

**Remarks by British Ambassador to the United States, David Manning, on Thursday
15 December 2005 at British Embassy, Washington D.C.**

Investiture of Richard L. Armitage

KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE ORDER OF ST. MICHAEL AND ST.

GEORGE

In 1981 he was appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia and Pacific Affairs in the Pentagon.

In 1983 Rich Armitage was promoted to become Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security. While there he played a crucial role in developing the political and military relationship with the British Government. We worked closely with him in the aftermath of the Falklands War. We also worked together on policy towards the then Soviet Union. During this period he also played a leading role on Middle East security policy, focusing especially on the Arab/Israel conflict and the Iraq/Iran war. We collaborated with him on these issues too, benefiting greatly from his wisdom and advice.

In 1991 Rich Armitage was appointed by the first President Bush as a roving Ambassador to Europe to help direct foreign aid to the Newly Independent States of the former Soviet Union. In 2001 he became Deputy Secretary of State under President George W Bush; and in that capacity he was a particularly important partner for the UK during the India/Pakistan crisis of 2002. His energetic and committed engagement with India and Pakistan, his close collaboration with British colleagues, and the leadership he provided

during a period of intense diplomacy, were instrumental in helping defuse a very dangerous situation.

His contribution was also at the heart of our bilateral cooperation over Iraq, both during the war and in its aftermath. He gave clear advice and unstinting help, and ensured that close consultation was the standard reflex at all levels of the State Department and the Foreign Office.

We therefore look back on Rich Armitage's career in government as one that was vital in promoting close cooperation between the United States and the United Kingdom on a wide range of security and foreign policy issues. Both at the Pentagon, and subsequently at the State Department, he was an invaluable interlocutor for British Ministers and officials who knew that they could turn to him for frank analysis and candid advice. He always saw through the weak argument and went straight to the heart of the issue; he was quick to expose nonsense or deceit; and just as quick to deal with wishful thinking or self-deception. If you wanted the unvarnished truth, if you wanted a reality check, in a business where both can be hard to find, you went to call on Rich Armitage.

You have better have your own argument straight when you did call. But if you did, you knew it would be a call to relish. Along with that searching gaze and uncompromising candour came enormous personal warmth, exceptional loyalty and a wonderful wit. You went away having enjoyed an enlightening discussion with one of the busiest people in Washington who always gave the impression that he really had been hoping that you

would find the time to drop by; and you went away richer by at least a couple of pithy one-liners and put-downers that you wished you had thought of yourself and would later try to pass off as your own.

Since leaving government earlier this year Rich Armitage has maintained his close links with Britain. It was typical that he was one of the first visitors to the Embassy to sign the condolence book after the terrorist attacks in London on 7 July. He has been a great and loyal friend to the United Kingdom no matter what the difficulties or challenges: we could not ask for a better friend. He is someone for whom we have immense regard and enormous affection.

It is in recognition of the valuable services that he has rendered to the UK that I am commanded by Her Majesty The Queen, in accordance with the powers vested in me as Her Ambassador, to confer on the Honorable Richard Lee Armitage the insignia of Honorary Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St. George.