

## **Western Innovation Forum Luncheon**

Introductionary Remarks

April 16th, 2015, Fairmont Hotel Vancouver, Vancouver, British Columbia

### **Check Against Delivery**

GOOD AFTERNOON EVERYONE. BONJOUR MONSIEURS/MESDAMES. IT'S A TREAT TO BE BACK IN VANCOUVER AND A REAL PLEASURE FOR ME TO BE HERE TODAY TO INTRODUCE OUR LUNCHEON SPEAKER, THE HONOURABLE DIANE FINLEY, MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES.

BEFORE I INTRODUCE THE MINISTER, I WOULD LIKE TO SAY WHAT A REWARDING EXPERIENCE IT HAS BEEN FOR ME AND MY TEAM AT CADSI FOR THE SECOND YEAR IN A ROW TO WORK WITH WD, AS WELL AS MITACS AND THE CANADIAN COMMERCIAL CORPORATION, TO BRING TO YOU THE WESTERN INNOVATION FORUM. I THINK IT IS FAIR TO SAY NOW THAT IN TWO SHORT YEARS WIF CAN LAY CLAIM TO BE THE PREMIER, THE "MUST ATTEND", CONFERENCE IN WESTERN CANADA ON BOTH POLICY AND BUSINESS ISSUES RELATED TO THE DEFENCE AND SECURITY, MARINE AND AEROSPACE INDUSTRIES.

IN WORKING ON WIF, CADSI HAS ENJOYED AN ESPECIALLY STRONG PARTNERSHIP WITH WD OFFICIALS AND MINISTER REMPEL AND HER STAFF, WHO I CAN TELL YOU ARE ALL DEEPLY COMMITTED TO FOSTERING GROWTH AND SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES IN OUR SECTORS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH WD IN THE COMING YEARS ESPECIALLY GIVEN "THE WEST MEANS BUSINESS".

MAKING MAJOR ECONOMIC POLICY CHANGE IS EXTREMELY COMPLEX AND CHALLENGING, ESPECIALLY IN TODAY'S INTER-CONNECTED, SOCIAL MEDIA WORLD, WHICH IS CHARACTERIZED BY SHORTER AND SHORTER PRODUCT AND TECHNOLOGY CYCLES OPERATING IN "A TURBO CAPITALIST GLOBAL ECONOMY".

NOTWITHSTANDING THIS FAST-PACED BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT, GOVERNMENTS IN ALL COUNTRIES TYPICALLY MOVE INCREMENTALLY AND SOMETIMES THAT CAN BE PERCEIVED AS SLOWLY. THIS IS SOMETIMES A FRUSTRATION FOR BUSINESS PEOPLE WHO OPERATE WITH A QUARTER-TO-QUARTER VIEW - ALTHOUGH LET'S BE HONEST, SOMETIMES WE CAN FOCUS TOO MUCH ON THE SHORT-GAME INSTEAD OF THE LONG ONE. WE NEED TO APPRECIATE THE PACE THAT GOVERNMENT MOVES WHEN MAKING MAJOR POLICY CHANGE IS OFTEN APPROPRIATE GIVEN THE UNIQUE AND INTENSE PUBLIC SCRUTINY AND ACCOUNTABILITIES GOVERNMENTS FACE, AND THE COMPETING INTERESTS THEY MUST ALWAYS BALANCE. WE DON'T HAVE CHALLENGES QUITE LIKE THAT IN BUSINESS.

NO POLICY CHANGES OF ANY SIGNIFICANCE, HOWEVER, GET MADE IN ANY GOVERNMENT, OR MOST LARGE COMPANIES FOR THAT MATTER, WITHOUT A STRONG POLITICAL CHAMPION OR AGENT OF CHANGE. WE LIKE OUR STATUS QUO. BREAKING THROUGH THAT IN GOVERNMENT REQUIRES A STRONG POLITICAL VOICE WITH SOME VISION, SOMEONE WHO IS WILLING TO TAKE RISKS AND GIVE OFFICIALS THE SPACE AND BACKING THEY NEED TO FORGE A NEW PATH.

THE HONOURABLE DIANE FINLEY, MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES, HAS BEEN WITHOUT QUESTION THE DEFENCE INDUSTRY'S CHANGE AGENT SINCE SHE ASSUMED THIS PORTFOLIO IN JULY 2013. WITHOUT HER COMMITMENT TO THE INDUSTRY AND HER LEADERSHIP WITHIN GOVERNMENT, THE DEFENCE PROCUREMENT STRATEGY, ANNOUNCED A LITTLE OVER A YEAR AGO, WOULD NOT HAVE COME TO PASS. AND WITHOUT HER CONTINUED FOCUS ON THIS FILE OVER THE PAST YEAR, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DPS MIGHT WELL HAVE BEEN SLOWER.

MAKE NO MISTAKE, THE DPS REPRESENTS A MAJOR POLICY CHANGE, INDEED A PHILOSOPHICAL SHIFT ON THE PART OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO LEVERAGE DEFENCE ACQUISITIONS TO ADVANTAGE CANADA'S ECONOMY AND SUPPORT THE DEFENCE INDUSTRY IN THE INTERNATIONAL MARKETPLACE IN A WAY NO GOVERNMENT HAS DONE IN THIRTY YEARS. AND WHILE THE DPS DIRECTLY INVOLVES THE MANDATES OF SEVERAL FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS, MINISTER FINLEY HAS HAD WHAT WE IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR MIGHT CALL CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FILE. SHE HAS CHARTED THE COURSE DOWN THE RIVER AND HAS ENSURED HER COLLEAGUES ARE PADDLING WITH THE CURRENT. SHE IS WITHOUT A DOUBT OUR INDUSTRY'S SENIOR POLITICAL CHAMPION IN THE CABINET ROOM, AND AGENT OF CHANGE ACROSS THE GOVERNMENT. FOR THAT WE OWE HER OUR THANKS AND APPRECIATION.

MINISTER FINLEY HAS MORE THAN A DECADE OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PUBLIC SERVICE TO HER CREDIT, HAVING BEEN FIRST ELECTED TO PARLIAMENT IN 2004 AND RE-ELECTED IN 2006, 2008 AND 2011. PRIOR TO BECOMING MINISTER OF PWGSC, SHE HELD THE SENIOR CABINET POSITIONS OF MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION, AND MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT.

SHE BEGAN HER PROFESSIONAL CAREER AS AN ADMINISTRATOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO'S FRENCH IMMERSION SCHOOL AND THEN HELD SEVERAL SENIOR POSITIONS IN BOTH THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS ENCOMPASSING AREAS AS DIVERSE HEALTH CARE, TRANSPORTATION, AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURING, PRINTING AND PUBLISHING, AND AVIATION. MS. FINLEY HAS BEEN ACTIVE WITH A NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE BRANT COMMUNITY CARE ACCESS CENTRE, THE NATIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE OF THE PARAMEDIC ASSOCIATION OF CANADA, THE AMBULANCE SERVICE ALLIANCE OF ONTARIO, THE ONTARIO GOVERNMENT HEALTH POLICY ADVISORY COUNCIL, AND THE THYROID FOUNDATION OF CANADA.

SHE HOLDS A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN ADMINISTRATIVE STUDIES AND A MASTER'S IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO. IT IS PERHAPS THIS BACKGROUND THAT ALLOWS HER TO UNDERSTAND OUR TOO OFTEN IMPATIENCE.

PLEASE JOIN ME IN WELCOMING TO THE PODIUM THE HONOURABLE DIANE FINLEY,  
MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES.