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Report to Congressional Requesters

October 1987

PHYSICAL SECURITY

Protection of Assets at U.S. Navy Bases



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National Security and
International Affairs Division

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October 26, 1987

The Honorable Pete Wilson
United States Senate

The Honorable John Glenn
Chairman, Committee on Governmental
Affairs
United States Senate

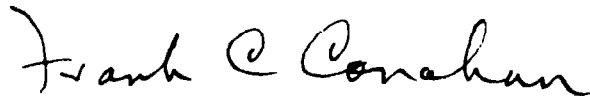
As you requested, we have reviewed the Navy's internal controls for protecting assets and facilities. We found that the Navy has placed increased emphasis on physical security at U.S. installations. This emphasis has resulted in an increased awareness of physical security and a general improvement in physical security procedures. However, our review also disclosed a number of security control issues that reduce the overall effectiveness of the security provided Navy assets. These include

- protection of restricted areas,
- control of commercial vehicles,
- protection of waterfront property,
- compliance with fencing requirements,
- access by private boats and airplanes, and
- designation of "restricted" and "secure" waterways.

Appendix I contains the details of our observations on these issues. The scope of our work did not allow us to gather data in sufficient detail to allow us to identify systemic and, thus, Navy-wide security weaknesses. However, the conditions discussed in appendix I occurred at more than one installation, indicating more than a local problem. We are recommending that the Secretary of the Navy direct installation officials to review and correct the conditions discussed in this report.

The Department of Defense concurred with the findings and recommendations in our report. The Department of the Navy has taken action or has initiated action to resolve the issues we identified. Specifically, the Chief of Naval Operations has directed responsible commanders to correct the deficiencies we identified. Also, a revised Navy Security and Loss Prevention Manual, OPNAVINST 5530.14A, will be available in January 1988, which will clarify definitions and areas of responsibility. The Department of Defense's comments are incorporated, as appropriate, in appendix I and are included in their entirety in appendix II.

As arranged with your offices, unless you publicly announce its contents earlier, we plan no further distribution of this report until 14 days from its issue date. At that time, we will send copies to interested committees and other Members of Congress, as well as to the Secretaries of Defense and the Navy. Copies will also be made available to other parties upon request.



Frank C. Conahan
Assistant Comptroller General

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Physical Security at U.S. Navy Bases

The increased emphasis the Navy has recently placed on physical security procedures has resulted in enhanced awareness of physical security and a general improvement in physical security procedures. For example, new fences have been constructed at some locations; stricter controls over vehicle and pedestrian traffic have been reemphasized; vehicle barriers have been installed at some entrances; and more emphasis has been placed on security force training. However, we observed several conditions that reduce the overall effectiveness of the daily physical security provided Navy assets. These conditions were generally due to either a lack of or inconsistent compliance with the Navy's Physical Security and Loss Prevention Manual.

Background

Over the past several years, large reported losses at Navy supply activities, thefts from Navy operations and repair facilities, and internal security inspections, audits, and management control reviews have highlighted the need for better physical security of Navy assets. The Secretary of the Navy, in his 1984 Financial Integrity Act report to the Secretary of Defense, stated that managers had initiated a number of corrective actions to address identified physical security control weaknesses. These actions included controlling access to bases and buildings by identification checks and visitor logs, developing internal security training programs, increasing security forces to ensure full security 24 hours a day, and developing written procedures to better define responsibilities and requirements for effective physical security. Also, in September 1985, the Chief of Naval Operations issued a revised Physical Security and Loss Prevention Manual. The manual provides policy guidance and uniform standards for physical security measures to protect Navy personnel, property, and material against such acts as espionage, sabotage, damage, and theft.

Security responsibilities within the Navy's management structure are as follows:

- The Chief of Naval Operations is responsible for the formulation and dissemination of Navy policies relating to security and for the supervision and coordination of their implementation. The Naval Security and Investigations Command implements these policies.
- The commanding officer of an activity is responsible for physical security at that activity, for appointing a security officer, and for establishing and maintaining a physical security and loss prevention program.

- The security officer assists the commanding officer by determining the adequacy of the command's physical security and loss prevention program, identifying those areas in which improved physical security and loss prevention measures are required, and managing the program.

