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NEWS RELEASE

IRPP 40th anniversary essay on Canadian policy milestones

Montreal – As part of the IRPP's 40th anniversary, this fascinating essay by IRPP Senior Scholar Thomas J. Courchene provides a sweeping overview of the evolution of Canada's postwar public policy.

Entitled *Policy Signposts in Postwar Canada: Reflections of a Market Populist*, the essay identifies the 13 signposts that are the key turning points in the history of Canadians, how they are interrelated, and how they have shaped the country we live in today.

The signposts are presented in chronological order. The first seven look back on the major events in Canadian policy history, for example the Pearson legacy of social programs, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Canada's participation in free trade agreements. The remaining signposts look ahead to some of the country's most pressing policy challenges.

Courchene emphasizes the importance of natural resources to Canada's future, and the challenges our economy faces with regards to Dutch disease. He maintains that as Canada finds itself at the raw-materials end of supply chains, it must work to increase the productivity payoff by embedding more value-added in its products before exporting them.

He also calls for a national energy strategy, rather than a regional one, to ensure that the resource boom does not become a curse. This strategy could become a springboard to develop the skills and human capital Canada needs to succeed in a knowledge-driven economy and to prevent rising fiscal and economic equality across the provinces.

"As we grapple in 2012 with how we ought to develop our resource endowments in order to secure our economic future, we need to continually remind ourselves that one of the dividends of an energy strategy has to be to develop and privilege our human resource potential," argues Courchene.

In other forward-looking signposts, Courchene reflects on Canada's Arctic policy, the shift in economic and political power to the West, and our resilience in the face of the recent fiscal and financial turmoil experienced by other industrialized countries.

Policy Signposts in Postwar Canada: Reflections of a Market Populist, by Thomas J. Courchene, can be downloaded free of charge from the Institute's Web site (www.irpp.org).

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For more details or to schedule an interview please contact the IRPP.

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