opposition to know the nature of whatever rule changes it is now contemplating. If a negative resolution procedure is to provide any guarantee to parliament, we suggest that it must provide, first, means whereby a member can move a negative resolution which will appear elsewhere than under private members' motions on the order paper.

Second, there should be a guarantee that the motion will actually be brought before the House and receive adequate discussion. Third, there must be an opportunity for a decision on the matter before the statutory deadline expires. Fourth, there must be a procedure whereby a negative resolution will be brought before the House, other than the way in which it was introduced, in time to be dealt with before the deadline date has overtaken us.

The procedure in clause 11 does not do any of these things. All it really does is to ensure that the supplementary agreement will be tabled in both Houses of Parliament. The bill goes on to say that unless both Houses object within 30 sitting days, the agreement is in effect. In short, this changes the onus. Instead of the treaties having to be ratified by the Parliament of Canada, they may, as far as supplementary amendments to these agreements are concerned, be ratified by order in council and it is up to this House and the other place to move. If they do not move in the fashion I have just described, the order in council is effective.

Where does the negative resolution come from? What member in this House would propose it? Who puts it on the order paper, and where; and who calls it for debate, and when? What obligation is there to reach a decision on the resolution? Is it dealt with simultaneously in the other place and, if not, who guarantees it will be considered there within the deadlines to which I have referred? A negative resolution procedure that neglects these questions is so cynical as to be an insult to members who supposedly being respected by these provisions.

Members are invited to look at section 20 of the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act to see a negative resolution procedure with some significance, despite the timing ambiguity of which the government has taken full advantage. It states that where an objection is filed the House "shall" take it up. That is a definite direction which the government cannot ignore. In clause 11 of Bill S-32 the House, which is fully controlled by the executive, making any agreement must "resolve that the order shall have no effect". I repeat, what use is that if there is no objection to bring any proposed resolutions before the House for debate and decision?

Clause 12 holds out the hope, if you like, of changes in our own rules and refers to a time when we might have a negative resolution procedure in the Standing Orders. Then clause 11 will lapse. As this debate develops, perhaps the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) will inform the House whether he has something in mind. Does he have an amendment to the Standing Orders which will provide for some type of procedure to deal with negative resolution with which we are not familiar at the present time? In the Senate banking, trade and commerce committee, Mr. Cohen, the witness from the Department of Finance, said:

> Clause 12 is contemplating a point in time when each chamber will have established its own set of procedural rules for handling this concept of both affirmative and negative resolutions in terms of the Interpretation Act. What we have tried to do here is anticipate that when the houses have established their own rules, those rules will apply, and clause 11 will no longer do so. Clause 11 is an interim step, which will function until the procedural rules have been ironed out and evolved in the two chambers.

In response to that, Senator Lang said:

> As a member of the Senate Committee on Standing Rules and Orders, Mr. Chairman, I must say that I have never heard of these contemplated changes in the rules. What makes you think, Mr. Cohen, that there are going to be changes in the House rules?

Mr. Cohen then said it was his "understanding and impression". We must echo, on this side of the House, the words of Senator Lang. We in this House have never heard of these proposed Standing Orders. None of the subcommittees of the procedure committee are dealing with them. There is no promise to bring them forward that anyone on this side of the House has ever heard of. I see the President of the Privy Council now looking at me. He was chairman of the procedure committee, and perhaps he can tell us about this, or we would be glad to hear from his parliamentary secretary who was also on that committee. What does the protection of parliament's rights in relation to these treaty amendments come to? I suggest it is a meaningless, procedural, magic trick in the present and less than an empty promise in the future.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I might be allowed to ask the hon. member a question. Is he urging that one of his members on the standing committee bring this matter forward? I would certainly have no objection, if he is dissatisfied with the initiative on this side. Of course, any member of the committee can bring it forward, but it is a matter deserving very careful consideration.

Mr. Stevens: In reply to that question, I would point out to the President of the Privy Council that this is the government's initiative. I should have thought that either in the other place or in the introductory remarks of the parliamentary secretary today in the House there would have been some explanation of why clause 12 has been inserted. All this says is that the government did plan to put a proposal forward to cover this point. What is the government's thinking. After all, it proposed the inclusion of clause 12. It deserves further explanation. I submit that the President of the Privy Council should give a concrete explanation of how the government expects to bring in these procedural changes.

● (1440)

Although in essence this bill ratifying the three treaties referred to encompasses but four pages and 12 clauses, it is a pace-setter with respect to new treaties which Canada will enter into. This is the first time since we passed the tax reform bill that we have been asked to ratify new treaties. In a sense, this bill deals with the fall-out effect of that tax reform legislation. In short, we made such drastic changes in that tax reform legislation that it has now become necessary to renegotiate previously existing treaties which we entered into with various countries. My point is that this bill is a pace-setter. We ought to consider to what extent the international consequences of our tax reform legislation have been desirable or undesirable.