance of its proceedings and may by such regulations make provision for all or any of the following matters, that is to say:— Regulations for proceedings of the Commission.

- 30 (a) the quorum at any sitting of the Commission;
- (b) the times and places of the sittings of the Commission;
- (c) the persons to whom notice of the sittings of the Commission shall be given;
- 35 (d) the form and manner in which submissions shall be made and evidence given to the Commission, and in particular, whether such submissions and evidence shall be given *viva voce* or in writing;
- (e) the attendance for *viva voce* or cross-examination of persons who have made submissions or given evidence in writing;
- 40 (f) the admission or exclusion of any person to or from the sittings of the Commission;
- (g) such matters as appear to the Commission to be necessary or expedient for the proper conduct of its business.

45 17.—(1) The Commission shall have all such powers, rights, and privileges for enforcing the attendance of witnesses and examining them on oath (which any member of the Commission is hereby authorised to administer) or otherwise, and for compelling the production of documents as are vested in the High Court, or a judge thereof in respect of the trial of an action, and a summons signed by any one or more members of the Commission shall be equivalent to and have the like effect as a formal process issued by the High Court for enforcing the attendance of witnesses and compelling the production of documents. Powers of Commission.

(2) If any person—

(a) on being duly summoned as a witness before the Commission makes default in attending, or

(b) being in attendance as a witness refuses to take an oath legally required by the Commission to be taken, or to produce any document in his power and control legally required by the Commission to be produced by him, or to answer any question to which the Commission may legally require an answer, or

(c) does any other thing which would, if the Commission were a Court of Justice, having power to commit for contempt of court, be contempt of such court,

the Commission may certify the offence of that person under their hands to the High Court and that court may, after such inquiry as it thinks proper to make, punish or take steps for the punishment of that person in like manner as if he had been guilty of contempt of the said court.

(3) A witness before the Commission shall be entitled to the same immunities and privileges as if he were a witness before the High Court.

Notice of investigations by the Commission and submissions by interested persons.

18.—(1) Whenever the Commission are required by this Act to make an investigation, the Commission shall cause notice of the making of such investigation to be published in the *Iris Oifigiúil* and in such other manner as the Commission thinks suitable.

(2) On the publication of a notice under the foregoing section any person may make a submission to the Commission in relation to the subject matter of the investigation to which such notice relates.

Prohibition on disclosure of information.

19.—(1) Subject to the provisions of this section it shall not be lawful for any person who is a member or an officer of the Commission to disclose any information available to him only by virtue of the powers of obtaining information conferred upon the Commission or upon an inspector by this Act to any person other than a member or officer of the Commission concerned with such information in the course of his duties.

(2) It shall not be lawful for any person (other than a member or officer of the Commission) who attends a sitting of the Commission to disclose to any person any information acquired through being present at such sitting and which is available only by virtue of the powers of obtaining information conferred upon the Commission or an inspector by this Act.

(3) If any person acts in contravention of this section he shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding fifty pounds or imprisonment for a period of six months or at the discretion of the Court to both such fine and such imprisonment.

(4) Nothing in sub-section (1) of this section shall apply to the disclosure of any information—

(a) to the Minister in a report (not being an annual report) or other communication from the Commission, or

(b) for the purposes of legal proceedings taken or proposed to be taken under this Act.

Annual Reports by the Commission.

20.—The Commission shall, as soon as may be after the close of every year, make to the Minister a general report of the proceedings of the Commission under this Act, and the Minister shall cause every such general report received by him to be laid forthwith before each House of the Oireachtas.

21.—The Minister may appoint the Commission to hold a public inquiry for the purposes of section 17 of the Housing (Financial and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1932 (No. 19 of 1932), and whenever the Minister so appoints the Commission to hold any such inquiry, the following provisions shall have effect, that is to say:—

Appointment of Commission to hold inquiries under section 17 of the Housing (Financial and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1932.

(a) the Commission shall hold such inquiry;

(b) the provisions of this Part of this Act relating to the following matters, that is to say, regulations for proceedings of the Commission, powers of the Commission, notices of investigations by the Commission and submissions by interested persons, prohibition on disclosure of information and annual reports by the Commission, shall not apply in respect of such inquiry.

