

Selected Interviews – transcripts

**Regarding the use of an unidentified gas
by the Israeli Defense Forces
During the week of February 12, 2001
In the Khan Younis Refugee Camp**

Recorded for the documentary film, “Gaza Strip”

Interviews:
February | March | April
2001

Filmed by:

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Background

I lived in the Gaza Strip from January 21 to the end of April, 2001 while making a documentary film. I saw many shocking and surprising things during my time there. By far the most striking and darkly ironic was an incident in February, when the Israeli military used a yet-unidentified gas on civilians living in the Khan Younis refugee camp, adjacent to a large Israeli settlement in southern Gaza.

When I arrived in Khan Younis at mid-day on the 13th of February, Israeli soldiers were firing assault rifles down the main east-west road in the refugee camp, sending men, women and children scattering. A journalist had just sustained a head injury from Israeli live ammunition as our taxi pulled to a halt. My line-producer and I took cover in a narrow alleyway. Palestinian children were scampering past us with their shirts covering their mouths, saying “The gas! They’re shooting the gas!” It was not clear why this was unusual; the Israeli military had often fired tear gas canisters into this part of the Khan Younis refugee camp in the past.

What we were witnessing was the tail-end of a major clash that had broken out the day before in the late afternoon. Apparently, some Palestinian gunmen had taken cover behind a pile of sandbags in the al-Bahar road, known to the locals as the “Tufa barricade,” and begun taking pot-shots at Israeli soldiers in the nearby army post. The Israelis, who have the entire Khan Younis refugee camp ringed about with fortified machine-gun nests, returned fire – heavy machine-gun fire and tank shells -- and didn’t stop returning fire until the next day. The Israeli army later denied firing tank shells into the refugee camp – but I have videotape of the shells detonating on the road that evening.

Another thing the Israeli military spokespeople later strenuously denied was that they had used a new kind of gas on the Palestinians that day and during that week. Not tear gas, but a gas that affected the nervous system and caused those who inhaled it to suffer violent convulsions, severe headaches and cramps, and other unpleasant symptoms.

As I made my way through the wards of Amal and Nasser Hospitals that day and for many days afterward, I observed many patients that had been brought to the hospitals suffering from these symptoms. Room after room, women, children, men. Some were vomiting. Some alternated between a coma-like state and violent convulsions, their entire bodies twisting and arching, members of their families struggling to hold them down on the beds. On and on, for days. One boy, who had inhaled a large amount of the gas in question, suffered in the hospital for an entire month with recurrent convulsions. It is difficult to describe the sensation of sitting in a room for hours and days with people suffering so terribly, and knowing that this was done by human beings.

The incident went largely unreported. No articles were written in major US newspapers. Fox News and 60 Minutes did not produce special reports. The story gradually grew old and fell through the cracks. Out of sight and out of mind – and who would believe that the Israeli military would do such a thing to civilians in a refugee camp? Olivier Rafowicz, an Israeli Army spokesman, was furious that I even dared to ask him about the gas when I interviewed him in Tel Aviv on April 10, and he repeated the same angry denials. I did not tell him what I had witnessed and filmed.

I make these transcripts available in order to set the record straight. I filmed many other interviews with patients, doctors, etc., but the accounts tend to vary only in the details.

- James Longley, February 2, 2002

Coverage

A few newswire clippings from the time period in question:

Copyright 2001 AFX News Limited
AFX European Focus
February 13, 2001 Tuesday

SECTION: GOVERNMENT; GENERAL

HEADLINE: AFX World news update - Palestinians say Israeli army used nerve **gas** in clash

DATELINE: CALIFORNIA

BODY:

The Palestinian security services have accused the Israeli army of using nerve **gas** during a gunbattle yesterday, on the outskirts of **Khan Yunis** in southern Gaza Strip.

The army has strongly denied the charges.

"The Israeli army released yesterday tear **gas** tainted with nerve **gas**," said a statement signed by Abdel Razeq al-Majeida, head of general Palestinian security in the Gaza Strip.

Palestinian medical officials said that 40 people were treated for **gas**-related injuries and another 50 were hurt by flying bullets and shrapnel.

LOAD-DATE: February 14, 2001

Copyright 2001 British Broadcasting Corporation
BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political
Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring
February 13, 2001, Tuesday

LENGTH: 148 words

HEADLINE: Israeli army reportedly using toxic nerve **gas** against Palestinians

SOURCE: Voice of Palestine, Ramallah, in Arabic 0800 gmt 13 Feb 01

BODY:

Text of report by Palestinian radio on 13 February

Medical sources at Nasir Hospital in **Khan Yunis** have announced that more than 40 Palestinians suffered a strange case of hysteria and nervous breakdown because they inhaled a toxic **gas** fired for the first time by the occupation army during the bombing of Palestinian areas.

Specialists believe that this is an internationally banned nerve **gas**. Dr Muhammad Abdallah Abd-al-Mun'im, official in charge of medical teams who treated the injured, said that the **gas** bombs fired last night on the western camp of Khan Yunis gave off heavy yellowish and highly-concentrated smoke. Those who inhaled it, he said, suffered a nervous breakdown and vomited blood.

Abd-al-Mun'im said this **gas** is not the same kind that was fired by the occupation forces previously and that it is the first time that the doctors have seen this.

Copyright 2001 Deutsche Presse-Agentur
Deutsche Presse-Agentur
February 14, 2001, Wednesday, BC Cycle
00:45 Central European Time

SECTION: International News

LENGTH: 331 words

HEADLINE: More than 100 hurt as Israel shells houses in West Bank, Gaza

DATELINE: Gaza

BODY:

Israeli soldiers shelled several Palestinian towns and refugee camps Tuesday in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, wounding more than 100 people and damaging homes, Palestinian sources said.

