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Introduction: The Context for Innovation in Japan, Comparative Competitive Aspects

*Peter M. Gerhart**

I have the honor of being the dean of the Case Western Reserve School of Law and, therefore, I have the honor of presiding at this afternoon. Deans live in reflected glory, and I came here to reflect some of the glory that Henry King brings to this conference and to reflect in the glory that you bring to this conference.

Deans take credit for many other people's achievements. In fact, deans take credit for most achievements that are other people's. This conference is one of the significant achievements of our law school, and I am impressed that you are here. One of the greatest achievements is having a group of conferees who have reached the level that you have reached and who are interested in dialoguing on public policy issues. I always enjoy coming out to preside, first to congratulate Henry King for the spectacular work he does, and then to congratulate you for being here for having the wisdom of sharing this high-level intellectual dialogue and to bask in the glory that you reflect on us and on Case Western Reserve Law School.

Now, to understand the background for our speaker today, I want you to picture a video game. Not uncharacteristically this can be a video game that features two gladiators. In the first frame, the one gladiator who is dressed in red, white, and blue is a giant. He is on one side separated by a vast expansive ocean from a rather small gladiator on the other side. They are fighting on the first screen over transistors. The ammunition that they use has to do with copying and implementation technology, and they fight with raw materials such as savings and investment policies with intellectual property infrastructure, and they fight with the educational infrastructure. At the end of that screen the giant on the other side of the expansive water grows, and we get to the next screen which is a fight over a chip, a silicon chip.

As each stage of this video game unfolds the giants battle it out using resources such as education, savings, something called national industrial policy, and supervision of business. And as we get to the present screen we see that in the chip wars the gladiator dressed in red, white, and blue is on the ascendancy and is getting larger.

Then we have to face the future because we are no longer talking about microchips and microprocessors. We are now talking about

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micro-machines, chips that do things that are a cross between a chip and a robot that can tell our air bags not only to deploy, but also how to deploy depending on whether we are wearing a seat belt. We can tell our pacemakers at what point to pump more blood through us.

We need to see the next screen of this great battle. To present this next screen of this video game, we should present a person who has been a futurist all his life. He had the good sense to clerk for Justice Douglas on the Supreme Court. He helped to open China as the first American lawyer to go to China, and he has been on the forefront of a good bit of this video game that we have been playing for many years. He will be talking about the comparative competitive aspects of innovation with the other gladiator, Japan.

There is no more important subject facing our future because the next century is the century of the silicon chip, and to give us a view of that, I am happy to present Thomas Klitgaard.