# Democracy and Capitalism Are At Risk

By Ray Dalio on February 26, 2020

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Did you watch the Democratic debate last night? These debates tell us a lot about the capacity of these presidential aspirants to operate in a civil way to exchange perspectives and thoughtfully disagree. It’s obvious that they can’t do it. How they behave with each other is such an anathema to me that I don’t want my grandchildren to watch the political system and these people in operation because they are such bad displays of how people, especially our country’s leaders, should be with each other. It’s true of both parties and I think it highlights the risk to our system that we should worry about. How is the system meant to work? Democratic Party candidates for president are supposedly on the same side working together in a civil manner against Donald Trump who is supposedly working with Republicans who are on the same side civilly working together in support of a different vision of the country, and these two parties are supposed to have a thoughtful debate that we the public will thoughtfully assess and make our choices. Then they are supposed to work together in a civil way to make compromises to manage the country as a whole for the benefit of the whole.

Do you really expect that to happen? I don’t. We are way too fragmented and uncooperative for that. That’s why we see each person with their own beliefs screaming at and harming the others. If you think that I worry too much about this, I suggest that you read the polls. They all paint the same picture. For example, in a recent ‘Global Satisfaction with Democracy 2020’ report, the proportion of citizens around the world who are dissatisfied with democracy has risen to an all-time 57.5% high and in [a recent Gallup poll](https://news.gallup.com/poll/240725/democrats-positive-socialism-capitalism.aspx) only 45% of Americans aged 18-29 view capitalism positively compared with 68% in 2010. In contrast 51% of young adults view socialism positively. Over the last few years, I’ve observed the growing risks to our democratic-capitalist system which led me to do a number of studies of history that helped me put in perspective what’s going on by looking at analogous periods, most recently the 1940-45 period. If you’re interested in reading some of my studies you can get them at [economicprinciples.org](https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/UD7uCQW2wWCqGmqfPnOdY).