



The Worshipful Company of Arbitrators
Mansion House Banquet Monday 20th February 2012
Speech by the Senior Warden (Karl Davies)

Master, fellow Warden; My Lord Mayor Locum Tenens; My Lord;
Attorney General; Alderman; Sheriff; Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the Master it is my pleasure to welcome our guests here tonight and to express our thanks to all those who make this Annual Banquet in the wonderful setting of the Mansion House such an enjoyable occasion. This includes not just the guests of the *Company*, about whom I will say more shortly, but also includes those who are here as guests of our *members*. Your support and your presence help to create the warm and friendly atmosphere that marks this event and each and every one of you is most welcome.

We are pleased to have with us our Chaplain, the **Reverend George Bush**. As always he set the tone for our meal with a most apposite grace. George it is good to have you here.

Master, may I first welcome the Civic Party. The Duty Esquire this evening is **Neil Chrimes**. Neil is fast becoming an old friend and it is good to see him again. It is also a pleasure to welcome **Sheriff**

Wendy Mead and her Shrieval Consort **Robert Tipping**. Sheriff Mead's service to the City covers over twenty years from the time when she successfully led the campaign to save Bart's Hospital from closure.

The Civic Party is led by the Lord Mayor Locum Tenens **Lord Levene of Portsoken**. Lord Levene was elected Sheriff in nineteen ninety-five and Lord Mayor in nineteen ninety-eight. For many years he has been a tireless advocate of, and contributor to, London and the UK as an international financial centre not least in his nine years as chairman of Lloyd's which he completed last year, and which were marked by the award of their rarely-struck Gold Medal. As we have just heard, he continues to make a cogent and powerful contribution. He is accompanied this evening by his wife Wendy. Lord & Lady Levene you are most welcome.

The Mayoralty dates from eleven hundred and eighty-nine and the office held by **Dominic Grieve** as Attorney General is almost as ancient having been in existence since twelve hundred and forty-three. Mr Grieve has been MP for Beaconsfield since nineteen ninety seven and Attorney General since the last election. He is the second Queen's Counsel parliamentarian in his family – his father was the MP for Solihull for almost twenty years. He is accompanied this evening by his wife Caroline who I note in her own career at the Bar is qualified as a mediator and an arbitrator and is a Fellow of the

Chartered Institute. It is a pleasure to have you both with us this evening.

It is also a pleasure to welcome **Dr Pierre Karrer** and his wife **AnMing**. Honorary President of the Swiss Arbitration Association Dr Karrer is one of the world's leading arbitrators. He is Vice President of the Stockholm Institute and a former Vice President of the LCIA. In addition to his practical and academic contribution to arbitration I can say that he is possibly one of the world's most considerate arbitrators. On his website he provides a list of hotels and restaurants near to his office although I'm not sure whether this is to help parties prepare for long hearings or to cheer them up when they don't get the outcome they hoped for!

At the end of last month **Sir Robert Akenhead** very kindly escorted members of the Company on a visit to the Rolls Building and we are pleased, Sir Robert to see you here this evening with Lady Akenhead. At the Bar Sir Robert was a specialist in construction law with an extensive UK and international practice both in litigation and in arbitration. He was appointed to the High Court bench in two thousand and seven and since two thousand and ten he has been the Judge in Charge of the Technology and Construction Court.

Finally Master it is an enormous privilege to welcome **Lord & Lady Woolf**. Lord Woolf's first career covered fifty years from nineteen fifty-five when he was called to the Bar until two thousand and five when he retired as Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales. During

that time when he was Master of the Rolls he introduced the new Civil Procedure Rules seen by many as the catalyst for the development of ADR and in particular mediation in this country. In two thousand and nine *The Times* was moved to observe that he may have retired as Lord Chief Justice but that he had not slowed down.

That remark was doubtless prompted by the many facets of his second career. These include mediator and Chartered Arbitrator; past chairman of the Financial Markets Law Committee at the Bank of England; President of the Qatar Civil and Commercial Court; a non permanent judge of the Court of Final Appeal in Hong Kong and his work in support of prison reform and prisoner rehabilitation. Indeed it is a measure of the very high regard in which he is held that he has chaired the 'ethics committee' set up by BAE Systems in response to allegations about bribery in arms deals; conducted the investigation into the LSE's relationship with Libya and most recently led an Inquiry on behalf of the International Cricket Council into the governance of that sport.

Lord Woolf we are delighted that you and Lady Woolf and indeed *all* our guests can be with us this evening.

I now ask the Members of the Company to charge their glasses, rise and join me in the toast to our guests.

OUR GUESTS