Apartheid will not end gradually

To the Editor:

Two months before I left South Africa to come to MIT, I waited up at a don in Loop St, Cape Town. It was the door to the Security Police offices and I was there because I wanted a permis-sion to visit my sister.

She had been detained in a church on June 16, after attend-ing a service to commemorate those who have died opposing apartheid. Apartheid is not about sharing beaches, trains and buses. It is about laws like the Internal Security Act which allow a person to be detained indefinitely without a trial, and it is about the power to make such laws and enforce them.

Most South African whites think that change should come slowly and that Botha has already begun to reform apartheid. Two years ago "non-whites" were introduced into parliament. They are elected in the ratio 1:4:4:2:1. "Coloreds": 2 "whites": 4 "Africans": 2 "Asians": 4 "blacks".

Being MIT students we all realize that we owe our lives to can-didates that 22,000 people have been arrested since June 12th. Eighteen people have died while being held in police custody or detention for their political ac-tivities.

My sister was 17, in her final year of high school, when she was detained. She was not the strongest person ever to be de-tained. Children as young as 11 are being held. She stayed for 40 days in the same prison they are holding Nelson Mandela. She was charged three months later for possessing subversive litera-ture - three pamphlets handed out at a church service. The charges were dropped.

My sister is one of the lucky ones. She was not held in solitary confinement for months on end. She did not die or end up in a psychiatric hospital.

Our family was one of the lucky ones. We knew where she was and when she had been de-tained. We got to visit my sister after three weeks; some never do. Families are often not informed of their children's detention.

"Don't tell me to wait and take it slow. I want to be free from apartheid, and I've been waiting 19 years. My mother has been waiting 54. I don't want to have to worry about my family and friends at home."

I want my children to know the children of other races. I don't want to have to feel guilty because my skin is white. I want to be able to be proud of what I say that I come from South Africa.

Dorothy Thornton '89

Black have been struggling for a change since the whites arrived in 1652 and the African National Congress has been opposing apartheid since 1912. How long are the people of South Africa supposed to wait, another 350 years?

On the 14th day of the State of Emergency, Minister of Law and Order Louis le Grange re-fused to release the names of the number of people detained under the Emergency. The Detainees' Parents Support Committee esti-mates that 22,000 people have been arrested since June 12th.

Most whites continue to ride in the black section of the trains. It is about laws like the Internal Security Act which allow a person to be detained indefinitely without a trial, and it is about the power to make such laws and enforce them.

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American Cancer Society

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For me, the news that I had a malignant tumor in my right el-bow, was a blow. I learned it shortly after I'd been elected Captain of the Army football team. Thanks to early detection, effective surgery and treatment, I was back in three and a half months - playing football but functioning in every other capacity as cap-tain, I graduated on-time. And today, I'm a Lieutenant in the Infantry.

"You know, millions of people like myself owe their lives to can-cer research. And they take money, lots of money.

"Think about it. We want to wipe out cancer in your lifetime."

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