PART III.

RETAIL AND WHOLESALE PRICES.

22.—(1) Where the Minister sends a request to the Commission to investigate whether unreasonably high retail prices or unreasonably high wholesale prices (as may be specified in such request) are being charged throughout Saorstát Eireann or in any specified part thereof for any scheduled commodity which conforms to the specification set out in such request, the Commission shall as soon as may be make an investigation (in this Part of this Act referred to as a price investigation) in accordance with such request.

Investigations into retail and wholesale prices of scheduled commodities.

(2) Before sending under the immediately preceding subsection a request to the Commission to make an investigation into the price (whether retail or wholesale) of butter the Minister shall first consult the Minister for Agriculture.

(3) Where any person (other than the Minister) sends a representation in the prescribed form and containing the prescribed particulars representing that unreasonably high retail prices or unreasonably high wholesale prices (as may be specified in such representation) are being charged throughout Saorstát Eireann or in any specified part thereof for any scheduled commodity which conforms to the specification set out in such representation, the Commission shall, if and only if they are of opinion that an investigation should in the public interest be made, make subject to the provisions of the next following subsection as soon as may be an investigation (in this Part of this Act also referred to as a price investigation) into the subject matter of such representation.

(4) Where a representation under the immediately preceding subsection relates to the price (whether wholesale or retail) of butter, the Commission shall refer such representation to the Minister for Agriculture and shall not make any investigation into the subject matter of such representation except with the consent of the said Minister.

23.—(1) Where after the completion of a price investigation the Commission are of opinion that the prices the subject of such investigation are not unreasonably high the Commission shall report accordingly to the Minister.

Proceedings consequential on price investigation.

(2) Where after the completion of a price investigation the Commission are of opinion that the prices the subject of such investigation are unreasonably high the following provisions shall have effect, that is to say:—

(a) the Commission shall give notice (in this section referred to as a price reduction notice) to the persons by whom such prices are being charged stating the opinion of Commission and the price to which such prices should in the opinion of the Commission be reduced, and requiring such reduction to be made within a time specified in such notice;

- (b) if as a result of such notice such reduction is made within such time the Commission shall report accordingly to the Minister;
- (c) if notwithstanding such notice such reduction is not made within such time the Commission shall make a report to the Minister setting out—
 - (i) the reasons for their opinion that the prices the subject of such investigation are unreasonably high,
 - (ii) their opinion as to whether such prices are influenced by any agreement or combination for interfering with free competition,
 - (iii) their opinion as to the price to which the prices the subject of such investigation should be reduced,
 - (iv) their opinion as to the best methods of enforcing such reduction,
 - (v) if in the opinion of the Commission a maximum price should be fixed by order of the Minister under this Part of this Act, the area to which such order should apply.

Price orders.

24.—(1) Where the Commission recommend in relation to any scheduled commodity that the Minister should make an order under this sub-section fixing a maximum retail price for such commodity, the Minister may, if he so thinks fit and subject to the provisions of this section, make an order (in this Act referred to as a price (retail) order) fixing as the maximum retail price for such commodity such price as he thinks fit.

(2) Where the Commission recommend in relation to any scheduled commodity that the Minister should make an order under this sub-section fixing a maximum wholesale price for such commodity, the Minister may, if he so thinks fit and subject to the provisions of this section, make an order (in this Act referred to as a price (wholesale) order) fixing as the maximum wholesale price for such commodity such price as he thinks fit.

(3) In this Act the expression "price order" shall be construed as equivalent to the expression "a price (retail) order or a price (wholesale) order."

(4) Every price order shall specify the following things, that is to say:—

- (a) the date on which such order is to come into force;
- (b) the duration of such order;
- (c) the area to which such order is to apply.

(5) Before making a price order in relation to butter the Minister shall first consult the Minister for Agriculture.

Validity of price orders.

25.—The making of a price order shall be *prima facie* evidence that such order was validly made in all respects.

Revocation and amendment of price orders.

26.—(1) The Minister may by order under this section revoke or amend a price order.

(2) Before making an order under this section revoking or amending a price order in relation to butter, the Minister shall first consult the Minister for Agriculture.

Offences in relation to price orders.

