

AMBASSADOR RICHARD L. ARMITAGE '67



General Colin Powell said he has never met anyone more dedicated to the Navy, to the Academy or to the nation than Ambassador Richard L. Armitage '67.

Confirmed by the Senate, Armitage served as the 13th Deputy Secretary of State from 2001 to 2005.

Early in his military career, he volunteered as a naval advisor and became fluent in Vietnamese. Armitage served three tours with Vietnamese troops, often wearing native clothing, sharing rations and telling jokes in perfect Vietnamese.

He joined the U.S. Defense Attache in Saigon in 1973.

Immediately prior to the fall of Saigon, Armitage organized and led the removal of more than 30,000 South Vietnamese. With KIRK escorting, he led a flotilla to the Philippines aboard a Vietnamese warship. He arranged for food and water to be delivered before negotiating with the U.S. and Philippine governments for permission to dock in Subic Bay.

Armitage was a foreign policy advisor to President-elect Ronald Reagan, then the deputy assistant secretary of defense for East Asia and Pacific Affairs. In 1983, he became assistant secretary of defense for International Security Policy.

In 1991, Armitage was appointed as a special emissary to King Hussein of Jordan. He then was sent to Europe as an ambassador to the states that had been formed out of the fallen Soviet Union. He remained in that post until 1993.

He has served two terms as a member of the U.S. Naval Academy Board of Visitors, which created the Armitage Committee to review the Honor Concept. Armitage also served on the Distinguished Graduate Award selection committee and delivered two Forrestal lectures.

Armitage is the recipient of several military decorations, including a Bronze Star with Combat V, Navy Commendation Medal with Combat V and Navy Achievement Medal with Combat V. He also received the Department of State Distinguished Service Award, Department of Defense Medal for Distinguished Public Service, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Award for Outstanding Public Service and the Presidential Citizens Medal. He also has received decorations from the governments of Thailand, the Republic of Korea, Bahrain, Pakistan, the Russian Federation and Vietnam. He was awarded a KBE from Great Britain and became a Knight Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George and was given similar decorations from the governments of Australia and New Zealand.

In 2009, Congress appointed him to the Quadrennial Defense Review Panel. Armitage currently chairs the American-Turkish Council. Armitage serves on the board of directors at ConocoPhillips, ManTech International Corporation and Transcu Ltd.

He and his wife, Laura, live in Vienna, VA. They have eight children and five grandchildren and have served as foster parents for dozens of children.