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*As an open forum for discussion of planning concepts a variety of views are expressed in this journal, which are not necessarily subscribed to by the publishers.*

## REDAKSIONEEL / EDITORIAL

Omdat die tydskrif met beperkte hulpmiddele bedryf moet word, kan geen korrespondensie gevoer word nie en kan ook geen onderhandelinge gevoer word met boekhandelaars nie. Ons moet dus staatmaak op persoonlike inskrywings van belangstellendes.

Graag wil ons langs die weg van hierdie rubriek veral ook ons dank betuig aan die gereelde finansiële ondersteuners, waaronder die Universiteit van Stellenbosch deur sy Publikasiekomitee, die Departement van Beplanning en die Omgewing en van persone soos Mnr. A.H. van Zyl van die Weskus en Prof. P.C. Fourie van die Universiteit van die Oranje Vrystaat.

### EVALUATION OF THE NATIONAL PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AS MODEL FOR PLANNING DEVELOPING TERRITORIES

Critical comment has appeared from time to time in print on the NPDP by persons from a variety of disciplines, including geography and economics. Some interpretations also seem to have a political colour.

Although the NPDP has been clearly defined, as an initial effort to provide the framework for an orderly and purposeful development of South Africa, most of the planning con-

cepts may be regarded as highly sophisticated and adapted to the fundamental needs of the mixed economics of the country. The definitions of development regions, chief town (regional centre), growth pole and growth points generally are particularly apt when viewed by the professional regional planner who is concerned with the establishment of a durable long-term development pattern and who must, if necessary, plan for a change in the present pattern.

An important issue of the NPDP is the possibility it offers of concentrating government action and investments in those growth points which will tend to an optimum distribution of the major central places for effective service and balanced economic growth.

The present urban pattern has evolved mostly by short-term ad hoc decisions inspired by private enterprise. There are areas of over-concentration with considerable social disadvantages; and at least half of the 500 odd existing towns in South Africa are on the decline, also with considerable loss of social capital.

Is it not infinitely better to create a rational system by the evaluation of potential and planning the long-term use of resources? The sooner momentum is gained in the chosen growth points the sooner a balanced economy of the entire territory concerned will be obtained. The diagram on the back page shows the model planned for the Ciskei.