One important aspect of the Navy's physical security program is that security controls begin at the installation's perimeter and become progressively more intense as one approaches a restricted area that is designated to protect a specific asset. The level of security resources used varies with the sensitivity of the asset being protected. The Security Manual allows the commander of an installation some discretion in designating restricted areas. However, it specifically requires that certain areas and assets, such as piers and wharves, aircraft operations and maintenance areas, and communications centers, be designated restricted areas. The manual also establishes minimum security requirements for each type of restricted area.

In commenting on our report, Defense stated that the authority for designating restricted areas will be clarified in a revision of the Security Manual, which will be available in January 1988. The revised manual will place the authority for the establishment of restricted areas with the installation commander. The installation commander's decision to establish a restricted area will be based on the sensitivity of the assets to be protected, the threat, the operational requirements, and the resources required to protect the assets.

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

We reviewed the effectiveness of selected physical security controls in operation at several domestic Navy installations. Our objective was to evaluate the physical security procedures used to control access to Navy installations and selected restricted areas.

Our evaluation of perimeter security included the land, water, and air boundaries of the installation. We examined the integrity of perimeter fences and the access controls in operation at gates, airfields, and shorelines. We observed vehicle and pedestrian entry procedures and considered the general accessibility of the installation.

Our evaluation of designated restricted areas concentrated on selected restricted buildings, piers and wharves, and aircraft operations and maintenance areas. The controls we considered included fences, building exteriors, door and window locks, alarms, and security patrols.

We performed our work from May 1986 through May 1987. We visited the Sewell's Point Naval Complex in Norfolk, Virginia; the Bangor Naval Submarine Base in Washington; the Pearl Harbor Naval Station and Barber's Point Naval Air Station in Hawaii; and the North Island Naval Air Station and San Diego Naval Base in California. We limited our work at the San Diego Naval Base to a review of waterfront security. We visited these installations because they contain many of the Navy's combat ships, submarines, and aircraft, as well as important supply and repair facilities. We also performed work at the Naval Security and Investigations Command headquarters in Suitland, Maryland. Our work was performed in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Inconsistent Implementation of Security Procedures for Restricted Areas

We observed the physical security of selected restricted areas—restricted buildings, piers and wharves, and aircraft operating and maintenance areas. We found substantial variances in the physical security at the installations we visited.