The fiercest clashes reportedly took place all day and night Tuesday in the western part of the **Khan Younis** refugee camp in the southern Gaza Strip, where Israeli soldiers used heavy weaponry and anti-tanks missiles. Palestinian medical sources said that at least 100 Palestinians from **Khan Younis** were hit by bullets and shrapnel from anti-tank missiles. The sources said that among the casualties was Palestinian ambulance driver Jihad Abu Attaya, who was shot in the back while trying to rescue a group of Palestinian children under heavy fire.

Eyewitnesses said dozens of Palestinian families arrived at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis with relatives covered with shrapnel wounds.

They said the missiles were shot from tanks located near the Jewish settlement of Neveh Dekalim, west of Khan Younis, into the main streets of the refugee camp.

Israeli tanks had also shelled houses in Rafah and the West Bank towns of Hebron, Bethlehem, Bethjallah and Nablus, wounding at least 10 people and causing severe damages to several houses.

Yasser Sheikh Ali, a Palestinian doctor working at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, said that over the past several days, Israel has been using a powerful type of tear **gas** against the Palestinians that causes convulsions and spasms.

Sheikh Ali said at a news conference Tuesday that it affects the nerves and respiratory system, making breathing difficult.

More than 80 Palestinians arriving at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis reported that Israeli soldiers had used the white smoky **gas**, but Israel denied doing so.

Meanwhile, director general of Gaza's airport, Brig Salman Abu Haleeb, announced late Tuesday that Israel had again shut down Gaza International Airport for security reasons until a further notice. dpa sar ls

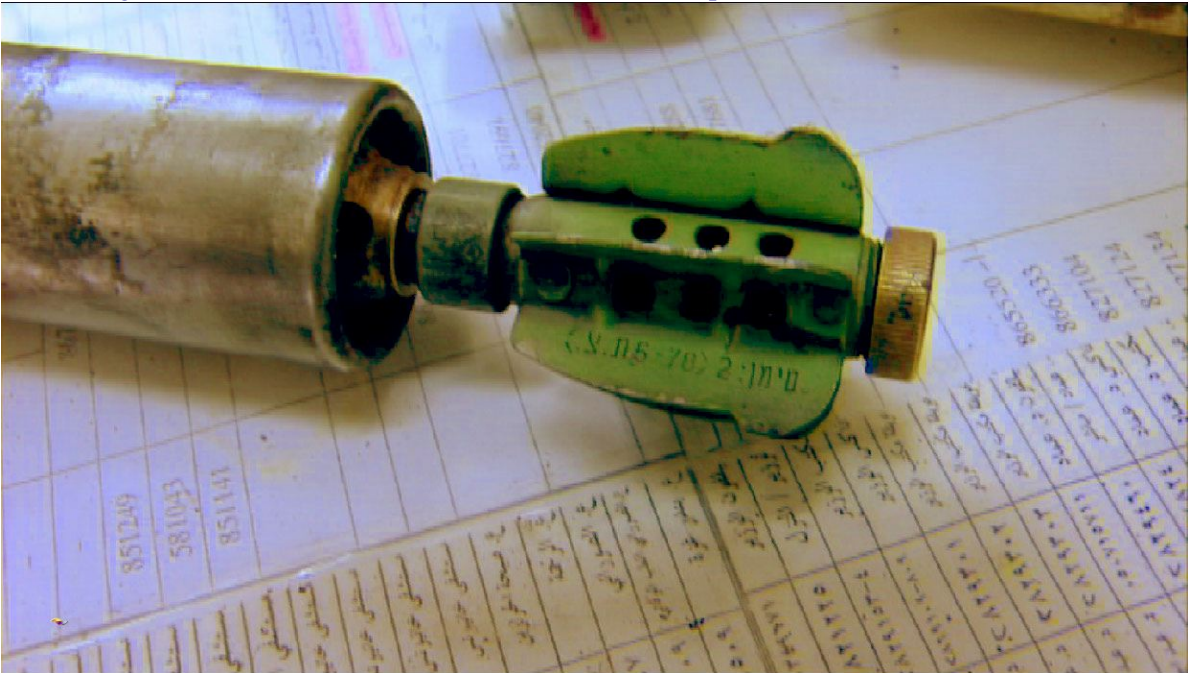
LOAD-DATE: February 14, 2001

The following are transcripts from filmed interviews made by James Longley in Khan Younis, Gaza Strip, following the gas attacks of the week of Feb. 12, 2001.

Translations from Arabic.

The numbers indicate video timecode notation.

– gas canisters in the ambulance station, Nasser Hospital, Feb 13, 2001.



gas canister, PCHR offices, Khan Younis, Feb. 2001



02:16:30:00 – interview with man in his courtyard, Khan Younis refugee camp, Feb. 13 – he describes gas attack:



16:36
the canister fell here and burned this (mattress)

16:56
We were asphyxiated
Like fire inside you

16:57
This is not natural

17:02
Me and all the family were in the hospital
We had muscle spasms

17:08
God is the only hope now

17:12
It came from the sky
Thank God the young guys came and helped us

18:00
We just now got out of the hospital.

18:08
Even now I cough and vomit
and my condition
you can say my chest – it's like a stone in my chest
filled with air

18:19
They say it's gas – all this area – this is area where things happen
This area always gets tear gas shot into it,
But we've never seen anything like this.

18:31
Fire, flame
And then the flame is extinguished
Smoke billows out
This whole area became blocked (with smoke)
It doesn't make you tear like before

18:36

18:40
After ten minutes you get so you can't breathe
You faint
The young men took us to the hospital
We spent yesterday there
They gave us oxygen
God has been merciful to us

19:00

even now the young people in the area
are having muscle spasms
So this gas is not natural, as they say
This must be a poisonous gas

19:12

--When did it start?

