The Tech

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APARTHEID

The issue of apartheid in South Africa will receive special attention this Wednesday and Thursday during the Institute Colloquium on Apartheid. In this special section, The Tech opinion editors have culled the views of major MIT figures on this ongoing debate. These views do not represent the full spectrum of opinions on the subject, nor do they necessarily reflect the views of the newspaper. The Tech hopes readers will benefit from the expanded coverage in these pages.

Mathews M. Cherian
Andrew Bein
Thomas T. Huang

Richard S. Eckaus PhD ’54 is a Ford International Professor of Economics. He analyzes the economic pressures and financial crises that mark the South African political environment in “Pressure on South Africa,” p.3.

“...The US banks feel the pressure of the movement of divestiture. These pressures have increased as the violence of the government against a black movement has escalated. Even more important...is the concern among bankers over the economic effects of the violence.”

Frank E. Morgan ’74 is an associate professor of finance at the Alfred P. Sloan School of Management. In “One Student’s Decision,” p.2, he describes the constant struggle a student faces—the struggle between assigned schoolwork, and outside demands— and how a very special talk influenced his thinking.

“I only wish I had gone to an important talk every month...because, like most of you, I was no writer or philosopher or political activist, just a conscientious student interested in things.”

John E. Parsons is an assistant professor of mathematics and chairman of the Institute Colloquium Committee. In “If Someone’s Decision,” p.2, Parsons depicts the suspect practices of a number of US companies in South Africa and ultimately questions the effectiveness of constructive engagement in that country.

“If of the 284 US companies operating in South Africa, only 128 have even signed the Sullivan Principals. In 1984 one half of the signatories either never reported or received a failing grade.”

Gretchen Ritter G is a graduate student in political science and will participate in the panel session on “What can and should Americans do?” during the Institute Colloquium on Apartheid. Ritter questions in “The Apartheid Colloquium: Goodwill or Malice?,” p.3, the motivation for the colloquium and what the colloquium must achieve to succeed.

“It will not be the forum, that is, unless the MIT community reports that is as the first step toward disinvestment and addressing minority concerns, rather than a last, symbolically sign which shuts these issues down for another five years.”

Robert I. Rotberg is a professor of political science and history in “The Crisis in South Africa,” p.2. Rotberg provides a terse overview of the heated political situation and current state of emergency in South Africa.

“President Botha is gambling that his immensely strong military machine, and his murder, rerouted, but still powerful police force, can soon cordon off the black townships and curtail the African anger that erupts from day to day in serious parts of the country.”

Holly Sweet is associate director of the Experimental Study Group. Sweet reflects on her experiences with what it means when good people choose not to act against what they see is evil in “The Dangerous Silence,” p.3.

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”