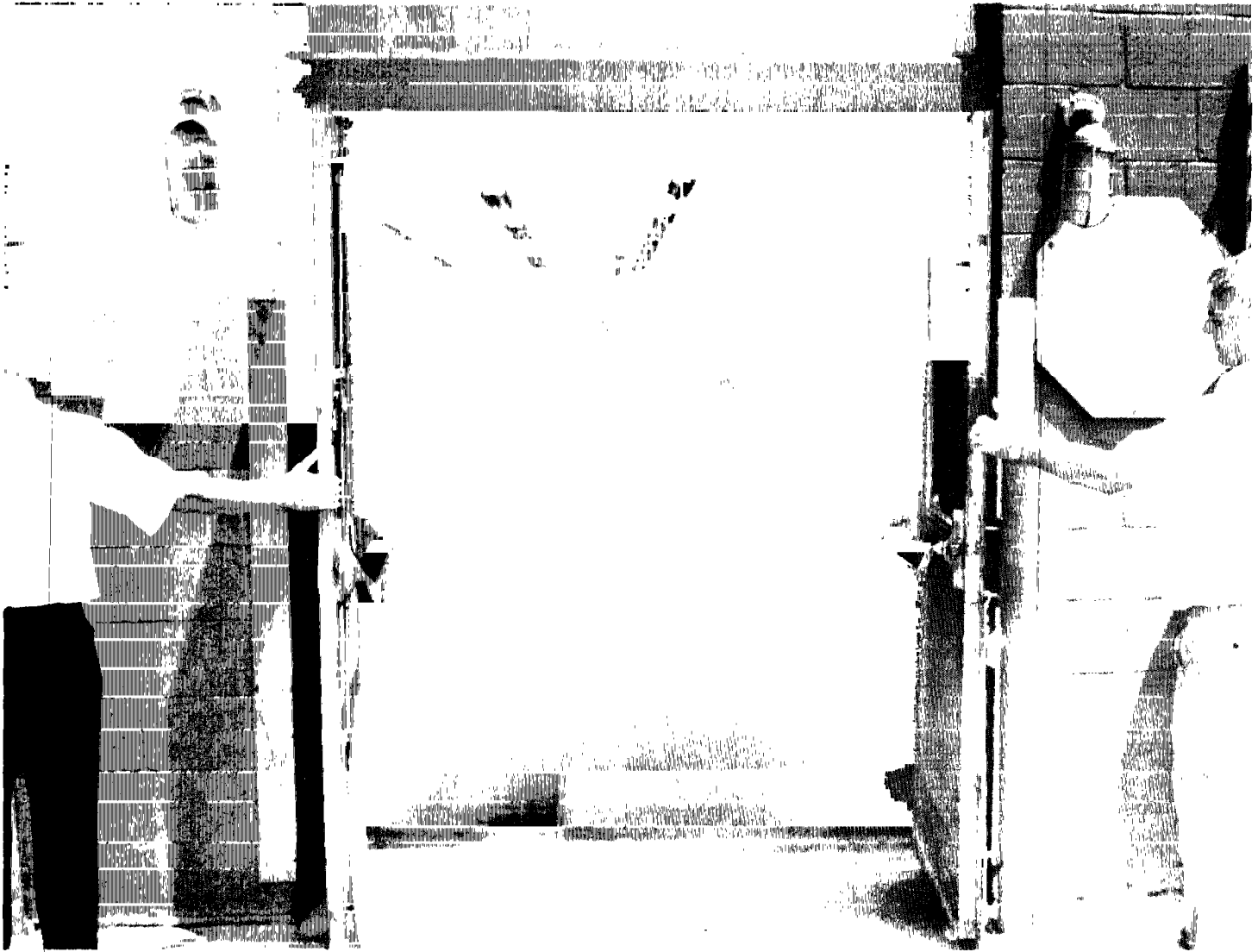
Restricted Buildings

We examined five buildings designated as restricted areas: one at Norfolk and another at North Island in which classified work on air-to-air missiles and other items was done; and three at Bangor, two libraries that contained classified documents and a building in which Trident missiles were assembled for installation aboard submarines.

At the Norfolk building, we found that the classified work area had not been visually shielded from the unclassified work areas. As a result, security clearances had been granted to over 500 employees working in the building when only about 35 percent of them were actually