MIT must divest from South Africa

President Paul E. Gray '54 argues that MIT should remain neutral on political questions that do not affect the Institute directly. But the decision to do nothing may constitute an active support of apartheid. They pay taxes and sell goods to South Africa's government. Revenues are used to preserve the apartheid system. A position against apartheid, then, cannot countenance mere "constructive engagement" in South Africa. Either of those actions would interfere with MIT's primary obligation to educate.

Dissent

Selective divestment is MIT's only alternative

Apartheid is an evil system. Every effort should be made now to mitigate its effects on South Africa's black population. MIT should not simply wash its hands of all its investments in companies doing business in South Africa.

Instead of walking away, MIT should motivate companies to improve the work and living conditions for blacks in South Africa. The MIT Corporation should selectively divest from those companies that are not making "good progress" (Category 1) in adhering to the Sullivan principles. The Sullivan principles classify the success of desegregation policies enacted by the corporations. [Text of the principles, page 15.] A corporation that fails to conform to these principles deserves blame.

A company is not immoral merely by doing business in South Africa. Many American corporations do operate morally in South Africa. They have provided a role model of equality using these principles.

Total divestment is too much, too soon. MIT stands to lose economically from a fire sale of 18 percent of its endowment. MIT's primary responsibility is to educate its students. Hurting ourselves is no way to prove a point. Taking a first step to divestment injures MIT.

A one-time, dramatic pull-out by MIT will have no long-term effect. We are morally obliged to apply solid, prolonged pressure—accomplished through selective divestment—to our companies, our government and South Africa, toward apartheid's destruction.

MIT must take a stand against apartheid. Constructive engagement has not worked. Total divestment is a painful overreaction. Selective divestment is the only alternative.

Andrew Ben Craig Jungwirth

LSC should reconsider screening of "Rambo"

To the Editor:

On Saturday night I attended LSC's screening of "And Now for Something Completely Different," which was superbly produced and executed. The audience, of 16-to-20-year-olds, adored the film, despite the scores of complaints about its gore and violence. The people were so quick to counteract injustice is.

Watching the preview was a new experience. As a film which rejected xenophobia and gratuitous violence, perhaps LSC would like to reconsider showing this film. If so, I would be happy to help organize a protest against it.

Julian West

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LSC should reconsider screening of "Rambo"