



February Quiz

What might you do as a member of an organization (or as its parliamentarian) if a speaker uses her or his full debate time and then at the very end of the speech calls for the Previous Question before sitting down? Is this fair to the group? Does this violate *RONR*? Is a Point of Order in order? How about a Parliamentary Inquiry?

The answer from Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 11th edition (underlining added for emphasis):

(p. 378, II.1-6) When assigned the floor, a member may use it for any proper purpose, or a combination of purposes; for example, although a member may have begun by debating a pending motion, he may conclude by moving any secondary motion, including the Previous Question (16), that is in order at the time.

Below are additional questions to challenge yourself or others in your unit or study group:

- Do you believe that employing the above procedure is manipulative or simply using *RONR* strategically?
- Have you heard people contend that just the opposite is true – that if you are speaking for or against a motion, that you may only debate and may not make a subsidiary motion (eg. Amend, Commit, Previous Question) as part of the speech?
- Some groups will adopt a Special Rule of Order that overrides the above provision in *RONR* on this matter and prohibits making secondary motions without being re-recognized and assigned the floor in turn. What are the pros and cons of adopting such a Special Rule of Order?
- Without such a special rule, if a member delivers a debate speech and then makes an amendment, would she or he get to speak again as the maker of the amendment?