working on classified material. At the time of our visit, a Navy official stated that a project to visually shield the classified work area was undergoing architectural and engineering review. In its comments on our draft report, Defense estimated that the project will be completed during fiscal year 1988.

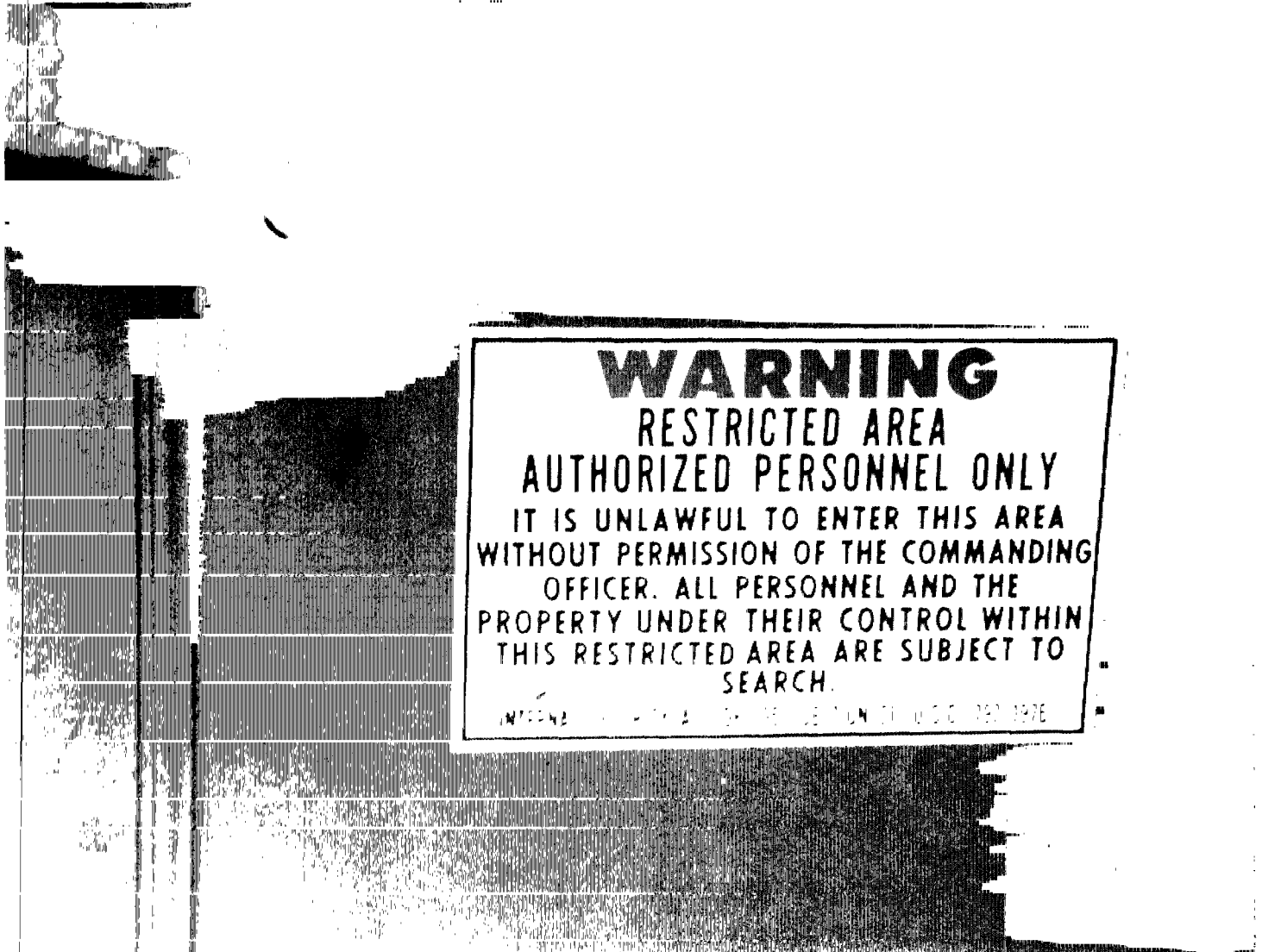
We also found several doors providing access to the classified work area that were not securely locked to preclude entry. These doors were standard metal-clad door assemblies. Even though one door leading to a classified work area was "properly secured," we were able to open it by giving it a hard jerk (see fig. I.1).

