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Please quote  
T&M 71/948/NDI  
Your reference

Date  
18th December 1975

Dear Professor Maude

OCEAN ISLAND PHOSPHATES - ROYALTY ACTION

I refer to your letter of 16th November addressed to Mr R K Price and to my reply of 27th November.

The royalty action has just started and it may be of interest to you to have an outline of the probable timetable, as envisaged by Mr Vinelott - although the possibility of modification (especially in the sense of matters taking rather longer than anticipated) cannot be ruled out.

The hearing commenced on Monday 15th December and the Court will rise at the end of the present week for the Christmas Vacation, resuming the hearing on Monday 12th January. The plaintiffs' Leading Counsel (Mr John Mowbray QC) has begun his opening speech which (according to his own estimate) will last some 15-20 days. This will be followed by the plaintiffs' evidence and this is estimated to last some 10 days.

Taking these factors into account, one arrives at Monday 16th February for the opening of the Crown's case. Mr Vinelott hopes that you will be the opening witness, to be followed by Mr Macdonald. Mr Vinelott hopes that you would both be able to be in London a few days beforehand, to discuss the case with him and (possibly) to be present in Court to hear a little of the plaintiffs' evidence. On this basis, your stay in London would be from early February until somewhere about the early twentieths of the month.

I wonder therefore whether you would like me to reserve accommodation for your wife and yourself for that period provisionally; if so, no doubt you will complete and let me have back the membership forms which I sent to you with my letter of 27th November. (Incidentally, I spent a night last week at the Society and was as impressed as ever with the comfort and warmth.) You might also care tentatively to discuss with Richard Sands your wishes as to travelling arrangements (I am arranging for him to receive a copy of this letter).

It has so far proved possible to obtain a transcript of the speeches in this action and, as proposed in your letter of 16th November, I am arranging for Mr Macdonald regularly to receive copies of these. However, I am enclosing with this letter the transcripts for the first day, as Mr Vinelott particularly wished you to see the passages commencing at "C" on page 33 of the first volume and continuing through the second volume.

I look forward to hearing further from you shortly and please do not hesitate to let me know if there is anything further which I can do at present.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Mr Macdonald.

Mr Price is now much recovered and wishes to send to your wife and yourself his best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Yours sincerely

N. D. Ing

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