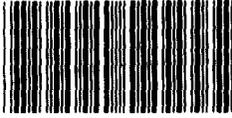


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UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548



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STATEMENT OF
FRANK C. CONAHAN
U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ARMS CONTROL AND
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND SCIENCE
AND
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ON
SECURITY AT OVERSEAS POSTS

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W.H. 11/10/85

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittees:

I am pleased to be here to discuss the Department of State's management of its embassy security program. We have issued two reports on this subject during the past 2 1/2 years and are now in the midst of an ongoing evaluation. In September 1982 we issued a report entitled "Improvements Needed In Providing Security At Overseas Posts." Last September we issued a report entitled "Status of Department of State's Security Enhancement Program," and we also testified before the House Foreign Affairs Committee on that report. Our reports and testimony discussed a number of problems that caused delays in implementing security improvements overseas.

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There is currently a great deal of activity at the State Department with regard to security. The Secretary of State meets almost daily on security matters and decisions are being made continuously on policy and programs. In our current evaluation, we have worked at agencies' headquarters in Washington and in 9 countries. We plan work in six more, before reporting our conclusions and recommendations. Today, I would like to discuss our work to date and some of our observations.

THE NEW BUILDINGS PROGRAM

The Department recognizes that a significant number of posts cannot be secured through modifications, and it will be necessary to construct new office buildings. Too often the existing buildings are vulnerable because of their age, locations, and design.

The Security Supplemental authorized last October (see attachment for details) provides \$28 million for 13 office buildings at high threat posts. This represents only a fraction of the buildings which will ultimately have to be replaced if their security is to be substantially improved. The preliminary results of a recently completed study indicate that 139 structures need to be replaced.

To date, no funds have been obligated for site acquisition or construction of the 13 buildings; however, at two posts the designs have been completed and construction contracts are scheduled to be signed by April 15, 1985.

One major factor that will determine the timeliness and effectiveness of these projects is the availability of suitable land that allows enough setback to meet standards established by the Department. The current standard requires at least 100 feet from the building to vehicular entrances and perimeter walls. We understand that 7 of the 13 projects currently do not meet this standard. The Department is attempting to find alternative sites and/or reconfigure designs to meet this requirement.

PERIMETER SECURITY PROGRAM

The Security Supplemental provides \$25.4 million for perimeter barrier improvements including \$5.4 million for research and development. The Department has been specifically addressing the threat of vehicular bomb attacks since the December 1983 Kuwait bombing by conducting perimeter surveys and using Security Enhancement Program (SEP), Security Supplemental, and post funds for emergency barrier improvements. We observed considerable activity at posts we visited--for example, walls being constructed, sand bags being stacked, and trucks being used as temporary barriers.

Recently, the Department has contracted with nine U.S. firms to conduct perimeter surveys at 37 posts in fiscal year 1985 at a cost of \$1.7 million. The Department is planning to contract for an additional 38 posts in fiscal year 1986. Following these surveys, these firms will construct the recommended improvements.

At one of the 37 posts scheduled for a perimeter survey in fiscal year 1985, there were questions about the need for, and

timing of, the new survey. Departmental survey teams had previously visited this post twice in 1984 and both times had recommended a number of perimeter improvements. The regional security officer was concerned about the impact additional recommendations may have on improvements completed or underway.

In our current evaluation, we also noted that certain equipment purchased to enhance perimeter security may not meet the Department's requirements. In addition, the Department has not provided for maintenance and parts for certain equipment being installed at overseas posts.

SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS
VARY FROM POST TO POST

As you know, the Department of State categorizes each post according to threat. We found that the extent of physical security upgrades and the use of precautionary measures are significantly different at overseas posts, even among those in the same threat category. For example, at three posts in the highest threat category, we found:

- Two posts did not have hydraulic vehicle arrest systems; one did.
- One post did not have a safe haven; two did.
- One post did not allow parking on the compound; the other two did;
- One post had no contract guard service; two did.
- Two posts had radios for all U.S. Government employees at their residences; one did not.

There are a number of reasons for these differences. No standards have been developed for each threat category, security guidelines are inconsistently applied, and the attitudes of post officials differ toward the implementation of security measures.

Another reason for the differences is that some security upgrades are planned but have not yet been implemented. As we found in our previous reviews, delays continue in the delivery and installation of equipment at posts. Overall, however, we observed that the Department appears to be providing more timely responses to post requests for security improvements.