Figure I.1: Secure Door Leading to Classified Work Area, Which We Were Able to Open



We found two other doors leading to the classified work area that had improvised attachments to defeat the locking mechanisms. One door had been altered to allow opening from the outside by pulling a wire placed through the door and anchored to the crash bar (see figs. I.2 and I.3). Another door had an improvised brace attached to the crash bar, which prevented the door from locking (see figs. I.4 and I.5).

Figure I.2: Outside View of Secure Door Showing Wire That Can Be Used to Open It



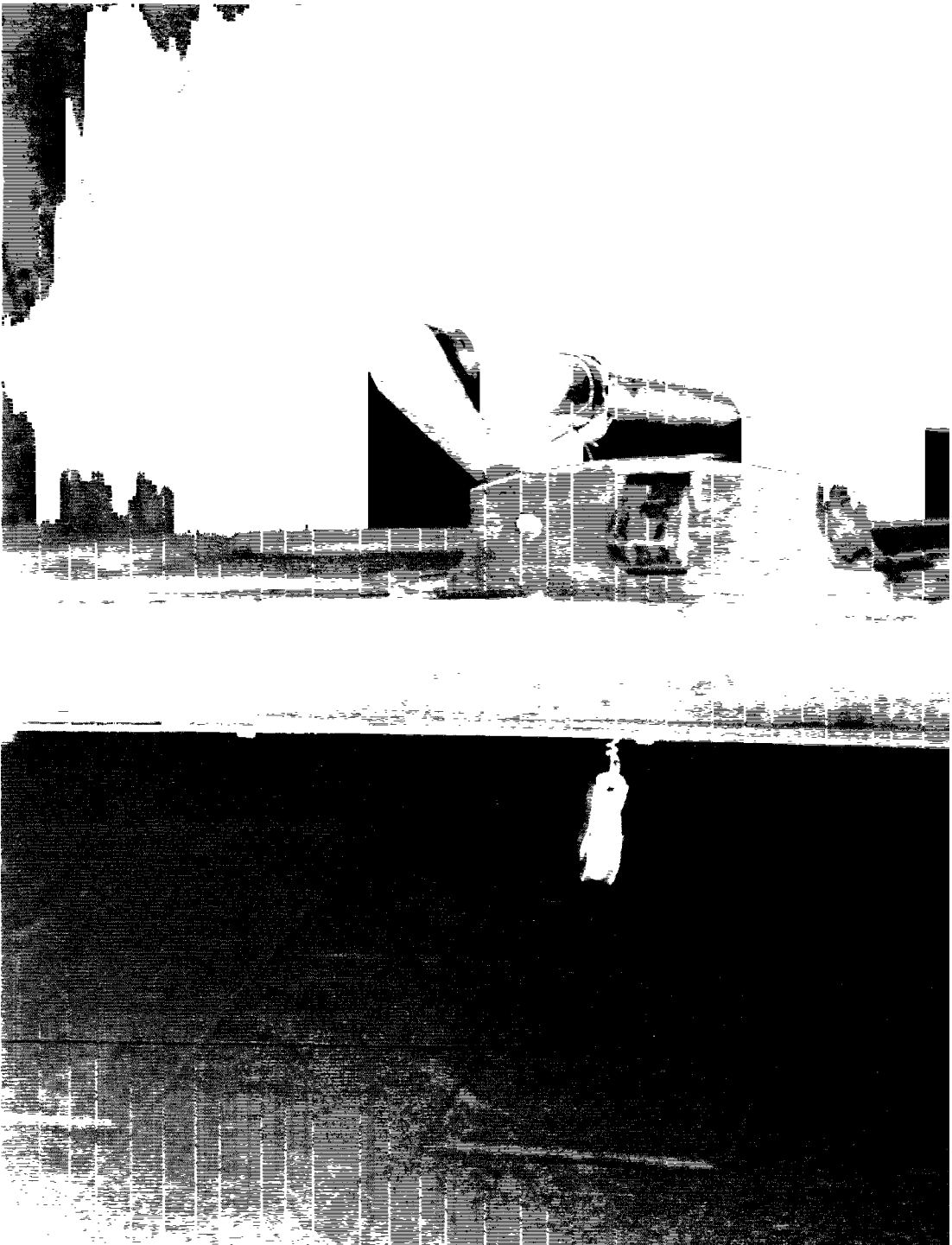


Figure I.4: Outside View of Secure Door That Has an Improvised Brace to Prevent Locking

