



GERRY ADAMS MP
51/55 Bóthar na bhFál
Béal Feirste BT12 4PD

13 June 1991

A Chara

Please find enclosed a copy of the report on the community forum on the Black Mountain which I hosted in Newhill Community Centre in March.

The forum was a valuable contribution to the debate on the environmental consequences of mining and quarrying of the Black Mountain. It was particularly significant in that it brought together, for the first time, the quarry operators, environmentalists, public representatives, and most importantly the people of West Belfast themselves.

The report of the forum which I am sending to you should, I hope, further inform this public debate. It contains the main submissions at the forum, the first from representatives of the quarry company, Lagan Holdings and the second from a spokesperson for the Black Mountain Environmental Group. The report also records contributions from those in attendance.

What was clear at the forum, and this is reflected in the report, is that there is widespread concern within West Belfast and amongst conservationists further afield, at the extent of destruction on the Black Mountain. It is also clear that the DoE bear a large degree of responsibility for this situation as it is they who are charged with the protection of the environment, yet have so abisimally failed to do so in this case. Such is their disregard for local opinion and accountability that they refused to come along to the forum and explain their position publicly. Their refusal to attend is to be contrasted with the positive response of the quarrying company which would have expected as much flack from the floor of the forum as the DoE. Their attendance was welcome, informative and appreciated by even their most ardent opponents.

The Black Mountain is a natural resource for all the people of Belfast. The damage to this resource as a result of quarrying and the added problem of atmospheric pollution along the Glen and Upper Springfield roads is therefore a matter of grave concern. In order to save and restore the mountain, an action plan is urgently required which should entail;

1. the restriction of further quarrying of the mountain.
2. rigid enforcement of environmental conservation measures.
3. no further mining or quarrying permission on the Black Mountain or any other section of the Belfast Hills.
4. the adoption of the range from Colin Mountain, across Divis and the Black Mountain to the Cavehill as a conservation area and its development as a natural park..
5. the preservation of natural habitats such as wooded areas, heath, bogland and other natural and historically important sites.
6. the signposting of historical and natural sites to enhances its educational value for the local community, particularly local schools.
7. the development of a folk park to further encourage public awareness of the history and importance of the mountain.

Every effort must be made to protect our environment and this must include the protection and restoration of the Black Mountain.

I hope you find the report interesting and I would be glad of any comment you wish to make on it.

With best wishes.

Is mise

GERRY ADAMS MP

4th August 1993

Dear Minister

I am writing to you on behalf of the Black Mountain Environmental Group asking you as Minister of the Environment, to order an immediate cessation of all quarrying on the Black Mountain. We also request the implementation of a radical and imaginative policy of reclamation and restoration in consultation with local communities, towards opening up Blackmountain as a facility and amenity for all the people of Belfast.

There are approximately one hundred and twenty other quarries in the North of Ireland from which the same aggregate can be obtained. Most or all of these other quarries are situated in what could be described as more environmentally suitable sites. Most certainly, none are located in such a beautiful and natural setting as the Black Mountain. Attempts by White Mountain Quarrying "to minimise the visual effects of their operations have failed miserably. Almost one third of that part of the mountain which is known as "the Black Hill" has disappeared. The mountain is being devastated. Local communities who live in the vicinity experience totally unacceptable environmental conditions, from dust, dirt, explosive vibrations and road safety. We urge you to act as quickly as possible before the overall damage is irreversible.

Understandable concerns for the re-employment of workers at the site would be off set by their being absorbed in to that company's numerous other operations, should the demand for aggregate increase due to such closure.

You are no doubt aware that your predecessor Mr. Richard Needham was previously moved to take similar drastic action to save the historic site of Navan Fort in 1986. In that case he was able to evoke Article 22 (NI) order 1972 to overrule Public Enquiry Commission findings concerning an application to extend quarrying at that site. By so doing, the application was designated as being "one of major importance" and thus that historic site was saved. The results of that bold and far-seeing decision can now be seen at that site.

We believe that such or similar legislation could be used to save the Black Mountain. All that is required, is the political will and vision to do so.

Yours sincerely

**Terry Enright
Chairman**

THIS LETTER IS ENDORSED BY THE FOLLOWING GROUPS:

