

August 6, 1998

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy
Minister of Foreign Affairs
House of Commons, Ottawa

Hon. Ron Duhamel
Secretary of State for Western Economic Diversification
House of Commons, Ottawa

Dear Ministers:

Earlier this year, you asked a group of us to serve as a task force and issued the challenge to consider the public policy and business aspects of the Mid-Continent International Trade Corridor.

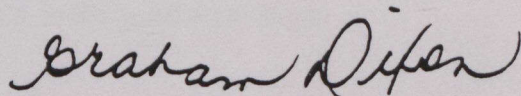
This report constitutes our advice on what the Government of Canada and other stakeholders could do to advance this country's participation in economic development across the center of the North American continent. The future of Manitoba and Winnipeg in particular are closely tied to our ability to work together to build an effective and efficient regional trade corridor.

The focus of our attention has been on international trade and economic expansion opportunities, and on the transportation system and services needed to support and take advantage of those opportunities.

Your initiative was timely, since there are several crucial international trade and transportation decisions imminent in the United States, Canada and Mexico. Among those decisions is the investment of billions of dollars in the US for its transportation system, being allocated across the mid-continent and other regions. Our comments in some cases have gone beyond strictly the Government of Canada's jurisdiction, to include suggestions on what could be done by all levels of government, other public institutions and the business community.

We are confident that the information and proposals we are putting forward will be considered in light of the urgency of action in some key areas. We have noted that several issues we raised in discussions with Canadian government officials have already led to the re-consideration of policies and procedures, particularly related to border crossings and the harmonization of trade rules.

Sincerely yours,



Graham Dixon
Chairman