

## *Plain Truth*

Read the following excerpts from the pamphlet *Plain Truth*, by James Chalmers. Summarize their meanings in the spaces below them.

“Can a reasonable being for a moment believe that Great Britain, whose political existence depends on our constitutional obedience, who but yesterday made such prodigious efforts to save us from France, will not exert herself as powerfully to preserve us from our frantic schemes of independency. Can we a moment doubt, that the Sovereign of Great Britain and his ministers, whose glory as well as personal safety depends on our obedience, will not exert every nerve of the British power, to save themselves and us from ruin.”

-James Chalmers  
*Plain Truth*, March, 1776

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“After his terrible anathema against our venerable constitution, and monarchy; let us briefly examine a democratical state; and see whether or not it is a government less sanguinary. This government is extremely plausible, and indeed flattering to the pride of mankind. The demagogues therefore, to seduce the people into their criminal designs ever hold up democracy to them: although conscious it never did, nor ever will answer in practice. If we believe a great Author, “There never existed, nor ever will exist a real democracy in the World.” If we examine the republics of Greece and Rome, we ever find them in a state of war domestic or foreign.”

-James Chalmers  
*Plain Truth*, March, 1776

Read the following excerpt from John Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*, then answer the questions beneath it.

“THERE is another late [recent] act of Parliament which appears to me to be unconstitutional and as destructive to the liberty of these colonies as that mentioned in my last letter; that is, the act for granting the duties [import taxes] on paper, glass, &c. [etc.] THE Parliament unquestionably possesses a legal authority to regulate the trade of Great Britain and all her colonies. Such an authority is essential to the relation between a mother country and her colonies, and necessary for the common good of all. He who considers these provinces as states distinct from the British Empire has very slender notions of justice or of their interests. We are but parts of a whole, and therefore there must exist a power somewhere to preside and preserve the connection in due order. This power is lodged in the Parliament, and we are as much dependent on Great Britain as a perfectly free people can be on another.”

-John Dickinson

*Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*, December 1767

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What is John Dickinson saying in this excerpt?

Does this surprise you based on what you previously read from him? Why or why not?

Do you think protesting British policy automatically meant supporting independence to British subjects in North America? Why or why not?

How do you think some were able to have mixed opinions such as John Dickinson's?