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Finally, there arises the question of how to handle, in such correspondence, the matter Brasilia, Brazil, with the GOB on human rights. Some such formulation as "We are confident (or you may be sure) the Brazilian Government is fully aware of our position on human rights and the importance we attach to it" probably would not offend the GOB, but by the September 22, 1975 be quite unsatisfactory to our correspondents. On the other hand

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which refers to our efforts with the GOB could well prove offensive. In effect, of course, the question George Lister, Esquire the balance to be struck between our ARA - Room 6263 on rights and our other interests in Brazil.

Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

no precise answer to the question, but we would appreciate the Department's guidance, as well as any comments Dear Mr. Lister: we might have on any of the foregoing.

This letter, a copy of which is going to Bob Zimmerman, is aimed at obtaining the Department's guidance on Embassy handling of letters it receives on human rights cases, usually arrested or missing persons.

David E. Simon

In general, of course, we believe the Embassy should answer its own mail, but many of these cases, and specifically those taken on by Amnesty International, become the subjects of multi-letter campaigns involving various addressees, including the Department and the Congress as well as the Embassy. It strikes us as possible that in such cases the Department might prefer to serve as the central source of response, coordinating as necessary with the Embassy by telegram or pouch regarding available information, etc., so that is one question we wanted to put.

If it were to reply directly to a request for information on an individual case, the Embassy would provide such information as was "available"--- by which we would mean information the release of which would not jeopardize the prisoner himself or other persons, violate confidences, or risk exposing sensitive sources or methods. Often, however, letters request not just information but efforts by the Embassy with the GOB, either on behalf of an individual or of human rights in general. A copy of a recent instance is enclosed. Regarding individuals, of course, the classic position has been that the USG has no grounds for intervening with the GOB on behalf of a Brazilian citizen. We have the impression, however, that that position has eroded recently, and we would appreciate guidance on the extent to which it is still used in such instances.

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Finally, there arises the question of how we handle, in such correspondence, the matter of our dealings with the GOB on human rights. Some such formulation as "We are confident (or you may be sure) the Brazilian Government is fully aware of our position on human rights and the importance we attach to it" probably would not offend the GOB, but by the same token could be quite unsatisfactory to our correspondents. On the other hand any formulation which refers to our efforts with the GOB could well prove offensive. In effect, of course, the question ultimately is that of the balance to be struck between our interest in human rights and our other interests in Brazil.

We realize there can be no precise answer to the question, but we would appreciate the Department's guidance, as well as any comments you or anyone else might have on any of the foregoing.

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Sincerely,

David E. Simcox
Political Counselor

Enclosure:
Amnesty Int'l ltr dtd 9/4/75

cc: ARA/LA/ER - R. Zimmerman

POL: LGirdler:dd 9/22/75

Clearances:
POL: DSimcox
Charge: RJohnson: LEJ(a)

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immediately.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Respectfully,

David E. Schuette