

he Federal government's exercise of contractor oversight has been in the news for months, and it's been the topic of several articles on this site as well. From the [Commission on Wartime Contracting](#) to the [proposed DFARS rule](#) on contractor "business systems," and from the "

[ad hoc](#)

[Senate Committee on Contracting Oversight](#)

" to

[allegations of illegal favoritism](#)

towards a certain LOGCAP III contingency contractor (who shall remain nameless but whose initials are KBR) ... the public has been inundated with committee hearings and testimony and reports.

But what about the "real world"?

Can anybody point to exercise of real oversight and the give-and-take of a military leader being grilled by a Congressman over failure to properly assess risk and plan for contingencies?

We can.

Oh boy, do we have an example of "real oversight" to share with you.

By way of background, the Defense Department has been building new facilities and preparing to transfer large numbers of personnel, ordnance, and weapon systems from bases in Japan and elsewhere to the small island of Guam. The increase is so large—and so impactful—on the island's current population that the island is now commonly referred to as "Fortress Guam". (The indigenous Guam population is largely comprised of U.S. citizens, by the way.)

Here's a [link](#) to a 26 minute-long 2007 Australian documentary on the military buildup on Guam, for those who want more background.

Naturally, Congress has been concerned about the build-up on Guam. There have been several hearings and much testimony collected over the past few years. We came across this video of one of those

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recent

hearings, where Representative Hank Johnson (D-Georgia) grilled Navy Admiral [Robert Willard](#) (Commander, U.S. Pacific Command) over potential problems associated with the military buildup.

Here is a two-and-a-half minute video of that encounter. Pay close attention at the 1:20 mark.

We congratulate Admiral Willard on maintaining his demeanor in the face of Congressman Johnson's probing questions. In particular, his response to one hypothetical scenario advanced by the Congressman ("... we don't anticipate that.") defused a potentially difficult encounter.

But we have to ask—doesn't this Admiral have, you know, *important things* to accomplish? Doesn't he have the lives of literally thousands of service men and women at risk right now, and shouldn't he be looking after those thousands of men and women, instead of wasting his time in this sham of an "oversight" process?

If this is real Congressional oversight, then we need to stop it, *right now*. We need to get our military leaders back to leading their commands.

