

fare. In view of the great concern felt by diabetic patients in Canada as a result of reports to the effect that the drug tolbutamide, under the trade name "Orinase", has dangerous properties, is the minister yet in a position to make a statement to the House about the use of this drug in Canada?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, this matter has been checked into by my officers in the Food and Drug Directorate. This was a conclusion of one paper submitted at a recent conference of scientists but there are other scientists who disagree with the findings. Scientific papers on investigations conducted especially in the United Kingdom and Scandinavia would indicate contrary conclusions. We are continuing to examine all the data, but in the meantime we are far from satisfied that there is anything harmful here which would require action at this particular time. We have also been in consultation with the Canadian Diabetic Association and they feel that the protective elements of this drug are very necessary for many diabetics in this country. Until we have greater clarification on what the research is, and because it is so contradictory, we feel that it is not appropriate to take action now.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): May I ask the minister whether the government of Canada is doing any monitoring of patients in Canada who are using this drug in order to determine statistics for our own use?

Mr. Munro: As far as all the scientific research that is being carried on is concerned, Mr. Speaker, we are aware of what is going on in other countries. We are not conducting research ourselves, but are relying on studies carried on in other countries. This does not mean we do not regard it as important but we do not want to duplicate the work. We are carrying on extensive research in other areas. That is the situation at the present time.

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): A supplementary question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Are we to understand from the minister's remarks that the government does not plan to restrict or control the use of Orinase in Canada until further studies take place?

Mr. Munro: That is correct, Mr. Speaker. Several studies that have been conducted indicate quite the contrary of the adverse findings mentioned, in terms of conclusions. Until we can adequately assess the contradic-

Inquiries of the Ministry

tions, we do not feel that action is warranted. Many benefits are derived from the use of this particular drug.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

DISCUSSIONS WITH U.S. OFFICIALS CONCERNING FINANCIAL POSITION OF ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): My question is for the Acting Prime Minister in his position as Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the fact that the federal government has not lent more than \$500 million to the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority and the Seaway Authority is unable even to pay the interest charges on this government loan, has the government or the minister been involved in any recent discussions with United States officials concerning any joint action that might be taken to put the seaway on a sound financial footing?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest to the hon. member that this question, although it is important and may be urgent, is the type of question that should normally be placed on the Order Paper. If there is urgency the hon. member might wish to give the Chair notice and I will see that it is given priority for consideration at the time of adjournment.

HEALTH AND WELFARE

RAE—INDIAN DEATHS ALLEGEDLY CAUSED BY SEWAGE PLANT WATER

Mr. R. R. Southam (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): My question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Is the minister in a position to answer the questions I directed to him on May 4 and May 20? On June 3 the minister indicated he expected an answer shortly. I refer to the allegations by Mr. Roy Daniels with respect to the Indian people who are alleged to have died because of water pollution in the community of Rae in the Northwest Territories.

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Yes, Mr. Speaker. The nature of that particular situation was due to the fact that there was no top soil. The environment was such that the pollution could not be corrected. Measures have been implemented for that particular community to be moved to another area some miles away from its present location where they will not be subject to this type of risk.