In the afternoon, approximately
They hit this entire area
Not just one canister – maybe twenty
About 20

19:21

Until the end of the day
There was shooting
Going on

19:26

Like a machine
Like a bullet factory

19:36

then after that they fired these canisters --
the gas isn't natural

19:45

Because our chests
Are all blocked up
Even our hands
We can't lift things
This must be nerve gas

20:00

may God help us

20:02

That's mother over there
And I have these kids also (gestures)
This one was in the hospital
And another daughter
Who was in the hospital
Islam, Ilham, Mohammed, Isra and I

20:22
They gave us oxygen and treatment
God protected us.
20:26
and mother --
it's still hard for her to breathe
20:28
Our nerves, speaking for myself
My hands – I feel like they're broken
I feel like there's something broken in it
And my other hand as well
Look
20:51
They young men took us to the hospital
To see if there was poison or not
20:55
They said "this is poison"
Everything is up to God

21:00
Even my knees
I feel like they're cracking
It happened all the sudden
My back
21:07
All the sudden this happened
All my nerves
Even now that I'm better – I feel like all my nerves are broken

.....

Tape GD10

01:33:00:00 – Mohammed Sultan having attack in Amal hospital (first material of him out of ICU)
01:36:30:00 – Mohammed Sultan's older brother, Fahd Sultan (right), gives interview in Amal Hospital:



01:37:18

I found him holding the mattress and hitting his head against the wall, trying to tear himself apart.

Me and our cousins carried him to the hospital –

He spent 4 days in ICU and then they brought him here –

He's been here for about 8 days

37:37

Every five minutes he gets the condition –

And he's been like this without any change

Without any improvement

He can't eat

Yesterday we gave him milk

And we gave him juice

we give him light things – milk, juice, and water

every five minutes he gets a condition (convulsions) – they give him injections

but the sedatives stop working in 10 minutes

38:16

He's very strong – it takes 5 or 6 people to hold him down

He's the most difficult case here.

He feels the pain from inside his body

When he relaxes for 3 minutes, he can talk normally

He says he wants to drink something

He says "it's crawling in my skin like ants"

It starts in his arm and then to his stomach, chest, head

He can't comprehend anything

If only one person is holding him down he'll throw him off and smash the place up.

And they tell you: “give him a sedative”
So they give him a sedative and he sleeps – 10 minutes later he’s awake again and
it’s the same story.

01:43:40:00 -- Ali – age 19 -- first material – interview: Amal Hospital, Khan Younis.

44:39



--What happened to you exactly?

--What were you doing?

I was walking to my relatives’
Abu Akka’s store
We have stores up there also
I went there to bring some things
They shot a gas canister – but I didn’t pay too much attention
I smelled a perfume smell
I didn’t pay attention
I went back
45:02
I went back and started having a headache
I left everything and went home
45:16
It was an unbearable headache
I told my mother
And she took me down to the street
And then I knew no more
45:25
I only woke up on the third day
In the hospital.
Only after the third day.

45:37

01:46:00:00 – interview with Ahmed, age 17 – Amal Hospital



46:11

We were in the refugee camp
The Jews started shooting
And then they fired gas canisters
Some of the guys left and

46:20

They started yelling
That there were women and children
And we should help them
Then we went

46:25

Me and the other guys
To take the kids out

46:30

the gas canisters started falling to an area
while we were trying to leave
We were surrounded

46:35

between the Israelis and the gas

46:40

and the canisters were descending on the street
we took the people out as far as we could
some of them are still in the hospital now
after that I didn't know what happened to me
This gas – you can't extinguish the canisters with water or a blanket
Or anything

46:55

--they brought me to Nasser hospital
I don't know who was with me
Someone was talking but I didn't know what he was saying
And then I woke up in the European hospital
After that I was released and went back home
Then I got the spasms at home

47:21

I went to Nasser hospital
And spent a day there
Then I came here

--Why?

Because some people are going home and then coming back to the hospital with symptoms

47:36

So I said let me come here
That guy over there – he was treated and went home – then he started going through the stuff again and they brought him back here.

--what are the symptoms?

47:47

Headache

It's hard to breathe, chest constricted,

47:49

and you lose control of what you're doing
you space out (enter a different world)
you forget yourself

48:00

Burning

You feel all kinds of things in your chest

Burning

48:08

Hard to breathe

Stomach pains

Your head gets heavy

48:18

yeah – the gas is sweet smelling

I mean, the gas doesn't make you want to run away

Or think it might be bad for you

You feel as if they are spraying a smoke in the air

48:38

and that's it – here were are

48:56

There's no help solving this problem

49:00

Aseval – all of these antibiotics

We'll become addicted to Aseval

If we get cured from the gas, we'll get addicted to the Aseval

Why are they giving it to us?

49:15
Sending out samples – this isn't going to solve anything
It won't bring us the treatment we need
What we need is for individuals to travel abroad
And get treatment
49:29
they're just going to throw the samples in the garbage

.....

Tape GD11

00:00:00:00

01:14:50:00 – Nasser hospital gas patient (bearded) – with skin blotches – interview

01:15:25
We were sitting in our house
There was shooting
We fled our homes
The house where we were was hit
We saw a fire, and we tried to put it out
15:41
First we saw white smoke
Then yellow smoke and other colors
There was the smell of mint
When you breathe it in you don't feel pain
It feels good
After 45 minutes you start feeling like you can't breathe
16:00
The gas hit four of my brothers
and other people also –
16:04
and they will start feeling the same symptoms today
And there are other guys who came yesterday
And they had the same symptoms (rashes) on their backs and legs
16:12:20
you feel like you are losing consciousness
16:19:07
And you can also feel spasms in the muscles
16:27
they gave me injections of sedatives
16:35
We were sitting at home
And there was shooting
We fled the house
they were shooting gas canisters at us
And the whole area became black
16:55:17
The house was hit
We thought it was a fire – we tried to put it out

But it wasn't a fire
At first there was white smoke – then many other colors
Like a rainbow
17:08:08
And the smell was good
You want to breathe more
You feel good when you inhale it
17:17:03 (end)
then, after 45 minutes you have difficulty breathing
And you feel a burning sensation in your stomach
And you want to scratch your body
17:24
You feel hot
A constricting sensation
They give us injections to calm us but then after one hour the symptoms return.
01:17:42:28 (end)

I stayed a few days in intensive care
I was unconscious for three days
17:48:15
I had a pain in my head
And then these blotches started appearing
And my legs felt limp
I felt dizzy and I couldn't walk, I fell down
Somebody always has to be with me
18:07

I've been here for 12 days

--Do you still have the same symptoms?

