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History and Purpose of the Canada-U.S. Law Institute

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History and Purpose of the Canada-U.S. Law Institute

*Sidney Picker, Jr.**

I am chairman of the Institute Advisory Board and I have been asked by Director Henry King to welcome you all to this conference. It is a pleasure for me to welcome you today. As a founder of the institute and the first American director of it, it's a chance for me to see where we have come since in 1976. It's also a special pleasure to have with us today the first Canadian director, Jack Roberts.

The institute is a bi-national entity, the joint creation of two law schools: Case Western Reserve University Law School in Cleveland, Ohio and the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario, Canada. Basically, we are an umbrella for a series of programs that are run by those two law schools to serve two purposes. These purposes are; one, to provide a substantial comparative law experience for our students and our faculties between two countries with similar social, political and economic problems and different legal solutions. The benefit that we get from the exchange program and the comparative law experience is the opportunity to teach each each school or each faculty or group of students about the substantive laws of the other country. We are not educating students and faculty in foreign laws so much as teaching them to think about their own legal system in a different way after experiencing a foreign system.

The second basic purpose of the Institute is to explore the transnational and the international legal issues which affect the Canada-U.S. relationship, a very special relationship. That is what this conference deals with in that our topics are not so much comparative law as transnational law.

The programs by which we seek to implement these purposes are basically five-fold; we have a student-exchange program, whereby we swap up to four students each year for a semester at a time. They provide not only a substantial comparative law opportunity for themselves, but for their host institutions as well. We have a faculty exchange program. We have sponsored research projects on joint Canada-U.S. legal issues and we publish a journal, the Canada-U.S. Law Journal. Finally, we conduct conferences such as this, beginning with Professor Roberts' 1976 conference on the extraterritorial application of U.S. antitrust law.

In our conferences since 1976 we have gone on to such exotic subjects as a comparison of the role of the Supreme Court in Canada and the

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United States, where we had Justices Potter Stewart and Brian Dixon sharing the same panel with Professor Larry Tribe as the chair, which is quite unusual to say the least. Beginning four years ago we began the type of conferences that we're doing now, which are substantially more serious, more in depth and more intensive than any conducted before for the purpose of exploring the relationship between the two countries.

We are particularly indebted as an institute to those who have supported us, which include participants, private corporate contributors on both sides of the border, as well as foundations in both countries including the Willaim H. Donner Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, the Cleveland Foundation, the Richard Ivy Foundation, and, the Ontario Bar Foundation. I also want to thank both the Canada and U.S. Governments, which have given us support and cooperation. In particular, I want to thank the American Embassy in Ottawa and the Canadian Embassy in Washington, and here in Cleveland, the Canadian Consulate which has been quite active in supporting us.

I now turn this conference over to the American director, Henry King.