

Christians.

President Bush should keep his personal religious beliefs private when he speaks as the representative of our nation.

*Frances K. Morse
Redwood City*

WE are shocked that you would choose to print a photo of a cross marking the spot where human remains from a member of the space shuttle were found (Page 16A, Feb. 3). As there were at least two members of the crew who were not Christian, this means that there is close to a 30 percent chance that the remains marked by the cross belonged to a Hindu or a Jew. Placing a cross on these unknown remains dishonors the beliefs of any crew member who was not Christian. An American flag would have been a much more appropriate marker.

*Andrea Levin and Howard Parnes
San Jose*

From the San Jose Mercury News After the February 2003 Columbia shuttle disaster.

WHILE we mourn the loss of the crew of Columbia, let us also remember those soldiers who gave their lives serving our country in the helicopter accident in Afghanistan only a few short days ago. It reminds us that all worthy endeavor is never undertaken without risk, be it reaching for the stars or toward a world at peace, and that there will inevitably be a cost borne by the best among us.

Space shuttles and military aircraft use some of the most advanced and complex technology we possess. Regardless of how perfectly mankind may come to understand the laws of nature, the machines we create are bound to be imperfect -- because we are men and errors will be made.

For both Columbia and Afghanistan, questions will be asked and doubts raised. Was the sacrifice too great? Not if you believe our nation has its ultimate destiny in space and in peace. Let us bind up the wounds of our sorrow for all who perished, find out what went wrong, fix it and move forward. Doing so will constitute the most lasting testament we can give the memory of the fallen.

*Paul M. Grant
San Jose*

IT is a terrible tragedy that occurred last Saturday morning. While the focus is on the seven lost astronauts and the space program itself, one must reflect a bit further.

Also last week, our country lost four heroes in Afghanistan when their helicopter crashed while serving their country. While these seven astronauts will never see their loved ones again while in this