27.—(1) Whenever a price (retail) order is in force in relation to any scheduled commodity, it shall not be lawful for any person who carries on any business for trade or gain to sell or offer for sale retail in the course or as part of such business at any place in the area to which such order applies any commodity to which such order applies at a price in excess of the maximum price fixed by such order.

(2) Whenever a price (wholesale) order is in force in relation to any scheduled commodity, it shall not be lawful for any person who carries on any business for trade or gain to sell or offer for sale wholesale in the course or as part of such business at any
5 place in the area to which such order applies any commodity to which such order applies at a price in excess of the maximum price fixed by such order.

(3) If any person acts in contravention of this section, such person shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall
10 be liable on summary conviction thereof, in the case of a first offence, to a fine not exceeding five pounds, and in the case of a second or any subsequent offence, to a fine not exceeding ten pounds, or, at the discretion of the Court, to imprisonment for any term not exceeding three months, or to both such fine and
15 imprisonment.

PART IV.

OVERCHARGING FOR COMMODITIES NOT THE SUBJECT OF PRICE ORDERS.

20 **28.**—The Controller shall not do any act or thing or make a certificate under this Part of this Act in relation to the price (whether wholesale or retail) of butter except he is authorised in writing by the Minister for Agriculture to do such act or thing or make such certificate. Restriction on proceedings under Part IV.

25 **29.**—(1) Any person may make in writing to the Controller a complaint (in this Part of this Act referred to as a complaint) alleging that a person who carries on a business by way of trade or for the purposes of gain has sold or offered for sale to him in the course or as part of such business at an unreasonably high price a scheduled commodity. Complaints of overcharging.

30 (2) Every complaint shall—
(a) state the name and address of the complainant;
(b) state the name and address of the person who is alleged to have sold or offered for sale the commodity to which the complaint relates;
35 (c) state the date of the alleged sale or offering for sale;
(d) state the nature of the alleged transaction (whether wholesale or retail);
(e) state the place where the transaction is alleged to have taken place;
40 (f) state the price alleged to have been charged or demanded for such commodity;
(g) contain a specification of such commodity.

(3) If any person makes in any complaint any statement which is false or misleading in any material respect, such person shall
45 be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding ten pounds.

30.—The Controller shall on receipt of a complaint refer it to an inspector for investigation under this Part of this Act unless— Reference of complaints to inspectors for investigation.

50 (a) he is of opinion that such complaint is frivolous, or
(b) the several matters alleged in such complaint would, if proved, constitute an offence under the provisions of this Act relating to offences in relation to price orders.

31.—(1) Whenever a complaint is referred to an inspector
55 under the immediately preceding section, such inspector shall investigate such complaint and when he has completed his investigations shall report the result thereof to the Controller. Investigation of complaints by inspectors.

(2) For the purposes of an investigation into a complaint an inspector may on production of his authority to act as an inspector require—

(a) the person who made the complaint the subject of such investigation to furnish him with such information 5 relevant to the complaint as he may reasonably require and as is in the power or possession of such person or can be procured without unreasonable expense by such person;

(b) the seller mentioned in such complaint to furnish him with 10 such information relevant to the complaint as he may reasonably require and as is in the power or possession of such seller or can be procured without unreasonable expense by such seller.

(3) If any person refuses or neglects to furnish an inspector 15 with any information lawfully required by him under this section, such person shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding five pounds.

Proceedings consequential on inspector's report and price certificates.

32.—(1) Where a report is made to the Controller by an in- 20 spector on a complaint referred to him for investigation and the Controller, after consideration of such report, is of opinion that such complaint is well founded, the following provisions shall have effect, that is to say:—

(a) the Controller shall serve on the seller mentioned in such 25 complaint a notice in the prescribed form—

(i) stating the nature of such complaint, and

(ii) stating that in the opinion of the Controller such complaint is well founded, and

(iii) in case such complaint relates to a sale or offering 30 for sale retail, specifying the price which in the opinion of the Controller is a reasonable retail price for the commodity the retail price of which was the subject of such complaint, and

(iv) in case such complaint relates to a sale or offering 35 for sale wholesale, specifying the price which in the opinion of the Controller is a reasonable wholesale price for the commodity the wholesale price of which was the subject of such complaint, and 40

