

communities have lost their post offices and therefore, an important national symbol.

With this bill I propose to give their national symbol back to those rural communities. While I support re-opening those post offices, I am quite aware that my view is opposite to the philosophy and the agenda of this government. Taking this into account, I propose we require that a Canadian flag be flown over every Canada Post facility thereby giving them back the status of national symbol which our federal government seems to have forgotten.

[English]

Recently Bill C-73 was introduced in the House of Commons and we debated Canada Post and the attempt at its privatization. At that time if we were to review *Hansard* we would see the important role as a national symbol that post offices play in every community across Canada.

Quite often in these small communities the post office is the only federal government presence. It is the only place where the federal flag flies. The importance of Canada Post and rural post offices as a national symbol and federal presence in communities has been recognized by all parties and MPs in this House.

• (1925)

The new aspect of the Canada Post philosophy regarding new commercial outlets is to get away from the post office as a national symbol. It is getting away from the use of the national flag.

We as Canadians must preserve these national symbols right across Canada. The new Canada Post logo has what some refer to as pigeon wings. That is the flag that many of them are using, along with the Canadian flag. They are using both. But what is the next step? The Canadian flag is good enough. It is meaningful and that is what we should have. We should have the Canadian flag at every post office and every post office outlet.

Private Members' Business

I know we started a little late, so even though I am allowed 20 minutes I am going to cut it short because I know there are a number of other MPs in the House who have expressed the desire to speak. I will allow them some extra time by cutting my speech a little short. I was hoping to be able to refer to the Canada Post philosophy of closing down small rural post offices because it is inter-related.

I was hoping to speak about Pointe-Verte and the closure of its post office; the reduction of hours at the Dalhousie post office, Saturday service; the sorting centre in Campbellton; the reduction of hours in Nash Creek; and the requirement for extra boxes in Saint-Quentin and Kedgwick.

[Translation]

These points must be made. However other members want to speak and I know that we started late because of the vote. Therefore I will give them this opportunity and shorten my speech.

[English]

I would only hope that other MPs will support me in the move to have the Canadian flag fly at every post office outlet in Canada.

Mr. Pat Sobeski (Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to participate in the debate on the proposal to change the Canada Post Corporation Act with regard to the use of our national flag.

I believe that the hon. member is presenting us with a complicated solution to a problem which for the most part does not exist. I do not believe the hon. member has been able to demonstrate that there is really a need for this legislation. I do not think that it deserves the support of this House.

It does not merit our support for several reasons. There is the cost which would be incurred should this legislation become law, but this is not the reason for my objection.

The hon. member's bill ultimately proposes that the flag be displayed in every business in this country that provides postal service, some 14,000 sites. I would hope that the hon. member is not suggesting that Canada Post is not proudly displaying the Canadian flag because that is simply contrary to the facts.

Canada Post has an official policy to guide its employees in the proper manner for display of the Canadian flag. This policy ensures that all Canadian flags that are displayed in corporate facilities across Canada are done so in a fashion that demonstrates pride and respect.