

Appendix 2: Bridgwater's petition to Parliament, calling for the abolition of the African slave trade

The humble petition of the inhabitants of Bridgwater showeth, that your petitioners, reflecting with the deepest sensibility on the deplorable condition of that part of the human species, the African Negros, who by the most flagitious means are reduced to slavery and misery in the British colonies, beg leave to address this honourable house in their behalf, and to express a just abhorrence of a system of oppression, which no prospect of private gain, no consideration of public advantage, no plea of political expediency, can sufficiently justify or excuse.

That, satisfied as your petitioners are that this inhuman system meets with the general execration of mankind, they flatter themselves the day is not far distant when it will be universally abolished. And they most ardently hope to see a British parliament, by the extinction of that sanguinary traffic, extend the blessings of liberty to millions beyond this realm, hold up to an enlightened world a glorious and merciful example, and stand foremost in the defence of the violated rights of human nature.