(v) requiring such seller within twenty-one days after the service of such notice to give to the Controller an undertaking in writing to charge in future a reasonable price for the commodity mentioned in such notice, and 45

(vi) if such complaint relates to a sale, requiring such seller within the said twenty-one days to pay to the complainant the difference between the price the subject of such complaint and the price specified in such notice as the reasonable price; 50

(b) if such seller complies with the requirements of such notice, the Controller shall take no further steps in relation to such complaint;

(c) if such seller does not comply with the requirements of such notice and such complaint relates to a sale or offering for sale retail the Controller shall do the following things, that is to say:— 55

(i) make a certificate (in this Part of this Act referred to as a price (retail) certificate) in the prescribed form and containing the prescribed particulars 60 certifying the price which, in the opinion of the Controller, is a reasonable retail price to be charged by the seller for such commodity,

- (ii) serve a copy of such certificate on such seller,
- (iii) publish a copy of such certificate in a newspaper or newspapers circulating in the district where the commodity the price of which was the subject of such complaint was sold or offered for sale;

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(d) if such seller does not comply with the requirements of such notice and such complaint relates to a sale or offering for sale wholesale, the Controller shall do the following things, that is to say:—

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- (i) make a certificate (in this Part of this Act referred to as a price (wholesale) certificate) in the prescribed form and containing the prescribed particulars certifying the price which, in the opinion of the Controller, is a reasonable wholesale price to be charged by such seller for such commodity,

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- (ii) serve a copy of such certificate on such seller,

- (iii) publish a copy of such certificate in a newspaper or newspapers circulating in the district where the commodity the price of which was the subject of such complaint was sold or offered for sale.

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(2) Every certificate under this section shall specify the period during which such certificate is to remain in force, and every such certificate shall, subject to the provisions of this section, remain in force for the period so specified.

25

(3) Every certificate under this section shall specify the area to which such certificate is to apply.

(4) The Controller may revoke a certificate under this section and thereupon such certificate shall cease to be in force.

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(5) Whenever a price (retail) order is made in relation to a commodity, every price (retail) certificate relating to such commodity which is in force in any place to which such order applies shall cease to be in force.

35

(6) Whenever a price (wholesale) order is made in relation to a commodity, every price (wholesale) certificate relating to such commodity which is in force in any place to which such order applies shall cease to be in force.

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(7) Any notice or certificate required by this section to be served on any person may be served by delivering it to such person or by leaving it with a person over sixteen years of age at the premises where such first-mentioned person carries on business, or by sending it by registered post to such first-mentioned person at such premises.

45

33.—(1) Whenever a price (retail) certificate in force in relation to a scheduled commodity is duly served on any person who carries on any business by way of trade or gain, it shall not be lawful for such person to sell or offer for sale retail in the course or as part of such business at any place in the area to which such certificate applies any commodity to which such certificate applies at a price in excess of the price certified in such certificate.

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Offences in relation to price certificates.

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(2) Whenever a price (wholesale) certificate in force in relation to a scheduled commodity is duly served on any person who carries on any business by way of trade or gain, it shall not be lawful for such person to sell or offer for sale wholesale in the course or as part of such business at any place in the area to which such certificate applies any commodity to which such certificate applies at a price in excess of the price certified in such certificate.

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(3) If any person acts in contravention of this section such person shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof in the case of a first offence to a fine not exceeding five pounds, and in the case of a second or any subsequent offence to a fine not exceeding ten pounds, or, at

the discretion of the Court, to imprisonment for any term not exceeding three months or to both such fine and imprisonment.

(4) In any proceeding for an offence under this section the production of a price (retail) certificate or a price (wholesale) certificate purporting to be signed by the Controller shall be *prima facie* evidence that such certificate was validly made in all respects and was signed by the Controller. 5

(5) Proceedings for an offence under this section shall not be instituted by any person other than the Controller.

PART V.

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DISPLAY OF RETAIL PRICE LISTS IN RETAIL SHOPS.

Recommendations as to the display of price lists in retail shops.

