



## *The Inspector General Purge – A Step in the Right Direction?*

*Lt Col (Ret) Ryan Sweazey (Retired, Air Force – United States Air Force Academy), President and Founder of the [Walk the Talk Foundation](#), authored this article. (Published January 26th, 2025)*

Check out our Podcast, *The Star Chamber*, on: [Apple](#) | [Spotify](#) | [YouTube](#)

Yesterday, several media outlets announced that President Trump had, on Friday night, terminated approximately 17 Inspectors General from various Departments to include the Departments of Defense, State, Transportation, Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development, Interior and Energy. Many of those outlets were quick to raise the alarm – purporting that the move would pave an unimpeded way for the President to carry out what some called Trump’s “grift.” Of course, many of those pundits have already proven themselves to be far from soothsayers, having completely punted on their recent election predictions. We at the [Walk the Talk Foundation](#) would like to offer now some *real* perspectives on the purge, having worked for many years in this field while advising and advocating for 400+ current and former service members, the vast majority of whom were enduring an IG investigation, either as a subject or complainant.

### **What the firings mean...**

For years, leaders within the Department of Defense, as well as Homeland Security, have brazenly violated the laws of this country, and done so with impunity. They violated Title 5, Title 10, Title 32, Title 50, The Privacy Act, The Freedom of Information Act, and The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), to name just a few. They did so while their Inspector General systems stood and complicity watched. By the Department of Defense Inspector General’s (DoDIG) own reporting, in the last years, the IG system substantiated 2.4% of reprisal complaints (and this does not account for those cases they dismissed without investigation). The same IG system failed to investigate serious concerns regarding the maligned Red Hill fuel facility before a spill poisoned 90,000 people in Hawaii. It watched as 70+ members of the Defense Intelligence Agency reported allegation after allegation of abuse, discrimination, violations of prohibitions of intelligence activities, and managers who had willfully interfered with the Afghanistan evacuation operation of 2021. It spectated as the personal and professional



## The DoD Times (Redacted)



lives of honorably-serving service members were ruined, resulting in an [immense trust deficit vis-à-vis our military](#) and [staggering suicide rates](#). We at the Foundation have consistently [reported these failures and the dire need for reform](#). Our pleas, to this point, have by and large fallen on deaf ears, in both Executive and Legislative branches.

Suffice it to say we wholeheartedly agree with the [President's statements that independent IGs are required](#) – that IGs subordinate to the leadership of the organization they oversee is simply a failed experiment, wrought with corruption and conflicts of interest. But Friday's firings are not that reform, not yet at least. Just as we are accustomed to seeing in the military, however – when the unit is failing, its commander is removed. And that is exactly what transpired on Friday night, at least as far as the DoDIG is concerned.

### **...and what they don't mean.**

But the removal of the head of the proverbial snake does not equate to reform, at least not yet. The terminations may be the first step to much-needed and much-overdue change, or they may be merely symbolic gestures. Very few, if any, know for certain what the future of the IG systems holds, and we would caution readers to leap to any unfounded conclusions about the motivations behind the firings or listen to those who profess the ability to predict what will occur to these Inspector General offices if anything (after all, many of those alleged pundits know very little of the true nature of IGs and their implicit mandate of protecting the leadership of the organization they serve). In short: what will become of the now-vacant positions and their respective Offices? Time will tell. Until then, we at WTF will remain the course: advocating for reform and independence. You can help in that endeavor by [signing the petition here](#).

### **Showing their true incestual colors: the CIGIE chimes in.**

You may have come across in the news the term “CIGIE,” one of the bodies that [wrote to the President in protest](#) over the termination letters. Taken directly from [their website](#), the mission of The Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) is to serve as “an independent entity established within the executive branch to address integrity, economy and effectiveness issues that transcend individual Government agencies and aid in the establishment of a professional, well-trained and highly skilled workforce in the Offices of Inspectors General.”

Further, “Another form of OIG oversight is CIGIE’s role in ensuring OIG professionalism. For example, CIGIE sets government-wide quality standards that form the basis for the professional peer reviews described above [IG Act, § 11(c)(2)]. OIG staff must adhere to these professional standards, so long as they are not inconsistent with Government Auditing Standards.” A function which they have unquestionably failed at, we submit.

We at WTF have had dealings with CIGIE, specifically raising concerns regarding the Inspectors General who oversaw and/or investigated the cases enumerated in the first section of this piece. The Council was lightning fast in absolving the subjects of any wrongdoing, “thoroughly examining the allegations” in the span of a mere month in some cases. Given past interactions, and the break-neck speed with which they protested the President’s termination actions, they have shown their hand now fairly definitively: their true mission is not overseeing IGs, it’s protecting them. This small paragraph [in the middle of the IG Act of 1978](#) may help to clarify why:

§11(c)(1). “The Council shall...submit recommendations of individuals to the appropriate appointing authority for any appointment to an office of Inspector General described under subsection (b)(1)(A) or (B).”

Self-protectionism at its finest.



# The DoD Times (Redacted)



The more salient point of this section, however, is to highlight the seething irony that is seemingly lost on the Council, but perhaps not lost on this audience. For years, service members were denied rights, due process, and real American justice due to the utter failings of the Inspector General system. In response the IG system and its

purported overseers, the CIGIE, barely batted an eye at that epidemic. Now, the “justice” and “due process” they denied members of the DoD are the same rights they clamor about being denied themselves. Pure poetry, really.

## What does it all mean?

As for the events of the weekend, Senate Majority Whip John Barrasso (R-Wyoming) has likely summed it all up most succinctly: “Sometimes inspector generals don’t do the job that they are supposed to do. Some of them deserve to be fired.” We couldn’t agree more, Mr.Barrasso.

If you would like to help us fight these issues, please consider donating to the Walk the Talk Foundation [HERE](#). We greatly appreciate your support. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, your donation is 100% tax deductible.

**Send this newsletter to your elected officials if you believe they need to correct the issues discussed.**

- Find your Representative here: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>
- Find your Senator here: <https://www.senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm>

Feel free to reach out privately at [francescagraham@walkthetalkfoundation.org](mailto:francescagraham@walkthetalkfoundation.org) or in the comments.

**PETITIONS:** [SIGN THIS PETITION](#) demanding that our leaders in Congress change the DoD’s unjust administrative investigatory system.

All our articles are posted on [LinkedIn here](#) and [Online here](#). Be sure to subscribe to the newsletter on LinkedIn and follow us on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [X \(Twitter\)](#).

Graphic: [Trump fires 18 inspectors general overnight in legally murky move](#)