

The Apprenticeship System 1834-1838

Why did Britain feel that this system was necessary?

- (a) She felt that neither the planters nor the enslaved were ready for full freedom. Both needed a period in which they could learn to adjust to the full freedom to come.
- (b) To provide a peaceful and easy change over from slavery to freedom. A number of persons had predicted bloodshed and general massacre of the whites if the enslaved were let free at once.
- (c) To give the enslaved time to get use to the responsibilities of freedom.
- (d) To give the planters time to get use to paying wages and getting enough money into the various colonies to pay said wages. Before Emancipation each estate did very little cash transactions. Mostly everything was done on credit. Therefore very little money was in circulation.
- (e) To guarantee the planters a sure supply of labor to continue sugar production at least for the next 4 to 6 years. She felt that the planters would not remain in the colony if they did not have the labor they needed.
- (f) The colonial authorities would have enough time to debate on and submit the changes in the laws that would become necessary with 'full freedom.'