



Northern Ireland Office

Press Notice

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Stormont Castle, Belfast

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OATHS AND DECLARATIONS (REPEALS) (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 1973

The Oaths and Declarations (Repeals) (Northern Ireland) Order 1973 has been laid before Parliament and will come into operation tomorrow (Friday, April 6, 1973).

The Order in Council has been made under the urgent procedure so that the statutory declaration of allegiance required to be made by a councillor on acceptance of office will be removed in time for the forthcoming local government elections. Under the urgent procedure the Order has to be approved by both Houses of Parliament within 40 days of the date on which it was made.

The effect of the Order is to amend existing Northern Ireland legislation, including the 1922 and 1972 Local Government Acts and the 1923 Promissory Oaths Act, so that in addition to district councillors, employees of central and local government, including school teachers, will no longer be required to take an oath of allegiance or make a declaration of allegiance.

In addition, the Order amends the oath required to be taken by new members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary. As in Great Britain they will continue to agree to serve the Sovereign but that part of the oath relating to serving "Her Government of Northern Ireland" will be removed.

The White Paper - "Northern Ireland: Constitutional Proposals" envisaged (in paragraph 64) the preparation of this Order in Council amending Northern Ireland legislation relating to oaths and declarations "so as to bring it in this respect into line with that in the rest of the United Kingdom".