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SESSION 3: BEYOND NAFTA. A NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR COMMON SECURITY AND PROSPERITY IN NORTH AMERICA.

INTRODUCTION

Dr. Henry T. King, Jr.

Our speaker this afternoon is Ted Kassinger; serves as Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Our session will deal with – and this is Ted’s topic, *Beyond NAFTA: A New Partnership for Common Security and Prosperity in North America*.

And we are certainly lucky to have him here today. He is the Deputy Secretary of the Commerce Department, the chief operating officer of the Commerce Department, which has day-to-day management of an approximate \$6.2 billion dollars budget, 15 operating units, and 40,000 employees,¹ which is a hell of a lot of people.

And prior to joining the Bush Administration, he practiced law with a multi-national law firm, Vinson & Elkins from 1985 to 2001, and his law practice focused mainly on the fields of international trade and business law and transnational disputes resolution.

Early in his career, Mr. Kassinger served as attorney for the United States U.S. Senate, Committee on Finance, the U.S. Department of State, and the U.S. International Trade Commission. He is a native of Atlanta, Georgia; graduated from the University of Georgia, BA, or School of Environmental Design, and he has a J.D. from the University Georgia School of Law.

So it is with great pleasure that I present you here today. Ted?

¹ Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Department_of_Commerce (last visited Oct. 22, 2005); U.S. Dept. of Commerce, http://www.commerce.gov/bios/Gutierrez_bio.htm (last visited Oct. 30, 2005).

