

**[SPEECH]**

# Address to Graduates of the Combatant Command Joint Inspectors General Course

**BY INSPECTOR GENERAL  
GORDON S. HEDDELL**

*Condensed from a speech delivered to the graduates of the Combatant Command Joint Inspectors General course on March 27, 2009, Fort Belvoir, Va.*

Good morning and thank you for inviting me to address you on this occasion and to participate in your graduation from the Combatant Command and Joint IG course. I want to extend my appreciation to General Whitcomb [Army Inspector General], for hosting this beneficial course and for bringing us together today.

The opportunity to speak with you today is very special for two reasons. First, many years ago I had the honor of serving as a chief warrant officer in the Army flying helicopters.

So when I find myself in the company of members of our military or service veterans, I feel very much at home. Second, we share a common bond as inspectors general.

As a result, I really wanted to come up with something special for you today – something that would be relevant to both the military and the IG communities.

Well it just so happens that I found it – right in the middle of Gen. George S. Patton's famous speech to the Third Army.

And I'd like to read it to you now – of course with some of the general's more "colorful dialogue" deleted. He said: quote-

"One of the bravest men that I ever saw was a soldier on top of a telegraph pole in the midst of a furious firefight in Tunisia. I stopped and asked what



(the blank) he was doing up there at a time like that.

He answered me saying: I'm 'Fixing the wire, Sir.'

The general then asked him, 'Isn't that just a little unhealthy right about now?'

The soldier looked at the general with a certain amount of caution and, He answered, 'Yes Sir, but the (darn) wire has to be fixed.'

The general responded by asking- 'Don't those planes strafing the road bother you?'

Without the slightest hesitation, the soldier answered, 'No, Sir, but you sure as hell do!'

And the general told the 3rd Army- Now, there was a real man. A real soldier."

I like this one because first and foremost, most people who have served in the military can relate to its humor.

But I also chose it because it illustrates that even though you may share

some type of bond as a member of a military or civilian organization, your position may cause you to be regarded by others with some trepidation.

With General Patton, the reason was obvious. For those of us here, however – well, let me just say in my many years as an Inspector General, that there have been very few, if any occasions in which I ever heard someone say, "Oh boy, am I glad the IG is visiting us!"

That is why it is so important that we come together as we are now. We are members of a small community responsible for performing a vital but often misunderstood mission.

American industrialist Henry Ford said that "Coming together is a beginning...staying together is progress and...working together is success."

Your collaboration throughout this week and our meeting here today is an important step in our progress towards success in the Defense oversight community.

## DEFENSE OVERSIGHT

Let me start by thanking you for all you do to support our men and women both in and out of uniform. As members of the oversight community who oversee a Department as enormous as ours, I know that you have your work cut out for you. Incredible as it may seem, we are charged with protecting a force of over three million people and a budget exceeding \$600 billion.

We serve two very important groups: our warfighters and the American people; therefore we must stay focused on issues that are important to the leadership and the Congress. We must attract and maintain a high quality and mission ready workforce.

We must ensure that high quality products are provided to the Department. We must:

- Avoid duplication of effort;
- Leverage each other's work when possible;
- Support each other's efforts and form partnerships; and
- Improve our ability to work together and to share lessons learned.

The Department of Defense is different than the other federal agencies in that there are internal Inspectors General, audit agencies, and investigative units that must work together to coordinate efforts. Two examples of essential collaborative efforts that I'd like to mention today are the Joint IG Activities Program and the International Contract Corruption Task Force.

## JOINT IG PROGRAM

First, the establishment of this course has resulted in success that we will continue to build upon by creating the Joint IG Activities Program. This program supports DoD IG's strategic priorities and the Secretary of Defense's priority of improving joint activities. This program is critical.

It has national interest and the

potential for worldwide impact; it serves as a guide in oversight partnership and provides a foundation for an international concept for IG training. I'm excited about the impact that this program can have and I'm proud of all the effort that has gone into making it a success.

### About the Joint IG Program



The Department of Defense Inspector General administers the DoD Joint Inspector General Program, in coordination with senior leaders of the Defense Council on Integrity and Efficiency. This program enhances the oversight of the Department by coordinating efforts and strengthening inter-agency relationships.

The program establishes a liaison office to interface with Joint IGs worldwide while interpreting and advising on doctrine and procedures; managing mobile training teams; producing publications and guidance; overseeing the Joint IG Qualification Course; and developing an integrated Joint Information Management network.

## INTERNATIONAL CONTRACT CORRUPTION TASK FORCE

One of the best stories regarding joint efforts, and certainly the best outcome for law enforcement organizations investigating and prosecuting the Global

War on Terror, is the formation of the International Contract Corruption Task Force.

