Custody Case SCS 2/2

(437)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY _____ DATE _____

RDS☐ or XDS☐ EXT. DATE _____
TS AUTH. _____ REASON(S) _____
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☐ RELEASABLE☒
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January 11 1978

I have been asked to reply to your letter of December 30 1977 addressed to Assistant Secretary Douglas J. Bennet requesting information concerning the custody of John Victor Stoen.

The Department of State and the American Embassy in Georgetown do not agree with your suggestion that the legal procedures in Guyana have not been conducted fairly and in accordance with international standards. Although the Embassy has officially expressed concern over the apparent governmental intrusion in the judicial process, they believe that the Stoen's local attorney is representing their interests most capably and that the case is proceeding with reasonable speed. Court proceedings resumed September 23 and have continued periodically since that time. The latest report from the Embassy (received January 9, 1978) indicated that Mr. Haas was optimistic that the court will rule in favor of Mr. and Mrs. Stoen and that he appeared satisfied that the Government of Guyana was not exerting any improper influence in the judicial process.

Please be assured that the Embassy continues to monitor the case closely and has extended all appropriate assistance to the parties in the hope of reaching a just solution in accordance with the laws of Guyana. The Department of State and the Embassy in Georgetown cannot intervene in the decision per se but will take all available measures to ensure that the decision is reached fairly and equitably.

Sincerely yours

Stephen A. Dobronchuk
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CA/SCS/FL:Schnoke:ram Clearances: SCS-Ms. Powers
1/11/78 x28089 SCS-Mr. Rivera