Action for Unemployed
Actively Seeking Work Campaign
Ainsworth Community Centre
Altamona Tenants Association
An Club Eachtra
An Cumman Gealach
Andersonstown Road Racing Supporters Club
Andersonstown Senior Citizens Thursday Club
Ardmonagh Women's Group
Ballymurphy Anti-Extradition Committee
Ballymurphy Boys Club
Ballymurphy Community Exchange
Ballymurphy Community Support Group
Ballymurphy Handicapped Association
Ballymurphy Parents Concern Group
Ballymurphy Tenants Association
Ballymurphy Tenants Association
Beechmount Festival Committee
Belfast Community Theatre
Belfast Community Travellers
Belfast Exposed
Belfast Writers Group
Between
Black Mountain Action Group
Black Mountain Environmental Group
Black Mountain Folk Society
Bog Meadows Festival Committee
Bog Meadows Group
C.R.D.
Centre for Research and Documentation
Charabanc Theatre Company
Clonard Drop In
Clonard Festival
Clonard G.A.C.
Clonard Resident Association
Community Games
Concerned Community Organisations
Conor Residents Association
Conway Education Centre
Corpus Christi Bowling Club
Corpus Christi Parish Centre
Corpus Christi Services
Corrigan Youth & Athletic Club
Cresslough Park Tenants Group
Cumman Na N'óg
Curtain Call Dance School
Davitts G.A.C.
Divis Community Centre
Divis Darts Team
Divis Drop In
Divis Senior Citizen
Donegal Celtic Fishing Club
Donegal Celtic Social Club
Emerald Boxing Club
Falcarragh/Kerrykeal Tenants Group
Falls Bowling & Lawn Tennis Club
Falls Bowling Club
Falls Entertainment Committee
Falls Family Education Centre
Falls Woman Centre
Feis Ard Eoin
Gaelscoil na bh Fal
Glen Advice Centre
Glen Community Centre
Glen Community Mothers & Toddlers
Glen Parent/Youth Group
Glen Parents Girls Group
Glencolin Estate
Glor Na nGael
Gortnamona C.L.G.
Gortnamona Drop In Centre
Gortnamona GAC
Gortnamona Tenants Association
Grosvenor Environmental

Holy Trinity Youth Club
Horn Drive 5 - 10's Project
Horn Drive Community Centre
Horn Drive Drop In
Irish Children Summers Programme
Iveagh Community Centre
Just Books
Kennedy School
L.O.R.A.G.
Lenadoon Development Association
Lenadoon Environmental Forum
Lenadoon Festival Committee
Lennadoon Community Forum
Links
Local History Group
Lower Andersonstown Festival Committee
Lower Donegal Road Advice Centre
Lower Falls Association for the Handicapped
Lower Falls Community Centre
Lower Falls Newstart
Lower Lenadoon Housing Action Group
Lynx Project
Markets Community Centre
Mary Ann Mc Cracken Historical Society
Matt Talbot Family Centre
Matt Talbot Youth Centre
Matt Talbot Youth Club
Méan Scoil
Moyard Festival Committee
Moyard Hostel
Moyard Housing Committee
Moyard/New Barnsley Play Project
Mutual Credit Union
N.S.P.C.C.
Na Daoine Beaga
Naionra Bharr a Chluanaí
New Barnsley Residents Association
Newhill After School Project
Newhill Community Centre

Newhill Youth Club
Newstart
NI Anti-Poverty Network
NICE
O'Connors School of Irish Dancing
O'Donnells Golfing Society
O.P.E.L.S.
Peter Pan Social Club
Play Resource Warehouse
Poleglass Youth Trampoline Club
Riverdale Residents
Saoirse Na hEireann
Scoil Rina Ní Changhaile
Shankhill Women's Group
Springfield Interface Group
Springfield Park Residents Association
Springhill Community House
Springhill Development Agency
Springhill Education Project
Springhill Festival Committee
Springhill Historical & Cultural Group
Springhill School Refusers Group
Springhill Youth Action Group
Springhill/Springmadden Residents Ass.
Springvale Partnership West Belfast
Springvale Steering Committee
St. Agnes Choral Society
St. Agnes' Advice Centre
St. Oliver Plunkett Youth & Welfare
Suffolk Action Team
Suffolk Advice Centre
Suffolk Community Services
Suffolk Gingerbread Group
The Carrick Hill Residents Ass.
The Glen Parent's Women Drop In
The Glen Training Agency Ltd.
The Oliver Plunkett Community Dev. Ass.
The Oliver Plunkett Ed. & Leisure Scheme
The Oliver Plunkett Handicapped Group

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PRINTING 1 DOCUMENTS FROM DOCUMENT 1

1. DOCUMENT 6243

Parish of *Lambeg, County *Antrim

Fair Sheets by %Thomas %Fagan, 25-29 Sept 1837

Box 14 I 2 pp1-14

Modern and Ancient Topography

Epitaph on a Tomb in *Lambeg, detail of *Lambeg Graveyard

%John %McHenry, %John %Chapman

Epitaph on a priest's tomb in *Lambeg: "Here lieth the body of the Reverend John %Mullan, for upwards of 39 years parish priest of *Derryaghy and Belfast. He died 15th of September 1772, aged 80 years". There are other many Catholic clerymen interred beside the above Mr. %Mullan, but their tombs are nearly covered in by modern graves, and consequently cannot be read. The many Catholics buried chiefly on the south side of the church, where the priests are also interred. On the tombs of many of the Catholics are inserted the number of feet occupied by the family's burial ground, a circumstance not usually met with in other graveyards. However, with few exceptions, the latter class of people have ceased to bury in *Lambeg in latter years, in consequence of a new burial ground having been opened at *Hannastown chapel. Besides that, the Catholics who come from the mountains to bury in *Lambeg had, according to ancient custom, the Irish cry kept up with their funerals, even to the graveyards, which custom has but lately ceased here (1807). But in the latter years of their coming, accompanied with the aforesaid ancient usage, as soon as their funerals arrived in the vicinity of *Lambeg, they were insulted and abused by their Dissenting neighbours, which uncouth treatment in a great measure induced them to change to a new burial ground ^p11 .

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