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NEWS RELEASE

IRPP Study Calls for a Defence Policy That Prioritizes Threats and Addresses Force Structure Issues

***The government's continual bowing to the efficiency god at the expense
of the mental and physical health of its soldiers is abhorrent.***

Montreal – The Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP.org) released today a study by Sean M. Maloney entitled "Force Structure or Forced Structure? The 1994 White Paper on Defence and the Canadian Forces in the 1990s."

Maloney, a professor in the Department of War Studies at the Royal Military College and strategic studies advisor to the Canadian Defence Academy, reproaches the previous government for insufficient identification of threats to our national interests in the 1994 document and says that the upcoming policy review must not make the same mistake.

The author says that clearer identification of Canadian interests and the threats to them was in fact possible at the time. "Contributors to the 1994 White Paper had three or four years to figure out that there were totalitarian threats to Canadian interests and values, yet they failed to do so — or at least they buried such analysis under so much coded language that it was unrecognizable," writes Maloney.

He argues that mobilizing an appropriate force structure is crucial to ensuring saliency, operational influence and effectiveness in Canadian defence-related interventions. But he cautions that in order to do so we first need to establish clear priorities in terms of our national interests and threats against them.

"Developing a force structure to protect Canadian interests within the budgetary constraints of Canada's debt situation was in fact possible, but would have required clear strategic objectives to shape a coherent national security vision," says the author.

The government's pursuit of efficiency above all other considerations was detrimental to the country's self-respect, he maintains. "Why is it," he asks, "that Canada, a G-8 power, can sustain only one or two battle groups, of fewer than a thousand personnel each overseas?" And, he asks, "why is it that Bangladesh and Nigeria deploy larger forces than Canada, for all of its peacekeeping rhetoric, to UN operations?"

The author recommends that any future defence policy review (such as the anticipated international policy review) must:

- ◆ be based on a realistic vision of Canadian interests, how they might be threatened and what military forces are needed to counter such threats;
- ◆ assess the ability of the Canadian forces to function across the spectrum of conflict in order to protect Canadian interests, which requires prioritization of the threats to those interests;
- ◆ be guided by the principles of Saliency, Operational Influence and Forward Security to identify an appropriate force structure;
- ◆ consider the critical human factor when the balance of commitments, rotations and deployment capability is considered – to ignore force burnout is not only morally wrong but also criminally negligent;
- ◆ confront problems with respect to weapons and platform procurement, which policy makers must educate themselves about; and
- ◆ resist the temptation to inject political expediency into those processes for short-term gain.
- ◆ apply strategic thinking, attention and care towards operational and force structure considerations.

“Force Structure or Forced Structure? The *1994 White Paper on Defence* and the Canadian Forces in the 1990s” is the latest *Choices* study to be released as part of the **National Security and Military Interoperability** series. It is now available on-line in Adobe (.pdf) format on the Institute’s Web site (www.irpp.org). Please find the summary attached.

For more information or to request an interview, please contact the IRPP.

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Contact:

Jasmine Sharma (jsharma@irpp.org)
Director of Communications and Public Relations
IRPP.org
(514) 985-2461, ext. 324