

# Abortion changes

Sir, I disagree with Lord Brown of Eaton-under-Heywood (letter, May 29) when he says that "the Supreme Court has definitively ruled on the minimum legislative changes required" to Northern Irish abortion legislation. That it should be thought proper that the Supreme Court can stipulate legislative changes in this way is remarkable enough. But it is even more remarkable that, in the case that Lord Brown has in mind, some justices of the Supreme Court believed it right to say that the legislation was in various ways incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. For the legislation cannot have been "ruled" to be incompatible, as the Supreme Court had earlier in its judgment found that it had no competence to rule on compatibility.

The comments of the justices on compatibility, therefore, have the same legal weight as an argument in the Dog & Duck.

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