18:15:12
I feel dizzy and I have headaches
And when I have the headache I don't want to see any light
I want to cover my face
Until I cool off
18:26:14
Other people are also having the same blotches...
Yesterday night a guy came in and told me that he and his brother had the same
symptoms
On his back – his brother had it on his legs
(points to a dark brown blotch on his stomach) like this one but much bigger and in
a circle
18:41:16 (end)
I have one here and another guy has one on his back
The doctor told me not to scratch at the blotches
And he told me that if I scratch it it'll get bigger and bigger
I don't touch it – they give me injections to calm me down.
18:57 (end)

.....
Tape GD13
GAS PATIENTS

00:00:00:00

00:36:00:00

Leila's father interview – mid 30s – al Bahar street, Tufa neighborhood, Khan Younis refugee camp, early March.

36:53

I was standing on the main street

About 25 meters from the house

There was shooting and the sound of bombing

I looked up and I saw black smoke coming out of the house

37:13

I thought there was a fire – I was surprised that there was no fire

37:20

there was a canister with black smoke coming out of it

37:24

I smelled something like mint

And I felt a burning in my chest and nose

37:37

after 5 minutes I started to feel dizzy

I thought it could be fatigue / exhaustion – it was the first time I saw a gas like this

37:50 – before this I had smelled teargas – everyone knew that you just had smell

some cologne and then you were okay again – we never got dizzy, we just had irritation to our nose and eyes, but nothing serious

38:09

So I thought it was just exhaustion – I felt myself collapsing on the floor , so I sat on the ground and I felt a spasm moving through my body.

38:22 – I went out and saw my brother and said that I didn't feel well – so he took me home.

38:29 – afterwards at home I had a convulsion and lost consciousness and woke up in Nasser Hospital – Khan Younis

38:42

this repeated itself about every four hours for 4 days

38:56

I'll be sitting and I start to feel something in my heart, a tightness in my chest

39:09 I have a spasm all through my body and then I lose consciousness

It would go on for 15 minutes half and hour –

And I was screaming from the pain in my chest, It was hard to breathe

(end 39:41:20)

39:42 – after 4 days my body started to feel different, the convulsions started getting less

39:54 – my body started to feel different, after 3 days I started to get these spots on my body – after the third day. (40:21—end)

.....
Interview with Ibrahim, age 14, Leila's uncle



01:09:44

The kids said “The house is burning.”

01:09:49

I went inside the house and I couldn’t get out, I stayed inside

10:00

when I was inside all this smoke and gas came at me – I felt suffocated

10:17

After 10 minutes my chest started aching

I had stomach cramps

And my head started hurting

And I felt like my entire body was going limp

My legs felt weak so I lay down

My uncle came and asked me ‘what’s the matter?’

I said I feel terrible

I can’t breathe

He started fanning me

And I felt terrible

I tried to stand up so that he could take me to the hospital but I couldn’t – I fell down

They carried me out to the car and we drove to the hospital

In the hospital I lost consciousness

After a few hours I woke up in the hospital and I didn’t know what had happened

11:12

I get these conditions:

My whole body will start shivering and shaking

They ask me “what’s the matter “?”

But I don’t know – my whole body is shaking and I can’t stop it

They would give me sedatives and they would fan me because my chest was constricted – and even now I feel a swelling in my chest because of breathing the gas. (end 11:41)

.....



01:24:00:00 – interview with black-veiled woman and her children in her home, Tufa neighborhood – Khan Younis refugee camp, February.

There was an exchange of fire – all my kids went out to have a look.
And they went to help in a house that caught fire up the street
The younger kids came back inside
There was an exchange of gunfire and we were watching from the window that
faces the tall building
What happened was a canister landed in our courtyard -- and smoke was coming
out of it –
I closed the door to the room where we were
And smoke came in from underneath the door and the room filled up with poisonous
gas
So me and my children started calling for help
I was shouting “help me! help me!”
After that I couldn’t shout at all – I couldn’t make a sound
The people tried to come into the window – but they were unable to break the bars
They kept trying to extinguish the gas canister, but they couldn’t because of the
smoke – they would come close and then retreat after 10 minutes I couldn’t even see
my children through the black gas
26:00
nobody could save us.
Finally they put out the gas canister
We were suffocating – we couldn’t make any sounds – I didn’t even know if my
children were alive or dead because of all the black smoke.



26:30

They came and took us by ambulance to Nasser Hospital and Amal hospitals where they treated us with oxygen and we stayed there for 3 days – because of the convulsions that happened to my children and I.

27:00 I would shake – I was having convulsions –and I couldn't speak – my children also couldn't speak – we had headaches and felt constricted and we were shaking.(end 27:20)

.....

02:27:00:00 – Interview with two gas patient girls – sisters --together, upstairs on roof with laundry in background (one in black veil, one in striped shirt):

02:28:38:00 – black veil girl speaks:



28:39

We were here – they were shooting and throwing gas

My mother was down below and I was sitting here

My sisters and I were sitting here

They were throwing gas, and we didn't think it was poisonous

We thought it was smoke

I started getting stomach cramps and headaches – and I couldn't move my arm – it was stiff

I was wondering what was happening to me – and then I saw my sister – she had stomach cramps as well

29:16

We started screaming – and the next thing I knew we were in the hospital

I said "How did we get here?"

