

Introductory Note

Our understanding of territorial structures and processes is still so limited, and our sense of national purpose for policy so vague, that there is yet much to be learned about the social ills and opportunities that policy is to address as well as much debate about the strategies to be followed. The selections in this part represent an exploration into diagnosis and prescription. They illustrate, we think, that policy formulation is a process of *social learning* where understanding of structure and process interact with diagnosis and rethinking public purposes, and where both interact with the continuing search for solutions.

The first selection, John Ehrlichman's White House memorandum, "National Growth Policy," is an extraordinary document consisting of dozens of questions addressed by the then principal domestic aide to the President of the United States to all departments of the federal government and to scholars in the field (chapter 22). It represents probably the most comprehensive and explicit probing of national policy issues for urban growth and regional development ever undertaken by a high official of government. Wilbur Thompson takes up this challenge (although his piece appeared before the Ehrlichman memorandum) and takes his readers through a grand tour of national urbanization policy for the United States, applying in masterly fashion what is known about the dynamics of urban growth (chapter 23). Tom Herman's brief article (chapter 24) illustrates a little understood political dimension of territorial policy. He reports on the paradoxical opposition by southern federal legislators to proposed legislation that would have greatly aided poor people in their region. It was its feared impact on the existing social structure in the southern states that gave rise to the unexpected hostility that Herman notes. This illustrates many of the conflicts discussed in the introduction to this volume.

The next two pieces deal with growth center concepts and strategies. The idea that public investment programs will have maximal effects on regional growth if concentrated in a small number of favorable locations has dominated discussions on regional and urban growth policy for the last decade. Unfortunately, the discussion has been hampered by a confusing welter of terminology and concepts. D. F. Darwent provides a careful review of the origins and confusions of the growth pole idea and helps clear the ground for subsequent research (chapter 25). In contrast to *poles*, which are nonspatial, growth *centers* are physically located in geographical space. Niles Hansen concentrates on the policy question of how to identify and choose growth

centers (chapter 26). Specifically, Hansen argues the case for the selection of intermediate-size cities as focal points for government policy, but the principal value of the piece is that it illustrates the intuitive basis of debates on this policy issue.

Yet another aspect of regional policy is the choice of region for the administration of government programs. John Friedmann and Barbara Stuckey explore some of the bases and contradictions of regionalization for transportation and other territorial phenomena, the variety of alternative regional definitions and concepts, and the needs of this sector within itself and with other governmental policies and programs (chapter 27).

Part III concludes with two articles by William Alonso. The first (chapter 28), building on the work of Hirschman (chapter 6) and Williamson (chapter 7), focuses on the problems and experience of developing countries and on the dilemmas they face in view of national objectives for economic growth and greater equality. The second (chapter 29) examines in its first part the general purposes of national policy that must be balanced in the formulation of national territorial policy; in its second part, it reviews the territorial dimensions of policies that are not aimed primarily at territorial questions and concludes that the impact of these, together with the forces of the social system, tends to swamp the effects of direct territorial policies such as those directed to depressed areas. It concludes that national regional policy, to be effective, must consider the geographic consequences of all principal public policies. Although Alonso examines the experience of the United States in particular, his conclusions are valid for all countries.