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It is not too much of an exaggeration to say that this slender, concise, enormously influential volume was the work of a lifetime for American Founding Father Thomas Jefferson. From his student days at William and Mary College through his experience amidst the disarray of the colonial legislatures and the Continental Congress and an exasperating term presiding over the Senate as U.S. vice president, Jefferson studied centuries of parliamentary law and culled the best practices into a notes that he finally organized into this manual. Based on centuries of tradition codified for the first time by Jefferson, this work remains the basis for the rules of order of the U.S. House of Representatives, and offers some surprisingly revealing insight into one of the towering intellects who helped create America and her cultural personality. American politician and political philosopher THOMAS JEFFERSON (1743-1826) was the third president of the United States, though he is perhaps even better remembered as the author of the Declaration of Independence.