The mission of the task force is to deploy criminal investigative assets worldwide, to detect and investigate corruption and contract fraud, resulting primarily from the GWOT, and to successfully prosecute those cases.

The task force includes: the Defense Criminal Investigative Service; the FBI; the military services investigative units; the Special Inspectors General for Iraq and Afghanistan Reconstruction; and the Department of State and USAID Inspectors General.

The task force serves as a model for investigations where multiple federal agencies are involved in major procurements. There is no duplication of effort; information and intelligence are shared; resources are shared; and agents consult and assist each other. Numerous successful investigations have been coordinated through the task force; and the level of cooperation is unprecedented!

These types of joint work and collaborations are essential to ensuring that we are working together with a common vision and staying focused on issues that are important to accomplishing our mission.

## THE WARFIGHTERS

As I said earlier, we serve two groups: our warfighters and the American people. We have an awesome responsibility to ensure that the American taxpayer gets the most for their hard-earned dollars.

And we, as the DoD oversight community have a solemn duty to ensure that we do everything possible to provide our warfighters with the type of high quality, reliable equipment that will not only enable them to complete their mission, but also the ability to survive in hostile environments around the world.

There is no higher priority than the safety and security of the members

of our Armed Forces. As such, I have focused a significant amount of our resources on these areas, to include projects on Body Armor Testing, Health Care, Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles, and Electrocutions.

For example, properly tested body armor is critical to the safety of our troops. During a recent audit, we found that first article testing was not consistently conducted or scored in accordance with contract requirements. As a result, we determined that the Army did not have assurance that all inserts purchased under that contract provided the level of required protection.

We recommended that the Army identify and collect approximately 16,000 sets of ballistic inserts purchased under this contract and remove them from their inventory.

The Secretary of the Army disagreed with our finding but took action to ensure that there can be no question concerning the effectiveness of every soldier's body armor. This project is an example of dedication to ensure that every service member has the best and safest equipment possible.

## LEADERSHIP

As all of you sitting here today are future IGs and leaders of the Defense oversight community; I want to close by talking about leadership and sharing an important story with you.

The story goes that sometime, close to a battlefield over 200 years ago, a man in civilian clothes rode past a small group of exhausted battle-weary soldiers digging an obviously important defensive position. The section leader, making no effort to help, was shouting orders and threatening punishment if the work was not completed within the hour.

"Why are you not helping?" asked the stranger on horseback.'

"I'm in charge here. The men do

as I tell them," said the section leader, adding, "Help them yourself if you feel so strongly about it." To the section leader's surprise the stranger dismounted and helped the men until the job was finished. Before leaving, the stranger congratulated the men for their work, and approached the puzzled section leader.

"You should notify top command next time your rank prevents you from supporting your men - and I will provide a more permanent solution," said the stranger.

Up close, the section leader now recognized General Washington, and also the lesson he'd just been taught. There are two qualities that George Washington always displayed as a leader – selfless service and a commitment to taking care of people.

We have brave men and women on the battlefields. They are saying to us – we know that you will be the best leaders you can be – and you will not let us down. It is an awesome responsibility that we have. And now it is up to us to execute that responsibility properly.

## CONCLUSION

In closing, I would like to thank so many of you who are on the front lines identifying and preventing fraud, waste, and abuse; and those of you who serve our country, sometimes in the most dangerous of places.

We in the IG community must continue to work together to ensure that we are covering all the bases, and not duplicating our efforts.

As you graduate together, let us remember that today is not the end, but only the beginning. We are all part of a much larger process – a process of learning, growing, and working together to succeed and I look forward to what the future holds for us. Thank you. Congratulations and good luck. ❧



Gordon S. Heddell

**Gordon S. Heddell** was sworn in as the Inspector General for the Department of Defense on July 14, 2009, one year after being appointed as Acting Inspector General. Prior to joining the DoD IG, Mr. Heddell had served as the Inspector General at the U.S. Department of Labor for almost eight years. Mr. Heddell began his government service in 1966 as an army chief warrant officer, helicopter pilot, serving in both Korea and Taiwan during the Vietnam-era conflict.

Following his military tours of duty, Mr. Heddell served for 29 years in the U.S. Secret Service, where he held various positions involving administrative operations, protection of presidents and vice presidents, and criminal investigations. The highlights of his career with the Secret Service include serving as the deputy assistant director responsible for the overall training of the Secret Service's employees; assistant special agent in charge in Washington where he investigated all threats made against the president and vice president; and assistant special agent in charge where he supervised complex criminal investigations related to counterfeiting and financial fraud.

Mr. Heddell holds a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Missouri, a M.A. in Legal Studies from the University of Illinois, and was a Woodrow Wilson Public Service Fellow while at the Secret Service.