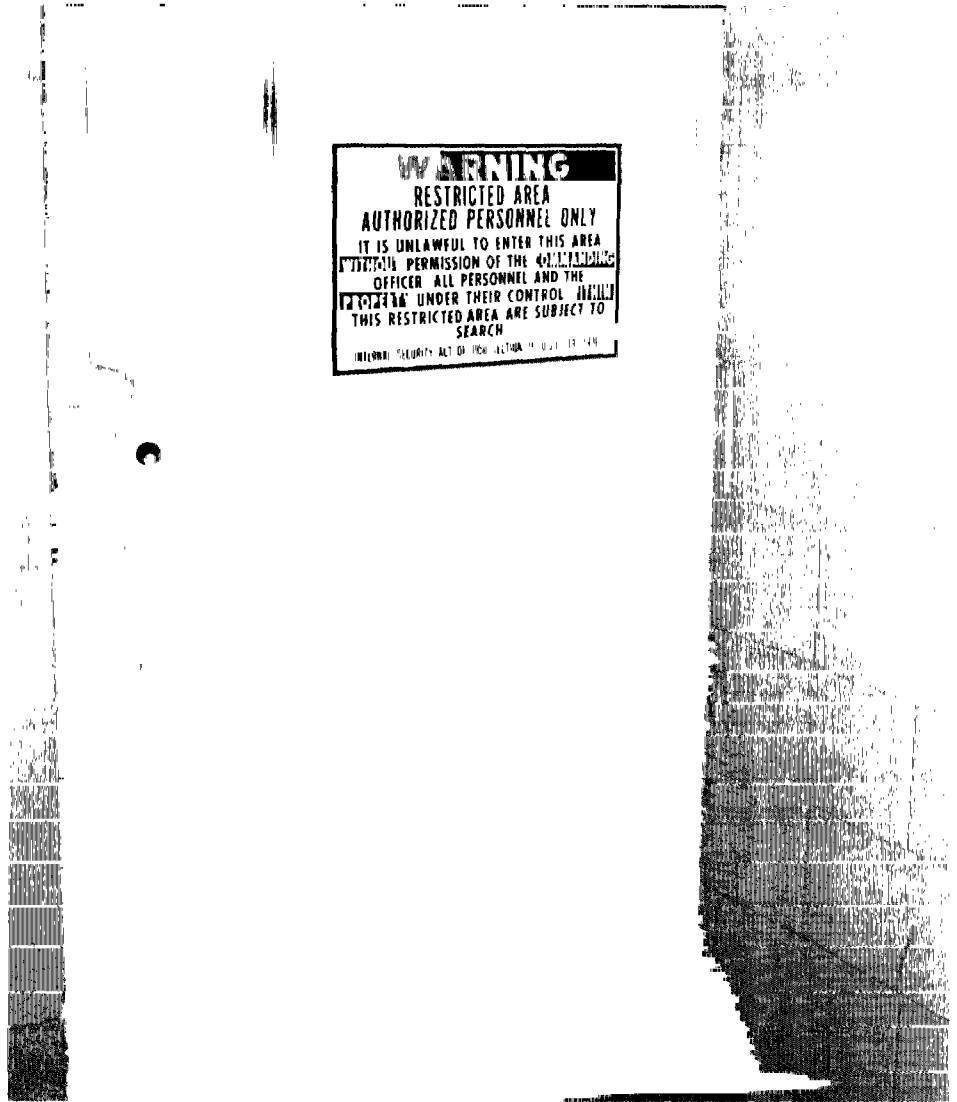
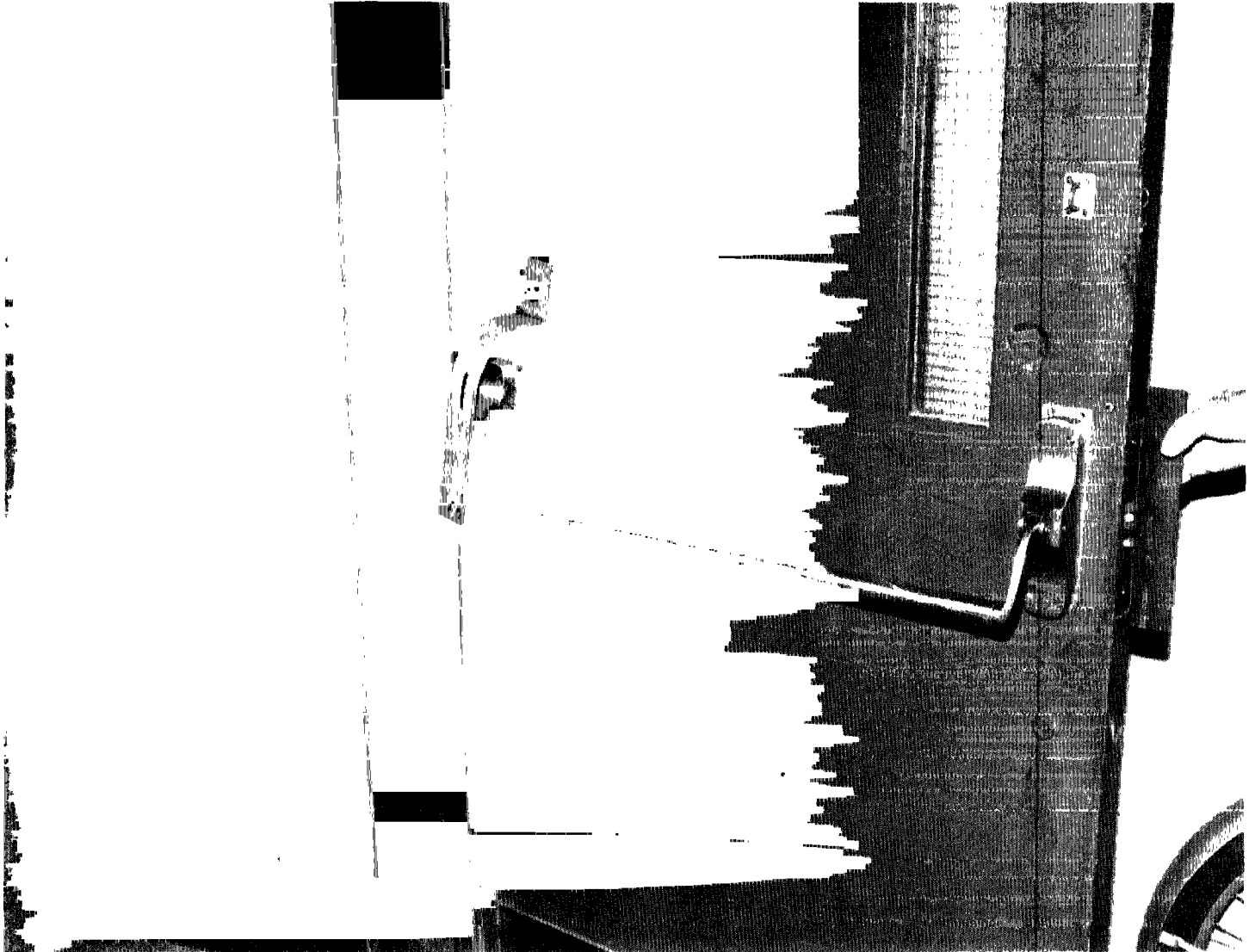