One dilemma currently confronting the Department is how much to upgrade a facility which is slated for replacement. There are no standards for interim security measures. At one post, we found that a communications upgrade was denied because a new office building was being constructed.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STATE DEPARTMENT
AND OTHER AGENCIES AT POST CONCERNING
SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS

In our last two reports we discussed problems caused by disagreements between the State Department and other agencies at posts. In our last report we indicated that improvements in resolving these differences had been made and our current work indicates this trend has continued.

However, at 7 of 16 posts we visited, recommendations for security improvements at other agencies were not always being implemented. In some cases, this was due to agencies' disagreeing with State over what was needed, who would pay for the

improvements, and the timing of the upgrade, especially when a move was contemplated.

We also found, at one post, that the Department's security team did not survey an annex building in which another agency was housed. As a result, improvements were recommended and implemented at the chancery but not the annex.

DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT AND POSTS

In our previous reports we observed that some projects were delayed because the Department and post officials disagreed over the details of security improvements. We found during our recent visits that such disagreements have continued to cause delays, ranging from several months to several years at most of the posts we visited.

For example, at one post the architectural drawings for access controls were completed in June 1980; however, post and headquarters officials disagreed over the design and funding for the project. In January 1983, a survey team recommended further design changes. The project was finally completed in April 1984--more than 4 years later. Because of these delays, other major upgrades will not be completed until August 1985.

At another post currently scheduled for a new building, the Ambassador believes that the security situation argues for moving to a temporary facility while the new building is being constructed. The Office of Foreign Buildings reviewed the proposed temporary site and concluded that it would be too costly and

that the facility was structurally unsafe. The Ambassador disagreed with this assessment and insisted on a second study. The Department is again evaluating the feasibility of moving to the proposed temporary facility. Meanwhile, acquisition of a permanent site has already been delayed by at least 5 months while the Department deals with the question of the interim office building.

At another post, the security of consular space was determined to be inadequate in 1982. Because of other funding priorities, the Office of Foreign Buildings recommended moving to rental space rather than new construction at this time. The post subsequently chose a rental location which the Department surveyed and rejected in August 1983. Subsequently, the Department recommended an alternative location which the post rejected. In April 1984 the post agreed to the location previously proposed by the Department. Modification of the rental space is scheduled for completion in April 1985.

In sum, Mr. Chairman, though the Department, with the help of increased funding and direction from the Congress, has increased its attention to and, together with other agencies, has diligently worked toward increased security at overseas posts, it is clear that a number of problems remain. We expect, at the conclusion of our current evaluation to have developed recommendations to assist in overcoming these problems.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I will be happy to respond to any questions you may have.

1985 SECURITY SUPPLEMENTAL
DETAIL PROGRAM CATEGORIES
FUNDS APPROPRIATED AND OBLIGATED/COMMITTED AS OF 2/28/85

	<u>Net</u> <u>Appropriated</u>	<u>Net</u> <u>Obligated/Committed</u>
<u>Major Categories</u>		
Regional Security Office Positions and Support	\$ 2,269,000	\$ 55,953
Embassy Perimeter Improvements	20,008,000	13,438,259
Overseas Physical Security Information Management System Computer-Assisted	1,606,000	389,050
Marine Security Guard Booth	300,000	105,695
Overseas Engineering Office	2,497,000	126,340
Seabees	4,280,000	39,000
Fully Armored Vehicles	8,250,000	2,449,907
Light Armored Vehicles	1,476,000	574,589
R/D Armored Vehicles	600,000	25,938
Marine Security Guard Vehicles	780,000	798,832
Special Protective Equipment Program	1,488,000	877,179
R/D Physical Security Barriers	5,388,000	98,917
Overseas Security Coordination	14,000	-0-
Specialized Security Training	2,140,000	595,963
TASCAT Systems	5,786,000	1,894,730
Radio Support Program	9,012,000	7,555,525
Overseas Security Support	2,754,000	282,041
Physical Security Main State	923,000	667,641
Emergency Planning Management Exercises	1,037,000	26,000
Emergencies/Rewards	1,000,000	-0-
Foreign Buildings Office	28,000,000	2,909,845
Centrally Managed Funds	5,277,000	32,279
USIA	5,315,000	1,339,446
<u>Total:</u>	<u>\$110,200,000</u>	<u>\$34,283,129</u>