I said "Where's my father – they said he was helping the injured

---What were the symptoms?

29:42

I would get headaches

And my legs would seize up – and I would feel pain in all of my body

And my chest would become constricted

28:57

And I feel like I want to tear myself apart

30:00

And I couldn't sleep – I could barely walk – they're giving me homeopathy treatment now

30:10

I'm 16 years old

--What color was the gas?

30:13

First of all the smoke was white, then yellow, then black
Its taste was like sugar – the smell was sweet
It was not unpleasant to smell



02:30:30:00 – younger sister interview

30:34

I was sitting here – they started shooting and my leg seized up
And I got a headache – I started throwing up and getting a burning sensation – the
next thing I knew I was in the hospital
My head and stomach were aching

--How did you feel?

31:14

My stomach was hurting, my head – I got stomach cramps – and my leg used to
cramp up

--How long did you stay in the hospital?

Five days.

--How old are you?

11 years old

31:40

I don't remember much about the hospital

--Do you have any other symptoms – spots?

Where it used to hurt, now I have spots



02:39:04:00

Veiled girl – 23 years old -- interview on pink and white striped hanging laundry (on roof)

39:22

I was at home – I heard a disturbance outside the home – I went outside and they said there's a fire

I saw a black cloud of smoke

I saw people running away

I saw the smoke – I didn't feel anything at the time

I went back home and sat down

After about 15 minutes I started throwing up

They gave me milk and I threw it up

40:00

The next morning I went to Nasser Hospital

They told me that the people who had inhaled the gas had to stay in the hospital

I went on the 13th and stayed 'til the 17th

40:16

I would get stomach cramps and headaches

And if I stood up I would fall to the ground

I would faint – I could barely get out of bed – even today I still feel a tightness in my chest, and a cough

I have a temperature

I feel dizzy if I stand up

And I throw up

41:03

I feel burning in my chest, as if somebody is scratching with their nails in my chest

It was very painful in my chest, and I would get stomach cramps
And whenever I screamed they would give me sedatives
(end – 41:33)

.....

Tape GD14

GAS PATIENTS CONTINUED

00:00:00:00

Interview with man in green interior garden, Tufa neighborhood, Khan Younis (with arm in sling)



On February 12th we were in the refugee camp with guys – and somebody said there was a fire in the camp – so we headed over to put it out
When we got there – we were surprised that it wasn't a fire – but a thick smoke of several colors

The most important thing was to save the children

One of the guys said this is not a fire – this smoke is poison

So we left the area

I was going to the hospital to see a friend who was hit by shrapnel

After about 10 minutes after arriving at the hospital I collapsed

I don't remember what happened – but the guys told me I got seizures – and I got a burning sensation in my chest, which is still there.

The people who were with me say that I smashed the windows of the hospital room
01:47

The treatment in the hospital was sedatives

Because what we felt was headaches

My muscles felt weak

All they gave us was sedatives – nothing more

02:00

There's no cure – and now they've taken samples – so far there's no cure –and we call on those in the Palestinian Authority to take action – look into our case, because it is a serious case

I've been hit by shrapnel and live ammunition several times – and in a few days I was fine – but this gas is not so easy – you can't underestimate it – nobody knows what the long-term effects will be

Some people say it will make you infertile

03:04

Some people including myself have continuous headaches –severe headaches – burning sensations, burning in the chest, in the joints – sometime I can hardly sleep at night

I go the hospital and they give me injections – and nothing more.

(end – 03:32)

--tell us about your arm

As for my arm – when I was in one of the convulsions in the hospital – the guys told me I was fine, and then suddenly I became hysterical – it was as if my chest caught on fire

I started getting headaches and seizures I made a motion like this (gestures)

There was a window behind me in the hospital room – hit the glass and then later when I was going to see the doctor I fell on my arm in the same spot – and I still have the glass shards in my arm

(end 04:19)



00:06:30:00 interview with sling-man's brother (gives name) on eagle background , same location, Khan Younis refugee camp

I was going to the Mosque to pray on Sunday evening prayers

Then near the mosque...

07:04

The guys said there's a house fire – and we headed over to the house near the mosque – there was thick black smoke coming out –
They said there were several injuries – they said there were some guys who were injured from this gas

And ten-fifteen minutes later I got severe stomach cramps

I felt that my stomach was being torn apart

And a burning sensation in my chest.

I couldn't breathe

People said –we'll bring you an ambulance

I said “no it's nothing”

I stood for a while and then I fell to the ground

I couldn't control my legs

I couldn't stand up

(08:06)

They brought me an ambulance and took me to Nasser hospital – they gave me milk
But I threw most of it up

They tell me

08:18

I was unconscious until Monday morning – I woke up and they told me I was in the hospital.

For about 12 hours they were giving me sedatives – they told me that I had been hysterical

I didn't remember anything but I felt I couldn't breathe – they gave me oxygen -- I got stomach cramps.

08:47

They told me that I was in a condition of madness, that I was thrashing around, smashing around – but I wasn't aware of anything

09:03 –

They gave me sedatives – a few hours later the same thing happened again – stomach cramps, difficulty breathing – and an inability to stand up

And the guys with me held me down – the same thing happened many times

I was in the hospital for a week.

(09:31-32)

13:49

Four days after I left the hospital

13:55

I was at home and I felt fine

So I thought I'd go and have a haircut

I went to the barber

And he finished half my head when I got severe stomach cramps and a burning pain in my chest – I couldn't control myself

So the barber and two guys carried me to the car and drove me to the hospital

I was shaking and in seizures – and they gave me a sedative

I slept for about 4 hours and woke up fine again

The next day I went back and finished the haircut.

.....

