thing you like, pervades the whole body of Nationalist policy-thinking for Black people. Education policy, the flashpoint in Soweto, provides a typical example.

The Soweto schools fall under the Bantu Education system. "Bantu Education" is a Nationalist invention. It was designed by Nationalist theoreticians for Black people. The Black people weren't asked whether they wanted it or not. Not one of them, to the best of our knowledge, was even consulted about it before it was announced as government policy. Indeed, many of them protested against it – teachers, churchmen, parents, political leaders – but all to no avail. Some teachers lost their jobs, some children were banned from school for life because they protested. The policy was imposed. And the Nationalists deluded themselves that, if they imposed this policy with sufficient determination, Black people would, sooner or later, come to accept it.

Having forced Bantu Education on the schools, the Government turned its attention to the universities. The Extension of University Education Act was passed, preventing any but White students from attending major existing universities, except in exceptional circumstances, and hiving Black students off into their own separate and unasked for Coloured, Indian, Sotho, Xhosa and Zulu colleges. The supporting myth for all this was that contact between students of different racial and tribal origins produced tension and conflict – that you avoided this by channelling them off into separate institutions; that, even if they didn't want to go to them, it was better for them that they should. And for you, too! For, although it might take time, these separate institutions would one day begin to turn out people who believed in Nationalist policy.

How does all this Nationalist theory look now, after Soweto, after 25 years of Bantu Education? Has this quarter of a century produced a single Black man who supports Bantu Education? If it has, we don't know who he is. Have the separate universities produced a single Black student who supports apartheid? Not that we have heard of. The Zulu university of Ngoye has gone up in flames, and nobody knows when it will reopen again; the Xhosa university of Fort Hare has closed down for the umpteenth time; the Rector of the Sotho university of Turfloop is in despair – and in the Black schools the rejection of Bantu Education appears to be total.

But Nationalist policy has created more than a collapsing educational policy. It has created Black Power. There is a new Black confidence abroad. Young Black people are not only more militant and determined than ever before, they give the impression that they know now that they are winning, that time and the world are on their side, and White South Africa can go to hell.

For years some people, Black and White, have been telling the Nationalists that contact between people of different races, though it certainly creates problems, should be as wide and frequent as possible. If it is not, both sides begin to think the other isn't really human, and effective co-operation becomes impossible. That is the point we have almost reached. As a deliberate consequence of government policy Black school children have been persuaded that they have nothing in common with White school children; Black students neither know about, nor want to speak to, nor give a damn about, White students – yet none of them supports apartheid.

Soweto should finally have exploded the myth that apartheid can solve anything. It has done none of the things it was supposed to do. It has not reduced race tension, it has magnified it a thousand times; it has not satisfied Black aspirations, it has frustrated them at every turn. Whether the Nationalists can disentangle themselves at this late date from the myths and illusions with which they have lived so long is the question of the day. For if they cannot, South Africa is heading for a future which, to use Mr Vorster's oft-repeated words, will be "too ghastly to contemplate" and which will made the catastrophe of Soweto seem like "the good old days".□

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FATIMA MEER

On July 22nd Mrs Fatima Meer, Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Natal, in Durban, was banned for five years. Why?

Fatima Meer has been saying and doing things the Government doesn't like for over 20 years now. It is true that her statements have become more radical as time has passed, but there are probably at least two reasons for this. First, the growing need she has felt for it to be publicly shown that leading South African Indians identify totally with the aspirations of Africans. Second, the deteriorating situation against which her statements have been made. Twenty years ago that situation was bad enough, today it is infinitely worse. Change towards a non-racial society was urgent then; today, every month's delay in starting such change, and getting on with it fast, increases the threat of catastrophe for all of us. Fatima Meer knew this and said it and hoped, by saying it, to shock us all into doing something. And as the situation worsened it was not surprising that her response to it should sound more and more outrageous to those who don't want real change at all.

Reality has not agreed with everything Mrs Meer has had to say, notably her condemnation of the Entebbe raid, but it has the greatest admiration for her courage and is proud to be able to count her amongst its contributors. We condemn her banning utterly. At this time, more than ever, it is vital for South Africa that every voice seeking a peaceful solution to our problems should be heard, however unpopular it may be with those in authority.□