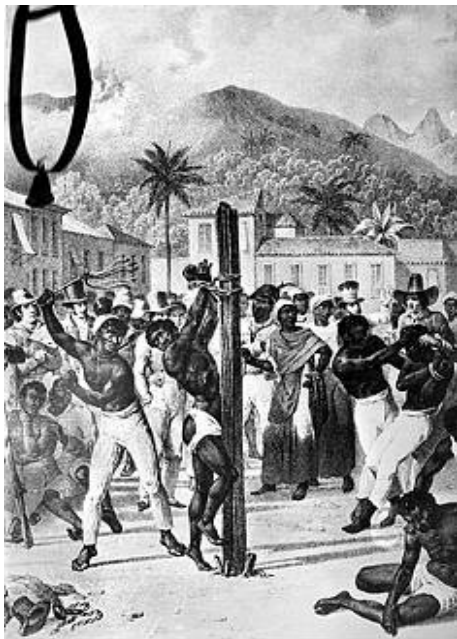


The Times

August 19th, 1807

Unlawful gathering at sugar depot, doth protest the slave trade. Calls only upon His Majesty's Prime Minister to act, and not for general rebellion.

Anti-slave trade actioners have this day established a "Free Village for the Elimination of the scourge of trading in our African brethren" near Sweetrow, the largest importer of Caribbean sugar in all of Christendom. The rebellious



abolitionists claim that the demand for sugar is encouraging and thus expanding the evil trade from Africa unto the New World in human souls.

Though the vagabonds and ruffians of the Village have foresworn from impeding the lawful commerce of their fellow subjects, large numbers of His Majesty's army have been sent to keep the peace.

Verily, there remains great confusion as to their exact petitions for redress. It doth seem the wicked band is not in fact asking for any lessening in consumption of sugar by subjects of His Majesty. Despite declaring themselves freemen, and vociferously proclaiming that they believe neither the forces of Law and Order, nor the force of Commerce can bring an end to the Slave Trade, yet they have not called for

rebellion. As far as is clear (for they proclaim they have no leader than Ned Ludd) they are calling upon His Majesty's Government to take action. It appears they desire the hasty dispatch of further Royal Navy frigates to interdict slave-trading ships on the western Coast of Africa. This would be entirely congruent with the stated intention of His Majesty's Government to be a beacon of action in the fight against the slave trade.

Many commentators have stated that the men (and, scandalously, women) who have established this makeshift village on common land, have no understanding of the Realities of the World, being not men of Property.

David Ricardo, a philosopher of trade who hopes soon to publish his work on the principles of political economy and taxation, explained that "Africa has a surfeit of human labour. It is logical and just that it concentrate on exporting this manual power to the plantations of the New World, where there is a surplus of sugar cane and sun. Thus will providence and the Invisible Hand benefit all of God's creatures."

Lord Digby of Birmingham for the Confederation for British Manufactures expostulated that Sugar, both its importation and consumption, are the "very essence of the commercial and individual freedom that make this country great and the envy of the world"

A spokesman for the Combination Representing Artisans, Workers of London was similarly critical. He stated that "not only do we need the jobs that the importation of ever increasing amounts of sugar will bring, but all workers also deserve the temporary uplift in their humours that sugar provides. British workers work very long hours, and they hold the sugar in their tea and jam very dear."

A spokesman for the Barbados Additives Association (BAA) has stated "BAA has always respected people's democratic right to protest lawfully. We believe that there is an important debate to be had regarding the treatment of our property. However, we do not believe our customers and agents should be harassed or obstructed by wanton vagabonds. Our customers and agents also have rights."

Prime Minister Spencer Perceval has warned the villagers that any attempt to stop the importation of sugar would be "unacceptable"

Home Secretary Robert Banks Jenkinson thundered "We are in a War for the survival of freedom against the forces of tyranny in the shape of Bonaparte. Irresponsible congregations such as these place a great strain on the forces of Law and Order, and give succour to the enemies of traditional English liberties. It would give me great pleasure to have Wellington boot these varlets into next week. Unfortunately, he is in Spain, dishing out violence to the French invaders. I shall send the King's Fulchester Imperial Terriers instead, and disperse these ruffians forthwith. Those we catch we shall either hang from the nearest gibbet or, worse for them, transport to the penal colonies of Australia."

Commenting on the split between the two strands within the village, the German philosopher G.W. Hegel observed. "There is a thesis and an anti-thesis at work here. The protestation is obviously trying not to anger the consumers of sugar, in order to move their spirits towards a world understanding. For the radicals among them, the determination of their liberal colleagues to keep the Whigs on-side probably has them tearing their hair out."

- The Times today can report that twenty years hence, once the Guardian is published for the first time, it will write a hand-wringing supplement about the vicissitudes suffered by the producers of sugar, alongside many diverse advertisements encouraging the increased consumption of that very sugar.