02:38:00:00

Mohammed Sultan, 18, interview – after release from hospital in March, at home in his family garden, near Amal Hospital, Tufa neighborhood, Khan Younis refugee camp.



02:38:35

I was praying in the Upper Mosque.

After I finished praying the sheik said let's go up into Tufa

38:54

I went with a bunch of guys. we went and they (the IDF) started shooting at us
After they started shooting we found a depression in the sand and we threw ourselves into it

39:06

they started throwing white gas, and then they threw black gas – they threw a gas bomb and it went off

39:16

the guys said – what is this what is this – this is nothing

39:20

we didn't smell anything –there was no smell to it

39:27

then they threw a gas bomb – the jeep left and the gas bomb didn't explode

39:31

I went in before the jeep came back and I put the gas bomb in my pocket

39:39

I started fighting with my friend over who got to keep the gas bomb

39:44

and then they started shooting at us again so we fled to the road

39:47

We went to a hole in the asphalt and threw ourselves into it.

39:50

I tried to open the gas bomb so that I could throw it back at the Israelis
39:56
So I opened it and nothing happened – and then it started to blow in our faces
40:00
Some of the guys fled and some stayed
40:03
It didn't seem to have any smell and then it smelled like Mint – you smell mint
40:10
I got it the worst.
40:16
I got a little bit dizzy and I went to my mother and said “I breathed gas”
40:20
“and I feel bad, my head hurts”
40:22
I went home and after that I don't know what happened after that.

---what did you feel at the beginning?

40:35 – my head
40:36 – I felt in my head, my head – I felt like my head was going to explode
40:41
Then it started moving into my body, my hands
40:45
then I started scratching – it felt like something was moving in my body
40:49
I was trying to scratch it out
40:52
No matter how much I scratched at it I couldn't get any relief
40:56
It goes up into my head and I try to scratch it out
41:15
My brother, Fahd, said that I had lost consciousness and he took me to the hospital
and that I was in a terrible state
41:22 “it took 13 people to hold you down – and even they were unable to”
so they gave me a shot
41:31 and then I knew nothing

---when was the first time you awoke?

41:38
I was asking how I got there, who brought me there
41:42
my brother Fahd said “we brought you and you started screaming and you were
scratching yourself”
41:51
After I came out of intensive care the pain came back again and I started scratching
my face and my body
And the pain started moving around with my blood
42:00
Every short while the pain came back and they would give me an injection
But it was useless
42:-05

I try to scratch apart my body and everything
43:51

It starts in my head, and I scratch at my head and my face It starts in my head – and
headache that builds up more and more pressure and then Moves down into my
body And so I start trying to scratch it out and they try to hold me down But I can't
stop scratching I want to scratch the entire world to pieces

44:08

When it moves to my face I want to scratch it out my face and then the same all over
my body

44:15

They give me a sedative and then 5 minutes later it's as if they hadn't given me
anything

44:25

The pain comes back and I start trying to scratch the pain out of my body again.
Every 5 minutes.

45:21

When I first had the canister the black smoke came out and the guys said "what is
this – it has no smell."

45:28

"it doesn't smell at all"

45:30

then after a while it had the smell of mint. Mint, mint, mint.

45:34

and the guys said "it's harmless – this gas is nothing"

45:37

We thought it was like the first gas that makes your eyes water

45:47

and so we started shouting to the Jews: "throw more! Throw more!"

So they started throwing more canisters.

And then the jeep left and I had the canister in my pocket and I started playing with
it – the guys were around – and it started spurting more and more smoke into my
face –

I got up and went home and lost consciousness.

46:40

It eats me like ants and I try to scratch it out – and they gave me all those injections
for nothing – I scratch and scratch and the pain never goes away.

46:59

It crawls in my body like ants ... but the worst thing was the headache.

48:56

I come and go – if I sit in the sun for a while I start to get a headache and I feel
pressure building up. I feel weak and tired and my bones ache

49:10

I ate yesterday and threw it up and I haven't eaten anything since then.

49:16

As much as I try to forget and the guys make me laugh – it's useless – I keep on
getting these headaches. As much as I try to control it – I still keep on getting these
headaches.

50:47 – the gas is not natural, it's not normal – in the last Intifada they never had anything like it – it's some kind of new gas. In the last Intifada as much as they used gas on us – they never used a gas like this. (end 51:08)

.....

INTERVIEWS with ambulance drivers, Nasser Hospital, Khan Younis.

02:13:30:00 – interview with ambulance driver regarding gas (older guy, moustache)



--Describe the symptoms

The first patient I brought in
I found him

17:00

Jumping up and down and the doctor and medics trying to hold him down

17:04

He was straining against them as if he wanted to tear himself apart

17:06:18

Jumping up and down, left and right

Then the second patient

17:13

Also a gas patient

17:17

He was thrashing his limbs around – because this is poison gas
(17:22:00)

--You didn't take any gas patients (after that)?

