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Mr D Watters
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OUR REF: GLR/VRJ/S.0587 SP
YOUR REF: DGW/HM
DATE: 4th December 1986

Dear Mr Watters

I thank you for your letter.

I note your opinion regarding the News of the World interview. Frankly, I disagree. The reporter was particularly keen to portray, for once, the human predicament of what it is like for a family rather than merely to extend the medical debate. The interview was sensitively handled and whilst, by its nature, the particular newspaper would choose a dramatic headline, by and large, it was reasonably presented.

I do understand that the general opinion from the Haemophilia Society is that any publicity connecting haemophiliacs with AIDS is bad for haemophiliacs since it will tend to promote prejudice in the public eye against haemophiliacs. I cannot disagree with you too strongly on that point. One of the most significant contributory factors to this whole tragedy has been the restraint on information in the past. The interview itself had a positive benefit for the clients in that a sum of money was produced by the newspaper that will not only brighten this family's Christmas, but would also help to create an initial Legal Costs Fund to help to ensure the investigation of this firm and other firms, including Philip Kossof & Co., investigating cases for haemophiliacs, in my view the more publicity is brought to the issue, the better prospects, that at the end of the day, the final outcome would be some element of no fault compensation for all haemophiliacs.

As explained in my telephone conversation at the time to your office, the News of the World interview did include certain fears that the family had at one time which has since been found to be unjustified. I am thinking, for example of the reference to the fears initially of kissing their children. It was unfortunate perhaps that the paper did not include some balancing comments and it was for this reason that I suggested that you may wish to go on record with such remarks. The reporter, Mr Keith Beabey at the Manchester Office would be prepared to file a follow-up story including such comments. Perhaps you would contact him if you wish to take this course of action.

Although we have a difference of opinion in respect of the matter of publicity I do, of course, appreciate the assistance you have given me so far in the matter and hope that we shall not let this matter come between us.

Yours faithfully

GRO-C

GRAHAM L. ROSS
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