# CHAPTER 98

## INFLATION OF PRICES (PREVENTION) ORDINANCE

*To provide for the prevention of the inflation of prices of certain essential commodities.*

(3rd February, 1939)*

*ORDINANCE IV of 1939, as amended by Ordinance XXV of 1962; Legal Notices: 4 of 1963, 46 of 1965; Acts: LVIII of 1974, XI of 1977, and XIII of 1983; and Legal Notice 408 of 2007.*

Short title.

**1.** The short title of this Ordinance is the Inflation of Prices (Prevention) Ordinance.

Interpretation. *Amended by: L.N. 4 of 1963.*

**2.** In this Ordinance -

the expression "essential commodities" includes articles of food for man, feeding stuffs for animals, livestock, articles used in the preparation of food for consumption and any other commodity which the Minister responsible for industrial development shall declare to be essential for the life of the community;

the expression "shop" includes any place where essential commodities are stored or offered for sale.

Power of Minister to make regulations. *Amended by: XXV.1962.4; L.N. 4 of 1963; XI. 1977.2.*

**3.** The Minister responsible for trade may, if he deems it expedient in the interest of the population of Malta, make regulations for any of the following purposes:

(*a*) for fixing the maximum wholesale and retail prices of essential commodities and for limiting the profit on the sale thereof;

(*b*) for ordering that no essential commodities shall be sold at a price exceeding the corresponding price at a date specified in the regulation, or at a price exceeding by more than the amount fixed in the regulation, the corresponding price at such specified date;

(*c*) for directing that the prices and an indication of the quality of essential commodities offered for sale to the public shall be conspicuously exhibited on the goods in such manner as may be provided in the regulations;

(*d*) for providing that any person owning, possessing or concerned in the importation, sale, manufacture or production of any essential commodities shall make a return of the essential commodities held by, consigned to or on order by him, to any person or persons authorized by the Minister responsible for trade, in such form and within such time as such authorised person or persons may require; and

(*e*) generally, for giving directions for the purpose of

**See* Proclamation No. V of the 3rd of February, 1939.

checking abuses in the sale of essential commodities.

Appointment of Price Control Board. *Amended by: L.N. 4 of 1963; L.N. 46 of 1965; LVIII.1974.68; XI.1977.2.*

**4.** (1) The President of Malta may appoint a Board to be called the Price Control Board, consisting of such persons as he may appoint.

(2) Such Board shall advise the Minister responsible for trade on any matter within the powers vested in him by this Ordinance, and shall exercise such other functions as shall be assigned to it by regulations under the last preceding article.

(3) The Prime Minister may appoint one or more persons hereinafter referred to as "inspectors" to inspect weights and measures, to supervise the sale of essential commodities, and to ensure the observance of any regulations made under this Ordinance.

Regulations to be published in Government Gazette.

**5.** All regulations made under this Ordinance shall be published in the Government Gazette and shall have effect from the date of such publication:

Provided that for the purposes of this Ordinance such publication shall be deemed to have taken place in any town or village, as soon as a copy of the Government Notice containing the regulation has been posted up on the notice board of any Police station in that town or village.

Powers of inspectors.

**6.** (1) Any inspector may enter any shop and may seize from any such shop or from any cart or other vehicle on which essential commodities are hawked, or from the possession of any person offering essential commodities for sale, any weights or measures which he has reason to believe to be incorrect, and may extract samples of foodstuffs, and examine any invoice, books or correspondence referring to any essential commodity.

(2) The inspector shall pay for all samples extracted and taken by him at the current market price and shall give a receipt for any weight or measure seized by him.

Offences.

**7.** (1) Any person who obstructs or impedes an inspector in the exercise of his powers under this Ordinance, or refuses to give to an inspector his name and address and other particulars for the purpose of his identification, shall be guilty of an offence against this Ordinance.

(2) Any person who fails to comply with or acts in contravention of any regulation made under this Ordinance shall be guilty of an offence against this Ordinance.

(3) Any person who knowingly makes any false statement in any return of essential commodities held or on order by him or consigned to him, required to be made by regulations under this Ordinance, shall be guilty of an offence against this Ordinance.

Penalties. *Amended by: XIII. 1983.5; L.N. 408 of 2007.*

**8.** Any person who is guilty of an offence against this Ordinance shall be liable, on conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months or to a fine (*multa*) of not less than eleven euro and sixty-five cents (11.65) nor exceeding one

hundred and sixteen euro and forty-seven cents (116.47) or to both such imprisonment and fine:

Provided that where the court is satisfied that the offence would be adequately punished by a lesser penalty, the court may reduce the fine in its discretion, but so that the fine shall in no case be less than twenty-five cents:

Provided, further, that in the case of a second or subsequent offence against this Ordinance, the court may order that any licence held by the offender for the sale of essential commodities, under any law, shall be suspended for a period not exceeding three months; any such order shall be published in the Government Gazette and a copy thereof shall be affixed to the door or doors of any shop in which the offence was committed and shall remain so affixed for the whole period for which the order is in force.