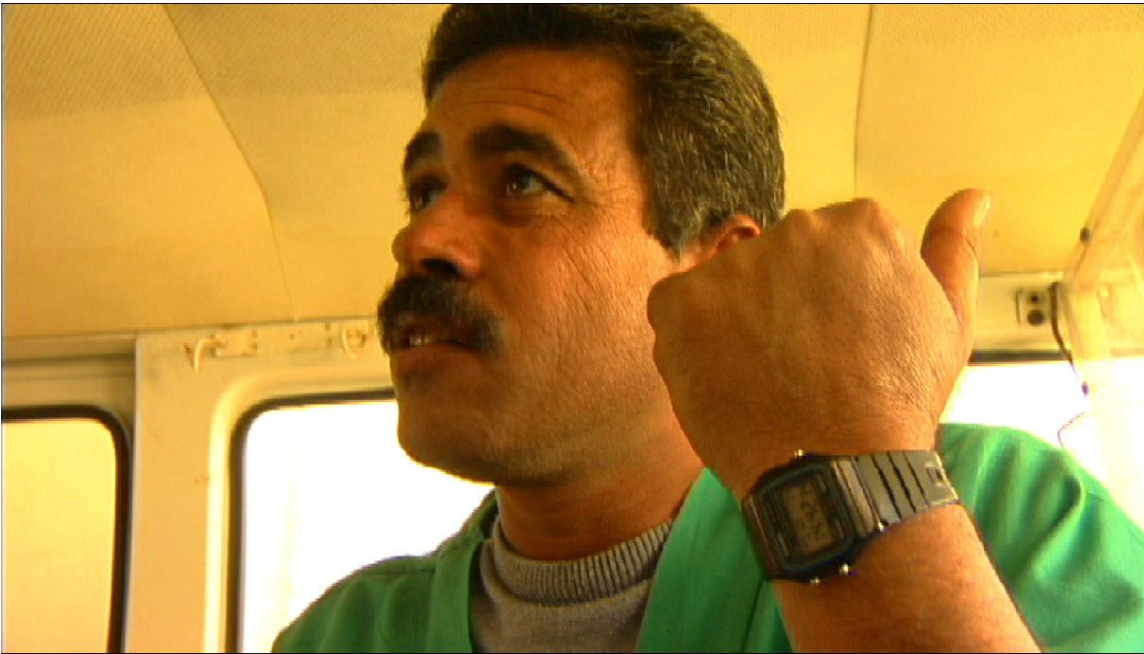
Yes, I carried two.

--Describe how you carried them – where were they?

17:30
of course
There are medics there, and I stay in the car.
17:36
They come in and tell you “drive”
And so we go
17:40
And I can hear them saying “Oh, my stomach, oh my head!”
17:44
“Let me be! I’m suffocating!”
17:47
Like they’re becoming hysterical.
17:50
I brought in two patients from the Tufa roadblock area.
17:54
I was hit (by a M16 bullet) when I was carrying the second patient.
17:58
Did you see the how the gas looked?
18:03
I saw three shells hitting the asphalt.
Near the ambulance
18:08
and my ambulance was hit by shrapnel, damaging it.
18:14
And then after they hit – these 3 bombs –
One near the other – and
We fled
18:20
18:23
and then there were shells that hit the tall building.

--Describe the gas.

18:31
It was black – like in a cloud
18:37
in a cloud
It was coming the West.
From the Sea
18:45
The gas they were firing was coming from the West, from the sea.
18:55



Ambulance driver in Green, same location

02:22:52

--Describe the gas patients in detail.

I'm an ambulance driver, working for the ministry of health

We drive to all the places where the conflict is taking place with the Israelis

23:07

At the Tufa barricade

We were surprised by a very serious gas

23:15

A gas we've never seen before.

23:21

This gas was a dark smoke

23:26

Without an odor, without anything

We took all the gas patients to the hospital

23:35

We spent 4 hours transporting the casualties from that gas incident.

23:42

After all of that I felt, as an ambulance driver, a looseness in my muscles.

23:52

it was something I've not experienced before.

24:01

--Describe the casualties.

There was one case when a gas canister

Hit a house where there was a woman and her children

24:24

She was yelling for the guys to come and help her – we broke the windows

24:29
and the asbestos roof so we could get inside.
24:35
So we got the woman and the children
Some of them were completely unconscious
24:40
With convulsions, with a kind of hysteria
They were all shaking
24:49
In the main street (Tufa barricade)
There was a guy on a donkey cart
Not part of the fighting at all
25:01
The poor guy was injured from the gas canister that they fired at the mosque
25:12
it had only been two minutes since the people had finished their prayers and left the mosque
25:25
When 2 gas canisters were fired at the entrance to the mosque
25:29
and the donkey cart was just passing by there, and the driver was injured and I
jumped out and carried him to the ambulance and took him to the hospital.
25:41
We had no idea that this gas would affect the nerves in this way
25:48
It was only after we had moved the people back to the hospital that we saw
That the gas patients were affected by convulsions and breathing troubles
26:02
If they had knives they would have cut themselves open, because they didn't know
what they were doing
26:06
They would have cut themselves open just to let the gas out.
26:12
At that time, the doctors had no idea how to treat these patients
26:18:23
They would give the patients tranquilizers so they would calm down
And they
Would leave the hospital for a day
26:25
and they would come back
26:27
With the same symptoms
26:32

----Could you describe the gas?

26:34
what I saw was a long gas canister
with like fins on the end
and like a tube for a body
26:48
It goes up high

And then comes straight down
26:52
Just like a flare would
When it comes down the gas explodes and billows out
27:02
the gas is dark
27:04
not like the usual teargas
27:10
it doesn't make you tear up
or irritate your mucus membranes
27:16
And it has a sweet taste
27:18
a good taste
27:23
The effect is that the patient starts to scratch himself
And thrash around
27:31
and have muscular spasms
37:35
starts to rub his chest
so that 3- 4 men couldn't hold him down
27:42
I had patients where 2 or 3 people were with him and the patient was bouncing up to
the roof of the ambulance and back down.
All from the gas
27:53
The medics would try to hold him down, but it was impossible.
27:58
We were taken by surprise – for 3 days at the Tufa barricade there was this gas –
very difficult to deal with the casualties
28:08
but we had no choice – we're ambulance drivers.
28:19
So whatever the casualty was, we just had to deal with it
We had oxygen in the ambulance but it didn't help
28:30
it didn't do anything to calm them down
28:38

-----Do you remember when the gas was used?

28:41
I might not remember the exact dates,
But I was dealing with the gas patients for 3 days
28:52
I worked for 3 consecutive days with our ambulances and with the Red Crescent
ambulances
29:08
most of the casualties were gas patients, and live ammunition
29:14

Rubber bullets? Lately they haven't been using rubber bullets at all.