Figure I.5: Inside View of Door With Improvised Brace



Defense stated in its comments on our draft report that the defective locking devices on the exterior perimeter doors have been replaced.

In contrast, the building at North Island had dedicated, secure rooms with reinforced steel door assemblies and cipher locks. The classified work area was visually shielded from other workers in the building. Also, the doors were equipped with electrical contact alarms, and the repair area was monitored by motion detection alarms. Both types of alarms sounded at the base police station.

At Bangor, we did not observe any physical security weaknesses at the two libraries containing classified documents. However, we found the following problems at the Trident missile assembly building in Bangor:

- A door, similar to those we were able to pull open in Norfolk, leads through an equipment room to a tunnel large enough to permit passage of a person directly into the missile assembly and repair area. We examined the length of the tunnel and found a grate secured with an inexpensive lock. It appeared that the grate and lock could be forced open.
- The roof has large vents that open into the missile assembly and repair area. These vents could be opened by pulling release wires provided for that purpose. Directly underneath were grates that could possibly be forced open. Moreover, the areas around these vents are not visible from the ground and could offer concealment to an intruder.

In commenting on our draft report, Defense stated that Bangor officials were aware of these conditions and that an approved waiver of exception had been executed. Since our visit, Bangor officials have secured these openings, and they now meet the requirements of the manual.

Required Restricted Areas Not Designated

Piers and wharves and aircraft operating and maintenance areas are specifically required by the Security Manual to be designated restricted areas. We found that Bangor, Barber's Point, and San Diego had complied with this requirement.

Norfolk's aircraft operating and maintenance area and the Naval Supply Center's warehouses located on three piers are designated restricted areas. We were told that the remaining piers and wharves are considered low-risk areas and that parking is limited at the waterfront. As a result, these areas will be treated as restricted areas only during periods of heightened security. Norfolk security officials do not believe that the

Security Manual requires the designation of piers and wharves as restricted areas. They believe that the manual leaves this decision to the discretion of the commanding officer. Defense stated in its comments that this issue will be clarified in the next revision to the Security Manual.

Pearl Harbor's piers and wharves are not designated restricted areas. Officials told us that they intend to designate them as restricted areas upon completion of projects to erect physical security barriers. At the time of our visit, these projects had not been started because of funding limitations. Defense noted in its comments on our draft report that a special project to fence one pier had been awarded and a second was in the design phase. Both are scheduled for completion in fiscal year 1988.

Neither North Island's piers and wharves nor its aircraft operating and maintenance areas are designated restricted areas. North Island officials stated that they intend to designate them restricted areas when sufficient numbers of security personnel are authorized and assigned. A request to hire additional personnel was included in the fiscal year 1989 program objectives memorandum. Defense stated in its comments on our draft report that the tenant commands at North Island have enhanced security by establishing line watches during non-working hours. Base security has also increased random patrols in all areas of the installation.

Inconsistent Controls Over Commercial Vehicles

The Security Manual provides the following guidance for controlling commercial vehicles:

"Commercial vehicles, including buses, may be authorized entry by permanent registration or visitor control methods. Normal search and identification verification procedures and additional local precautions will be applied to prevent unauthorized material or personnel being introduced into or removed from the installation."

Although each base we visited had operational security procedures to control vehicle access to the installation, we found that these procedures differed substantially among the installations. These differences raise questions regarding the Navy's ability to meet the intent of the Security Manual.

