LETTERS

On war and witnessing

Just a brief comment concerning "Love your (Iraqi) neighbor" (Letters, Fall 2003). First, let's not forget that the Seventh-day Adventist Church had established the Medical Cadet Corp during WWII to train our youth in medical treatment so that when we were drafted we would serve in that capacity. We live in a world where war and other horrible things happen and we can and should show our Christian character no matter where we are. I am currently serving in Baghdad as a medical officer and have had the opportunity to witness not only to our soldiers but also to the many Iraqi citizens I have given medical care to. As Christians, we are part of society and have a role to play within it, even in time of war.

Gaddiel D. Rios, MD (BS '90)
CPT, MC,USA
Squadron Surgeon
2nd ACR, US Army

An AU family legend

Imagine my surprise to see a picture of my great-grandfather, Reu Hoen, in your article on the original science building on campus! That is probably only the second picture I have ever seen of him from that era. Family legend has always been that he designed that building; how interesting to read the full story behind it! Thanks to Meredith Jones-Gray!

It was nice to see the artists using it so well during my attendance there and now how sad to see it go.

H. Edwin Stickle, MD (BIT '88)

Making peace, not war

In response to Marlin A. Field's letter to the editor in the Fall issue of *Focus*, I would argue that during the recent Iraqi War the United States were acting as peacemakers and loving their neighbors.

If I witnessed the brutal beating of a man by another man, would it be immoral for me to intervene on behalf of the victim? American intervention in Iraq is essentially the same thing. Saddam Hussein has been systematically brutalizing his people for decades. Saddam murdered all of his political opponents, sometimes pulling the trigger himself. He murdered hundreds of thousands of his own people, the Kurds in the north and Shiites in the south. He used chemical weapons on civilians including women and children. Saddam started a meaningless eight-year war with his neighbor Iran that cost the lives of more than a million people. He invaded his neighbor Kuwait and again exported his torture, brutality and evil to another nation. When an international coalition attempted to remove him, he fired missiles into Israel in an effort to start a general Arab/Israeli war, knowing that Israel possesses an arsenal of nuclear weapons.

Please, before you protest against this War, think about the number of people who lost their lives because of Saddam Hussein. In my opinion, Saddam had given up his rights to sovereignty, and moral people everywhere should have looked for an opportunity to remove such a monster from power.

It might be forgivable if people who were subjected to the unspeakable horrors that Saddam unleashed were to ask, "where is God?" I would prefer to ask, where was man? Where were the Christians of the West when, to paraphrase Gen 4:10, the blood of hundreds of thousands of dead Iraqis called out from the ground?

No nation has the resources to intervene everywhere in the world, but does that make it immoral to intervene anywhere in the world? If America has the determination to see a decent regime established in Iraq, then in the coming decades I believe we will see an Iraqi democracy thrive and be taken for granted just as we take the democracies of Germany and Japan for granted. I thank God for the brave men and women of this country who gave everything they had so that the people of Iraq could enjoy some of the blessings we in the West take for granted.

Douglas Elsey (MDiv '97)

The following are corrections for the 2002–2003 Annual Report:

1874 Founders Club
100,000–499,999
Bruce and Kathleen Oliver

President's Club & Friends
Michael and Marie Andreasen