

2001 No. 3959

**NORTHERN IRELAND
CONSTITUTIONAL LAW**

**The Northern Ireland (Date of Next Assembly Poll)
Order 2001**

Made - - - - - 11th December 2001

Coming into force - - - - - 20th March 2003

At the Court at Buckingham Palace, the 11th day of December 2001

Present,

The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty in Council

Her Majesty, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 32(4) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998(a), is pleased, by and with the advice of Her Privy Council, to order, and it is hereby ordered as follows:

1. This Order may be cited as the Northern Ireland (Date of the Next Assembly Poll) Order 2001 and shall come into force on 20th March 2003.
2. It is hereby directed that the date of the poll for the election of the next Assembly shall, instead of being determined in accordance with section 31 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, be the date proposed by the Secretary of State under section 32(3) of that Act, namely 1st May 2003.
3. The Assembly shall be dissolved on 21st March 2003.

A. K. Galloway
Clerk of the Privy Council

(a) 1998 c. 47.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

Under section 32(3) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 the Secretary of State must propose a date for the next Assembly election if the period of six weeks specified in section 16(8) ends without a First and Deputy First Minister having been elected. The relevant period ended on 3rd November 2001 without a successful election.

But as a First and Deputy First Minister were elected on 6th November the Secretary of State, having consulted the parties in the Assembly, concluded that it would be in the best interests of Northern Ireland for the next Assembly election to be held on 1st May 2003, the date specified in section 31 of the Act. This Order accordingly directs that the election should be on that date and provides for the Assembly to be dissolved on 21st March 2003.

£1.50

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E1987 12/2001 677172 19585

