



EXCLUSION IN PARLIAMENT

DEBATE OR TAKEDOWN? | OPINION | 17 SEPTEMBER 2026

Anyone with a different view deserves a substantive answer. In these clips, I see something else: belittling remarks and personal judgements in the Dutch #Parliament.

Ralf Dekker calls for fewer labels and more arguments. I wholeheartedly agree.

Brekelmans starts by criticising his “tone”, then suggests that Dekker simply accepts Russian aggression. But Dekker argues for de-escalation from what he sees as the Dutch national interest. Want to challenge that? Explain why you think his approach will not work. That is #Debate.

If you cannot refute the argument, humiliating the speaker gets you nowhere. Parliament is not a school playground with better microphones.

The way experienced people are addressed bothers me too. Dekker has a long business career behind him; Faber spent more than twelve years in the Senate. You can disagree strongly with either of them and still treat them decently. Those are #Values in practice.

In a separate archive debate on 1 April 2025, Jetten calls Faber an “utter disgrace” and refers to her “disgusting behaviour”. The dispute concerned her refusal to support royal honours. I think that personal dressing-down was unjustified. Explain why her decision was wrong. An objection based on principle deserves a substantive answer.

My satirical advice to Jetten: rehearse that speech with “I” instead of “you”. “I am an utter disgrace.” At least that would be a start at self-criticism.

What does this style of debate do to viewers? Researchers Diana Mutz and Byron Reeves investigated this in three experiments. Uncivil political debate on television could reduce political trust while attracting more interest. More attention does not necessarily mean better debate. Source: [Mutz & Reeves \(2005\)](#)

My concern about #Polarisation: once the message becomes “you are a bad person”, listening gets harder. Carry that into the home, classroom or workplace and you shut people out instead of opening a conversation.

My criticism of the left: framing and shaming can pull the debate away from the actual argument. I expect the same standard from the right. #Democracy needs dissent.

UNDERSTAND FIRST. THEN JUDGE.

Which substantive question would you put to Brekelmans or Jetten? And do you expect the same standard of decency from your favourite politician?

SHARE • FOLLOW • COMMENT — with an argument.

@Telegraph @EvaVlaar

SOURCES AND CONTEXT

Dekker/Brekelmans: Dutch parliamentary proceedings, 16 September 2026.
https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/plenaire_verslagen/detail/2026-2027/2

Jetten/Faber: separate archive debate, 1 April 2025.
https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/plenaire_verslagen/detail/2024-2025/70

Diana C. Mutz and Byron Reeves (2005), The New Videomalaise: Effects of Televised Incivility on Political Trust. Three US laboratory experiments; the findings do not establish the effects of this particular Dutch video.

This is an opinion article. The suggested “I” speech is satire, not an actual Jetten quotation. The video preserves the original Dutch voices and adds English translations.