

## Publishing Editor's column

AT THE beginning of last year in this column I referred to the apparent imminence of war in the Middle East and the severe consequences it could have. The war came and went, and looking back it is difficult to say whether the world is or is not a safer place as a result of the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's villainous régime. One nation which might certainly be said to have benefited from his removal is Israel, which stands stronger and stronger in the Middle East in comparison with the nations which surround her. Yet in reality there are two major threats to the longer-term existence of the present-day nation of Israel, and these threats have become more prominent in the last year.

The first threat is that of the Palestinians. This long-running problem was never far out of the news during 2003, either for new peace initiatives and their failure, or for terrorist outrages and responses to them. The second threat stems from the first, and is directly linked also with the war on Iraq: it is the increasing tendency for opinion to turn against Israel at both national and individual level—as indicated, for example, by a poll taken last autumn in Europe, which showed that Israel was considered to be the greatest threat to world peace. Occasionally I have read letters in newspapers saying that Israel must now be forced to obey United Nations resolutions. We can expect Israel to come under more and more pressure regarding the Palestinians, and the fact that America invaded the Middle East and removed one unpopular power will make it that much easier for other nations to do the same, as they think, to Israel. And so we see things move on towards the climax foretold in Scripture.

In the meantime, as we wait for the fulfilment of our hopes, we seek to strengthen one another in the things of the Word of God. We thank our readers for their continued support, hope that they will continue to read and enjoy the magazine during 2004, and pray that the coming year may bring the return of our Lord to his waiting saints. The past year has been one of sadness for the Testimony Committee, due to the falling asleep of our beloved Exhortation Editor, Brother Jim Wood (as reported in October), but we have been pleased to welcome two new members to the Committee, Brethren Edward Carr and Jeremy Thomas, the former, of course, the son of Brother Reg Carr, an editor for many years. The Committee now consists of the following brethren:

Carlo Barbaresi	High Wycombe	Ewan Macleod	Malvern
Tony Benson	Norwich	Trevor Maher	Stirling
Nigel Bernard	Pembroke Dock	Derek Marbrook	Sutton Coldfield
David Burges	Leamington	Eric Marshall	Kings Lynn
Bernard Burt	Coventry West	John Nicholls	Chelmsford
Edward Carr	Cardiff East	John Ramsden	London Forest Hill
Russell Ebbs	Colchester	Jeremy Thomas	Manchester Sale
Stephen Green	Bracknell	Mark Vincent	Stirling
Trevor Hughes	Amersham	David Willey	Norwich

*Publication of articles in The Testimony does not presume editorial endorsement except on matters of fundamental doctrine, as defined in the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith.*