

## The Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order Day commemorates the May 2, 1837, birthday of the author of the standard manual on parliamentary procedure in the United States. Henry Martyn Robert graduated from West Point, fourth in his class, in 1857, and was commissioned in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. While attending a church meeting, he was unexpectedly asked to preside. His embarrassment made him determined to educate himself on parliamentary law before ever attending another meeting.

Robert searched out and studied the books available on the topic. His interest increased as he was periodically transferred to different parts of the United States. He found that people from different parts of the country had varying ideas of correct procedure for meetings. Wanting to bring order out of chaos, Robert eventually authored the manual known as *Robert's Rules of Order*.

From 1867 until his retirement, Robert was involved with most of the major river and harbor improvement and fortification projects undertaken by the U.S. government. He built lighthouses on Lakes Michigan, Erie, Ontario and Champlain, and on the Saint Lawrence River. He made river and harbor improvements on Long Island Sound and New York Harbor. He was engineer/commissioner for improvements on the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers. In 1889, President Grover Cleveland appointed him to a board of engineers to recommend a western Gulf port for the government to develop to handle tonnage that was increasing each year. Robert selected Galveston as the only site that could meet the conditions to become a major Gulf port. Just before he reached retirement age, Robert was promoted to brigadier general, chief of engineers, United States Army, on April 30, 1901.

Protocols and systems are imperative in the centers of Life Care and in the work of Life Care at Home. Otherwise, there would be confusion and inefficiency in the conduct of our business and the delivery of service to our residents. Order, not chaos, must reign. Policies and the chain of command are key factors in achieving this kind of environment.

There is no doubt that God is a proponent of order. Genesis describes how He took a formless place of chaos and created a world of amazingly detailed intricacies and function. When God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, He gave specific instructions for all their activities, including marching, setting up camp and worshiping. The letters of the Apostle Paul often contain principles and guidelines for the conduct of church services in dignity and orderliness.

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He doesn't intend for our lives to be places of chaos and confusion, either. If we think that they are, we may not be able to see the order that He is bringing out of our circumstances as He shapes us for His purposes.

Or perhaps we just need to spend more time in God's rule book.

--Beecher Hunter