

provinces in these areas than to implement corridor-highway proposals.

As everyone knows, a four-lane highway now connects Ottawa to another highway coming from Toronto and both highways become one just before the Island of Montreal and this four-lane highway goes on as far as Rivière-du-Loup, and even further in the direction of the Gaspé peninsula. But from Rivière-du-Loup to the New Brunswick border, this magnificent national highway is reduced to two lanes and, as we know, over nearly all its length, except for two sections, bypassing two cities, this highway has only two lanes.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but his time is now expired.

[English]

**Mr. Maurice Harquail (Restigouche):** Mr. Speaker, this is my first intervention in debate and my first opportunity to address myself to a bill in this House. I at first contemplated waiting to participate in the debate on the bill with regard to capital punishment. I thought I might have had an opportunity to speak for the first time in the House on the occasion of a Speech from the Throne. However, when I had occasion to read Bill C-272 with respect to the proposed Maine corridor authority and saw that it would adversely affect my constituency, I decided I should participate in today's private members' debate.

I am opposed to this bill. During the course of the debate I will explain my reasoning and my views that bring me to the position that I take today with regard to Bill C-272. As I started out to say, I never dreamed that my first intervention in the House would be with regard to spending money for negotiating with people south of the border with a view to constructing a highway to take people out of our country. This is the indication that I get from the bill. I do not understand the logic or reasoning behind such a joint agreement which would do nothing but bring adverse effect to the region I represent, indeed to the entire northern part of New Brunswick.

The establishment of a Canada-Alaska and Maine Corridor Authority could only be supported if it could be proven that the construction and maintenance by the United States government of an inter-state highway through the state of Maine joining the provinces of Quebec and New Brunswick, and improvements by our governments to parts of the Alaska Highway that lie between Alberta, British Columbia and the Yukon Territory, would be of very great benefit to Canadians as well as being a sound proposition in financial terms.

There are many questions that come to mind. Who are the promoters of this corridor proposition? Who will actually benefit? In my area we have been experiencing problems for decades in an endeavour to achieve some measure of success with regard to having the provincial government accept its responsibility under the British North America Act, a responsibility it likes to refer to from time to time in retaining its authority and autonomy. While it pleads that the Province is autonomous, we often find that it is lacking in action in carrying out its responsibilities. I refer specifically to the completion of highway No. 11 between Moncton and Campbellton, New Brunswick, and

*Canada-Alaska and Maine Corridors*

highway No. 17 between Campbellton and St. Leonard, New Brunswick.

● (1750)

As a result it becomes quite obvious that I could in no way support this bill when in fact in our region of New Brunswick we have been waiting for years to have the proper priorities placed by the provincial government on utilizing those millions of dollars which have been provided to it by the federal government, and to fulfil the many promises that have been made by the provincial government to complete this highway between Campbellton and Moncton.

In the latter part of October or the early part of November there was a regional meeting conducted in the city of Bathurst where some 125 elected representatives were brought to a joint meeting between the federal, provincial, and municipal people to consider the completion of route No. 11. The premier of New Brunswick was in attendance with an entourage of deputy ministers and other ministers and officials of the department of highways, as well as the minister of national resources. After a full day's session of discussion about the completion of this all important route No. 11 we were at no time successful in getting one indication of agreement from the premier of New Brunswick that he would even give it consideration as being a matter of priority to complete this highway. This was his position notwithstanding the fact that our federal government has provided that province with some \$55 million over the last number of years, money which, we were told, would go toward the completion of this highway. So while the present Hatfield administration in New Brunswick takes this attitude I cannot sit here and allow consideration of a bill which would shift the priorities to a corridor road in another country.

As was mentioned by the hon. member for Madawaska-Victoria (Mr. Corbin) we have many other priorities. The present provincial administration is cutting back on schools, cutting back on hospital beds, cutting back on practically every front in the province, including my riding, and I can see where with the position the Hatfield administration has adopted there will be a continual dragging of feet with respect to the completion of the construction of route No. 11 between Campbellton and Moncton.

The explanatory notes attached to this bill state that the voters of the state of Maine have twice voted against the expenditure of money for highway projects which would principally benefit Canadians. When one reviews the material, information and statistics with respect to the financing of this project, and the material contained in this bill, one can quickly conclude that this type of project should not be allowed to go any further than the stage at which it has now arrived. I mentioned the attitude of the New Brunswick government at the moment, not forgetting the importance of the province of Quebec where my riding borders on the province on Quebec through the interprovincial bridge at Cross Point.

The hon. member for Laprairie (Mr. Watson) has mentioned the importance of tourism. Of course we all know the importance of tourism. That is one of the reasons why I am speaking with regard to the importance of completing this highway between Moncton and Campbellton, New