We observed that trucks routinely passed, with no inspection, through gates at Pearl Harbor and Barber's Point. The issue of the control of vehicle access to the Pearl Harbor Naval Station was raised in a 1986

internal security inspection report. The report concluded that control over commercial vehicles was inadequate and recommended that one gate be designated for commercial vehicle access and a truck inspection station be built. Defense stated that a request to build an inspection station was submitted in August 1986. Funding approval is estimated to occur in fiscal year 1989. After our visit to Barber's Point, the commanding officer directed that commercial vehicles will no longer be permitted on the base without proper authorization documents. In commenting on our draft report, Defense stated that a random inspection procedure has been established for periods of normal threat conditions. During heightened threat conditions, all vehicles will be inspected before entering the installation.

North Island established a truck inspection station at its truck entrance gate, which is capable of handling two trucks. Trucks entering the installation were stopped and inspected, provided space was available in the inspection station. If the inspection station was full, other trucks were passed through the entrance. Trucks leaving the installation were not inspected. Security officials stated that staffing ceilings limited any additional effort. Defense stated that local orders have been revised to require all trucks to be inspected prior to entry onto the installation. If backlogs occur, trucks will be required to wait.

Norfolk processes commercial freight trucks through truck monitoring stations. Incoming vehicles must pass through one of three monitoring stations where they are inspected and sealed. Movement about the installation is controlled by signature of a responsible official at each stop and upon leaving the installation.

Lack of Compliance With Regulations on Waterfront Security

The Security Manual provides the following guidance for waterfront security at Navy installations:

"Water boundaries present special security problems. Such areas should be protected by material or structural barriers, and posted. In addition to barriers, patrol craft should be used at activities or installations whose waterfronts contain critical assets, restricted areas, or which are otherwise essential to the mission of the installation or activity. In inclement weather, such patrols cannot provide an adequate degree of protection and should be supplemented by increased waterfront patrols, CCTV [Closed Circuit Television], watch towers, sentry dogs, etc...."

With the exception of Bangor, we found a general lack of compliance with this section of the Security Manual. When submarines are in port,

Bangor patrols its shorelines 24 hours a day with two all-weather boats. At other times, one boat is used for patrol, and the other is kept on standby. Bangor maintains three boats for rotational duty.

In contrast, Norfolk, North Island, Pearl Harbor, and San Diego each use one or two open fair-weather boats. According to Norfolk officials, boat patrols are conducted from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. weekdays and from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekends. Because of inclement weather conditions, no patrols are conducted from October through March. Security officials at North Island, Pearl Harbor, and San Diego state that they patrol infrequently. Mechanical failures and a lack of boat crews were the reasons given.

Defense provided the following information regarding activity subsequent to our visit:

- Procurement action has been initiated to acquire two police boats for delivery to San Diego in March 1988. Personnel requests have been made for boat crews.
- The harbor patrol unit at Pearl Harbor has two 22-foot Boston Whalers and a 22-foot Roberts jet boat. These boats are operationally ready. The harbor patrol unit has been augmented with more personnel, and patrols occur 24 hours daily.
- Funding for two police boats and additional personnel has not been available at North Island. Funding will be requested for fiscal year 1990.

Lack of Compliance With Perimeter Fence Requirements

The Security Manual requires that perimeter boundaries be fenced or walled and posted to establish legal boundaries, provide buffer zones, facilitate control, and make accidental intrusion unlikely. It also states that (1) all wire used to fasten fence fabric to fence posts must be 9-gauge steel, (2) any hardware used to assemble fences and gates must be peened (screw heads flattened) or welded, (3) culverts passing under or through the fence must be limited to the size of a 10-inch pipe or equivalent-sized clusters of pipe, (4) openings through a fence must be secured with material of equal or greater strength than the overall barrier, and (5) an area of 30 feet inside and 20 feet outside, parallel to the perimeter fence, must be kept clear of all vegetation higher than 8 inches.

During our review, we identified several conditions that indicate failure to comply with existing fencing requirements. Examples of the conditions we found are shown in figures I.6 through I.10. In general, the reasons cited by installation officials were that these conditions were in a low risk area, had a low-funding priority, or lacked sufficient funds.

The requirement in the Security Manual for peening or welding fence hardware was not included as an inspection item in the Security Manual checklist used by installation security officers. Nor was it included in the construction specifications used by the Navy to procure fences. As a result, none of the installations we visited complied with the requirement for peening or welding of fence and gate hardware. Fences could be disassembled, and gates could be removed by lifting them off the hinge pins. Only Bangor officials took corrective action after notification of this condition. They detailed a working party to peen or weld the securing hardware on the operations area perimeter fence, and they stated that they would initiate a contract to complete the effort.