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Opening Remarks

*by Henry T. King, Jr.**

It is indeed a pleasure to welcome you here today to this seminar on the legal aspects of a shared resource between the U.S. and Canada. It is pleasing to see so many of you from both sides of the border working on a common problem which is so vital to all of us in the Great Lakes region.

First a word about the Institute. The Canada/United States Law Institute was formed in 1976 at Case Western Reserve University School of Law in Cleveland and the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario. Professor Sidney Picker of Case Western Reserve Law School was the founder of the Institute and its first U.S. Director. The theoretical underpinning of the Institute was the recognition of Canada and the United States as two neighboring common law originated countries each of which undertook a different but related historical path, developed its own unique federated structure, and established its own constitutional foundation, thus providing an ideal basis for maximizing the advantages of comparative legal studies. Each country is the most important trade, investment and industrial partner of the other, and this deserves careful examination with an appreciation of the transnational impact of legal regulations.

Accordingly, the Institute established the first formal continuing program in either country designed to use the legal systems and structure of the other for comparative and transnational law purposes, as part of the process of legal education. This was done in a number of ways, one of which was the organization and sponsorship of conferences of interest to the legal communities of both countries. For example, the Institute sponsored a successful conference this past spring on "Legal Aspects of Sectoral Integration Between the U.S. and Canada." Next April the Institute will sponsor a conference on "Canada-United States Economic

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Ties: The Technology Context.” Other facets of the Institutes’ five part setting of programs include the following:

- a) the exchange of law students from each school for one semester;
- b) the exchange of faculty for brief and extended visits;
- c) the publication of the first scholarly law journal devoted exclusively to issues of common interest to both countries-the Canada/United States Law Journal;
- d) the sponsorship of scholarly research on comparative law and international law issues affecting both countries.

The Institute is very happy indeed to share this platform here with The Center for the Great Lakes as a co-sponsor of this Conference. Our collaboration will extend beyond this Conference as a consequence of the publication of the Conference proceedings in the Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law.

When we look at the Great Lakes region in terms of favorable factors for economic development, I can say with confidence that a major plus for this area is the abundance of water. Water is a resource which is indeed vital to both agriculture and industry. And, it is a resource which the competitive and rapidly growing areas in the South and West of this country are indeed short on. Moreover, it can be a very costly item when it is in short supply. In the water supply context we can count ourselves fortunate, but the fact is that even our supply of good water is limited and we need to use this vital resource wisely and well.

Taking the long view and looking at the potential for economic growth in our two countries I can say with some conviction that our water problems are likely to grow rather than diminish and I believe it is most important to the people of this region that we focus on them now rather than later. And, I think it is particularly significant that through this conference we are conducting this review jointly with citizen participation from both sides of the border rather than separately.

In passing I also want to congratulate Donna Wise and her staff, including Michael Donahue, for putting together a program which should indeed prove to be most meaningful, challenging and interesting. It is legally oriented and grassroots based. I like the mix of specialists and legislative types on the program. This Conference will indeed provide a significant dialogue in an important subject area between our two countries. And the record of the Conference will be an important benchmark or reference point for dealing with both current and future problems in this vital area.