34.—(1) The Commission may make a report (in this Part of this Act referred to as price list report) to the Minister stating that in their opinion it is desirable, in the public interest, that the Minister should make an order under this Part of this Act requiring every person who carries on the business of selling retail either (as may be specified in such report) at any place in Saorstát Eireann or, at particular places in Saorstát Eireann any scheduled commodity or commodities to display at the premises where such person carries on such business a list stating the retail price of such commodity or commodities. 15 20

(2) Every report under this section shall specify:—

- (a) the reasons why the Commission consider it desirable that the order the subject of the report should be made;
- (b) a specification of every commodity to which the proposed order should relate; 25
- (c) the date on which the Commission recommend the proposed order should come into force, and the duration of such order;
- (d) the area to which the Commission recommend the proposed order should apply; 30
- (e) the manner in which the Commission recommend that the proposed order should require the price list of every such commodity to be displayed.

Display of retail prices order.

35.—(1) Where the Commission make a price list report the Minister may, if he so thinks fit, make an order (in this Part of this Act referred to as a display of retail prices order) requiring every person who carries on the business of selling retail, in any area to which such order relates, if the report relates to one scheduled commodity, such scheduled commodity, or, if the report relates to several scheduled commodities, such one or more of such scheduled commodities as the Minister thinks proper and specifies in such order, to display in the manner required by such order at any premises where he carries on such business in such area a list stating the retail price of every scheduled commodity to which such order applies. 35 40 45

(2) The Minister may by order under this sub-section revoke or amend a display of retail prices order.

(3) The making of a display of retail prices order shall be *prima facie* evidence that such order was validly made in all respects. 50

Offences in relation to display of retail prices order.

36.—If any person acts in contravention of or fails or neglects to comply with a display of retail prices order for the time being in force, such person shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof, in the case of a first offence, to a fine not exceeding five pounds, and in the case of a second or any subsequent offence, to a fine not exceeding ten pounds or, at the discretion of the Court, to imprisonment for any term not exceeding three months, or to both such fine and imprisonment. 55

PART VI.

MANUFACTURER'S PRICES FOR PROTECTED COMMODITIES.

37.—(1) The Minister may, subject to the provisions of the next following sub-section, from time to time send to the Commission a requisition requiring the Commission to investigate the prices charged for any protected commodity which conforms to the specification set out in such request by persons manufacturing such commodity in Saorstát Eireann, and upon receipt of such request the Commission shall make an investigation (in this Part of this Act referred to as a manufacturer's price investigation) in accordance with such requisition.

Prices
(manufacturer's)
investigation.

(2) Before sending under the immediately preceding sub-section to the Commission a requisition to make an investigation into the price of butter, the Minister shall first consult the Minister for Agriculture.

(3) Subject to the provisions of the next following sub-section the Commission shall on its own motion, from time to time as the other business of the Commission permits, select from amongst protected commodities manufactured in Saorstát Eireann a commodity, and make an investigation (in this Part of this Act also referred to as a manufacturers's price investigation) into the prices charged for such commodity, by manufacturers thereof in Saorstát Eireann.

(4) The Commission shall not make an investigation under the immediately preceding sub-section into the price of butter except with the consent of the Minister for Agriculture.

38.—On the completion of a manufacturer's price investigation in relation to a protected commodity the Commission shall make a report (in this Part of this Act referred to as a manufacturer's price report) to the Minister setting out—

Reports to the
Minister on
manufacturer's
price
investigation.

- (a) a specification of such commodity;
- (b) the movements of the prices of such commodity over a specified period;
- (c) whether in the opinion of the Commission such prices are or are not unreasonably high, together with the reasons for such opinion;
- (d) their opinion as to whether such prices are influenced by any agreement or combination for interfering with free competition;
- (e) if the Commission are of opinion that such prices are unreasonably high—
 - (i) the opinion of the Commission as to what would be a reasonable price for such commodity,
 - (ii) their opinion as to the best methods of enforcing a reduction of such prices to a reasonable price,
 - (iii) if in their opinion a maximum price should be fixed by order of the Minister under this Part of this Act, the area to which such order should apply.

39.—(1) On receipt of a manufacturer's price report in relation to a protected commodity the Minister may, if he so thinks fit and subject to the provisions of this section, make an order (in this Part of this Act referred to as a manufacturer's price order) fixing as the maximum price for such commodity such price as he thinks proper.

