

people in the past, and threaten to do so again.

Mr. Khachatrian warned that "attempts are being made to reestablish autocratic rule in Armenia, thus threatening not only the security needs of Armenia but also the development of democracy. In the absence of external aggression and interference, Armenians can achieve democracy and political stability.

"The goal of our organization, as well as of my visit, is to promote the establishment of stable and lasting conditions for peace in the region. The only possibility for a lasting peace is the one based on history, international law, and in particular, on the rights of the indigenous people. In this sense then, we view the recognition of the reunified independent Armenia with Karabakh as a necessity" in order to strip the veneer of legitimacy from the provocations and aggressions which now threaten war.

Israeli massacres in Gaza, West Bank

by Joseph Brewda

Israeli soldiers opened fire on a crowded market place in Rafah, a town in the occupied Gaza Strip on April 2, killing 4 and wounding 80. The incident typifies Israel's intentionally provocative occupation policies.

"The market place was packed with thousands of people doing their shopping for the feast to mark the end of Ramadan," the Islamic holy month of fasting, shopkeeper Rawhi Subuh told Agence France Presse. "Five jeeps raced in, chasing a Peugeot car carrying members of the Red Eagles [a Palestinian resistance group], who got away. The jeeps got stuck in the crowd and then stones and Molotov cocktails were thrown at them. The border police got out of their vehicles and fired everywhere for 10 minutes. Many people were wounded accidentally and people hit the ground for cover."

The day following the incident, Israeli soldiers shot and wounded 35 demonstrators in four refugee camps and Gaza city protesting the massacre the previous day. On April 4, the U.N. Security Council issued a statement condemning the Rafah killings, but called on all parties to demonstrate "self-restraint." The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) issued a statement the following day ridiculing the U.N. statement as "inadequate." "We are amazed to see the U.N. Security Council use two standards to deal with terrorism," it said, adding that such double standards would "encourage the Israeli occupation to continue mass killing operations."

Over 1,000 Palestinians have been killed by the Israelis, approximately 300 of them under than 16 years of age, since

the beginning of the 1987 Intifada. Many of those killed were shot in the back. On April 13, Israeli soldiers shot and wounded at least 22 Palestinian demonstrators in the Nusseirat refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. The clash occurred immediately after a four-day curfew was lifted that had been imposed after the Army had killed a youth from a prominent family allegedly attempting to cross the border into Egypt.

Commenting on killings, Haydar abd al-Shafi, the head of the Palestinian delegation to the U.S.-sponsored Mideast peace talks, stated, "This has been going on since the occupation. The Palestinians put up resistance to which they are naturally entitled, and the Israelis strike back."

In addition to a proclivity to shoot into crowds, the Israelis have increasingly carried out a policy of assassinating Palestinians rather than arrest them. "The Army has adopted a policy of seeking out activists, hunting them down, and executing them," Faisal Husseini, leader of the advisory team to the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, recently charged. Eight people were killed in the first two months of 1992 by Israeli squads dressed in plain clothes, often in Arab dress, and at least another eight were killed in March, a report by the Palestine Human Rights Information Center notes. There were reportedly 29 such killings in 1991.

Describing one such assassination, that of a Palestinian youth on March 29 in the West Bank town of Hebron, an Irish nurse told the *Christian Science Monitor*: "As he was running, he was shot down without warning. At the same time, the doors of a back of a van flew open and a lot of men dressed in Palestinian women's dresses got out and there was shooting all around." The assassinations are believed to be coordinated by the Prime Minister's Office for the Warfare against Terrorism. The office has also been used to kill Palestinians overseas, often under the guise of inter-Arab disputes.

There are also reports that Israeli soldiers have disguised themselves as U.N. officials to facilitate arrests. Sandro Tucci, an official of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency, told the *Christian Science Monitor* that his agency had "obviously taken this matter very seriously because it implies a threat to the security of our personnel."

On April 2, Betzelem, an Israeli human rights monitoring center, issued a new report on the systematic use of torture in interrogating Palestinians. According to the report, issued by Professors Stanley Cohen and Dafna Golan, torture has become a "normal procedure" to the 5,000 detainees who were interrogated in the past year. On April 13, the Public Committee against Torture petitioned the Israeli High Court to overturn guidelines set by a 1987 government commission which amount to a permit by the police to use torture. The guidelines, issued by the Landua commission, allow "moderate physical," and "non-violent psychological" interrogation of non-Jews suspected of security offenses.

In its argument before the court the group said the guidelines have "turned into a permit in the [Occupied] Territories to torture." The group has asked that they be made public.