

Supply

and colleges to recognize and celebrate these top students in over 70 events from coast to coast.

• (1800)

Anyone who has had an opportunity to participate in these ceremonies will know that it is much more than just a flashy opportunity for photo ops and other such frivolous things. They are a real occasion to celebrate the excellence and the achievements of these young students and to pay due recognition to them, their parents and to the people who have contributed so much to their education. The educators themselves and the contribution that they have made cannot be overstated. It all goes back to the recognition and reward factor.

It is interesting to note at this point that over the past two years we have awarded almost 5,000 scholarships worth \$8,000 each over four years to Canada scholars in support of their studies. The vital aspect of these awards is that they strongly emphasize excellence and maintenance of a first class academic standing. We should all be proud of the 1988-89 scholarship holders who maintained their first class standing and qualified for the second year of the program. Our congratulations go out to them.

I want to remind you that this year there will be a significant addition to those scholarships. It is apparent now that at least one-half of the scholarships awarded are going to be awarded to women as part of our ongoing effort to address their traditional under-representation in the sciences and engineering. The Canada Scholarships Program stands as a glowing example of our government's ongoing commitment to foster excellence in science and education in Canada. Combined with initiatives such as increased support for the university research granting councils, the science and technology of public awareness campaign and the national network of centres of excellence it represents an unprecedented federal commitment. It is a commitment that I am proud to talk about, one that will ensure a competitive Canada and a prosperous and rewarding future for our young people.

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the hon. member on his excellent presentation.

I keep hearing over and over again from the government side that we need to see more being done by the private sector. Is it not fair to say that the federal government has to do at least its fair share in what is happening out there by providing the proper environment for the private sector?

If you look at all the increases since 1984-85, taking inflation into consideration, the government commitment to research and development has only increased by 1 per cent. When you compare this to the private sector, even though the private sector has contributed over 10 per cent due to inflation and other factors in our society, it seems to be that the private sector is playing catch up. It does not matter what they are doing, it is an increase of 1 per cent in interest rates which has given a devastating blow to whatever they are planning.

Does the hon. member support the government's monetary policy when it comes to high interest rates in light of what has taken place in the high tech industry at this point in time?

Mr. Corbett: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the hon. member. I think it is a fair question and one in which I know business across the country has a great deal of interest.

I want to assure the hon. member that without the direction the present government is taking, without its determination to bring inflation under control, reduce and eventually eliminate the debt and bring down the deficit that we inherited from a previous administration, business will be more hampered because there will be less business coming to the country and less opportunity for the businesses of this nation to make the necessary profits to reinvest in such things as research and development.

I just want to remind the House, as I have done on past occasions, in fact just this afternoon, that we do not want to lose sight of the position we maintain, which is simply that we must all become involved in research and development and as a federal government we have a responsibility. We feel it is necessary for the provinces, universities and business to become involved. It is important for businesses to understand the importance