Manufacturer's
price order.

(2) In addition to fixing a maximum price every manufacturer's price order shall specify the following things, that is to say:—

- (a) the date on which such order is to come into force;
- (b) the duration of such order;
- (c) the area to which such order is to apply.

(3) The Minister may by order revoke or amend a manufacturer's price order.

(4) Before making a manufacturer's price order in relation to butter or an order revoking or amending any such manufacturer's price order, the Minister shall first consult the Minister for Agriculture. 5

Validity of manufacturer's price order.

40.—The making of a manufacturer's price order shall be *primâ facie* evidence that such order was validly made in all respects.

Offences in relation to manufacturer's price orders.

41.—(1) Whenever a manufacturer's price order in relation to any protected commodity is in force, it shall not be lawful for any person who is a manufacturer of that commodity in an area to which such order applies to sell any such commodity at a price in excess of the maximum price fixed by such order. 10

(2) If any person acts in contravention of this section such person shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable, on summary conviction thereof, in the case of a first offence, to a fine not exceeding ten pounds and, in the case of a second or any subsequent offence, to a fine not exceeding fifty pounds or, at the discretion of the Court, to imprisonment for any term not exceeding six months, or to both such fine and imprisonment. 15 20

PART VII.

PROVISIONS SUPPLEMENTARY TO PARTS III AND VI.

Statutory defences.

42.—(1) Where a person being an employer or a principal is charged with having committed an offence under the provisions of this Act relating to offences in relation to price orders or to offences in relation to manufacturer's price orders, it shall be a good defence to such charge for such person to prove— 25

- (a) that he used due diligence to prevent the commission of the acts alleged to constitute an offence; and 30
- (b) that the acts alleged to constitute such offence were not done by him personally; and
- (c) that the said acts were done without his consent, connivance or wilful default; and 35
- (d) that on service of the summons on him he gave to the prosecutor all information in his power with respect to the person who did the said acts.

(2) Where a person being a servant or employee is charged with having committed an offence under the provisions of this Act relating to offences in relation to price orders or to offences in relation to manufacturer's price orders it shall be a good defence to such charge for such person to prove— 40

- (a) that he was in the employment of another person (in this sub-section referred to as the employer); and 45
- (b) that the acts alleged to constitute such offence were committed by him in the course of and for the purposes of such employment; and
- (c) that the said acts were committed by him in obedience to the express orders of the employer; and 50
- (d) that on service of the summons on him he gave all information in his power with respect to the matters mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs.

Effect of orders under Parts III and VI on existing contracts.

43.—(1) Where a contract for the sale of any commodity which is the subject of a price order has been entered into before the date of such order and the whole or any part of such contract is to be performed after such date, the following provisions shall have effect, that is to say:— 55

- (a) nothing in Part III or Part VI of this Act shall affect such contract or any of the terms thereof; 60

(b) anything done under such contract shall, for the purposes of Part III or Part VI of this Act, but not further or otherwise, be deemed to have been done before such date.

5 (2) Where a tender to supply any commodity at certain prices during a certain period has been accepted before the date of a price order relating to such commodity and the person making such tender is legally bound subject to the terms of such tender to supply such quantities of such commodity as may from time
10 to time be ordered from him during the said period, every contract effected by an order for such commodity during the said period and after the date of such price order or price orders shall be deemed for the purposes of sub-section (1) of this section to have
15 orders.

(3) In this section the expression "price order" means any order made by the Minister under either Part III or Part VI of this Act.

SCHEDULE.

20 Every commodity which is used as food, clothing, material for clothing, or fuel.

BILLE CHUN PRAGHSANNA DO RIALÚ,
1932.

CONTROL OF PRICES BILL, 1932.

BILLE

BILL

(mar do leasúidh i gCoiste)

(as amended in Committee)

dá ngairmtear

entitled

Acht chun soeruithe do dhéanamh chun
pragsanna earraí do rialú.

An Act to make provision for controlling
the prices of commodities.

An tAire Tionnscaíl agus Tráchtála do thug
isteach.

Introduced by the Minister for Industry and
Commerce.

Do hordúidh, ag Dáil Éireann, do chlóbhuála,
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