

side and miss no opportunity to highlight even differences in nuance where they occur. However, such actions should be considered within the context of the expectation that the Closing Government team will introduce one significant new platform of information.

“TOP HALF” OF THE DEBATE

- *Prime Minister (Opening Government)*. The principal role of the Prime Minister is to define the motion—clearly explaining what the debate is going to be about. This might involve elucidating where a particular proposed legal change should take place or what area of policy is the focus of a particular motion. The definition should tie clearly and logically to the motion; failure to do so is usually penalized harshly by adjudicators. As with other formats, the definition must be reasonable and debatable. In the case of most modern BP motions, relatively little definition is needed as the motions are usually precise. The speaker then sets out the case to be proposed by her and her partner, dividing the material between them, before developing one or more of their arguments. The Prime Minister in particular must be aware that the second team on that side will be looking for an important additional area for debate, so she would be wise to make sure that she does not leave out obvious areas of argument from her speech. She is, after all, trying to beat both the Opposition teams and the other Government team.
- *Leader of the Opposition (Opening Opposition)*. The role of the Leader of the Opposition is to introduce the arguments to be made by his team and develop one or more of these ideas. The first Opposition speaker also critiques the Prime Minister’s arguments, demonstrating ways in which they are inaccurate, inconsistent, illogical, impractical, or just straightforwardly wrong.
- *Deputy Prime Minister (Opening Government)*. The Deputy Prime Minister develops her team’s remaining arguments and responds to what has been said by the Leader of the Opposition. She also concludes the case for her team. It’s important that this speaker tidies up any loose ends and make sure that the focus of the debate is clear in the minds of the adjudicators, so that neither Opposition nor later Government speakers can muddy the waters. This speaker must remember that the debate may move on to new territory. Consequently, she must ensure that she leaves the adjudicators with the impression that her side has taken control of the debate thus far.
- *Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Opening Opposition)*. The task of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (DLO) is, essentially, the same as that of the Deputy Prime Minister—to conclude the case for his team. This speaker is in an interesting position, however, because, in some ways, the debate comes to an end here. It’s fairly common for the