29:19

either live ammunition or this nerve-irritant gas

29:26

It started after the afternoon prayers and went on continuously until midnight.

29:34

31:19

the several days I worked with the gas patients at Tufa barricade...

I've worked at Netzarim,

I've worked at many flash-points

I've worked at Karni Crossing, Netzarim

There were live ammunition casualties where I'd be carrying the patient with half his head blown off

31:36

And I wouldn't be shaking

31:38

I'd carry him to the ambulance and take him to Shiva Hospital

But the 2-3 days I spent at the Tufa Barricade

With this gas

31:50

Over the whole five months I've never seen anything –even for a day or an hour – anything like the gas at Tufa.

32:01

A guy would be passing by and would go into shaking and spasms from the gas.

32:11

If they had anything in their hand – a woman carrying her child might throw him down without realizing it.

32:16

She'd just drop him and start clawing at herself from the gas.

I worked for 5 months

32:27

Now I've been working for 5 months during the events of the Al Aqsa (Intifada)

32:32

But they never passed like the three days of the gas attacks at Tufa.



02:39:00:00 – interview with white-haired ambulance driver (Yousef Ayesh Srur)

02:39:18

I've been an ambulance driver since 1970

39:20

Of course, I worked through the whole first Intifada

39:25

And through the current Intifada

39:28

--What happened the day of the 12th?

39:35

You mean the last events at Tufa?

39:38

Of course, I left here for ambulance duty with all of the bombardment, all the shelling

39:44

We assisted the people affected by the gas

I never saw anything like this gas in all the 30 years I've worked as an ambulance driver.

02:39:56:27

The convulsions were just unnatural

40:01

and by the time I got back to the hospital I was nearly a patient myself.

40:07

The patients were in spasms, terrified

40:14

Something ... unnatural

40:18

nobody could hold them down, put them under control

40:21
and get them to the stretcher
40:22:23
Except by getting them in a shoulder hold.
And with great difficulty
40:28
40:31
it was black.
It was black
It was black in color and the odor doesn't hit you right off, but after a while you feel
the effects.
40:48

01:14:00:00 – Interview in Amal hospital with doctor in metal-rim glasses in ICU Dr. Salakh Shami



01:15:22
The Amal Hospital received about 130 patients suffering from gas inhalation
From Feb. 12, 2001
About 100 of the patients went to (the Dept. of Internal Medicine?)
And some went to the intensive care unit
15:56 – end
15:57
As for their symptoms
They varied from patient to patient
There was one group of patients suffering from hysteria
16:16
And others were suffering convulsions

Another large group was suffering from difficulty breathing and a burning pain in their eyes and chests

16:33

There were also patients suffering from stomach pains and severe headaches

16:41

We treated the patients with the medicines we had available

Some patients stayed in the hospital for a couple days, some stayed for a week and others for 10 days (end 17:02)

03:01:00:00 – woman in street with children, Tufa neighborhood, Khan Younis refugee camp, April 2001.



01:04

We were sitting in the house – me and the little ones – I was preparing a meal

A gas canister hit the house and landed just outside the window of the house

The guys came and said – take the little ones and run

I left the house open and ran with the children to my parents home

My daughter was coming from the school

She thought I was inside the house

She went in and inhaled the gas – then joined me at my parents house – she was unable to breathe and she collapsed

And the guys came and took her to the hospital

(end – 02:03)

--Are the spots on you baby's face from the gas?

02:06

all of it is from the gas

02:09

He didn't have anything on his face before

02:19

He's started wheezing when he breathes

And his chest aches

His chest never bothered him before

02:42 (girl – Abir Radi Abu Zarqa – 14 years old)

I thought everything was okay

Some guys were standing around in the street

So I went into the house

After I went into my house there was lots of smoke

I went outside, to my grandmother's house

I could barely breathe

And after that I knew nothing

Tape GD19

00:00:00:00

Gas interview – girl with family at home in Tufa neighborhood, Khan Younis refugee camp
– (Her home was subsequently bulldozed the night of April 10-11, 2001 – note)



00:26

We heard something fall into the courtyard

I went outside to have a look – and this entire area was full of black smoke

The phone rang – I couldn't reach it – it rang and rang

I got to the phone – it was my mother

I said "the house is full of gas – I can't talk"

I left the receiver off the hook and went back inside the house (end 00:48)
My brother banged on the door and said “quickly quickly – get out”
I said “wait I need to dress”
He said “just leave now”
I got my cloak and my veil – and I breathed some of the smoke
I felt dizzy
I reached the house behind my grandmother’s home
I felt a bit dizzy
I went into a house and collapsed
They took me to Amal Hospital in an ambulance
(end – 01:25:10)

(girl’s mother)
03:51



Twice after she left hospital we had to take her back.
Once she was at school and the teachers took her to the hospital – they called me
and told me that my daughter was in a coma .

This was a week after she had been discharged from the hospital (the first time) (end
04:06:01)

07:36 (mother)

When I went to the hospital I was standing next to her, holding her
She would tell people “I want my mother!” and I was right there with her.
They would say to her “Here is your mother.”
And she said ‘No – this is not my mother’
She would speak gibberish, nonsense
It was like you weren’t speaking to a normal person
It was me and her aunts and her grandmother holding her down – and we couldn’t.
(08:04)

11:32 (mother – continued)

The Israelis say it’s teargas – but it’s not teargas

In the first Intifada we inhaled lots of teargas,
But it was nothing like this.
At the start of this Intifada they fired a lot of teargas – but this isn't teargas.
This gas we've never seen before.
This is a black smoke and it has no odor.
It has no odor at first – then you get the symptoms that the patients have been
suffering from.
(end 11:56)
11:57
We want an antidote to this gas, so we can treat the people
Not just any old medicine,
(end 12:05)
This is what we want. (end 12:08)

00:27:00:00

Gas patient interview – Tufa – early April.

01:00:00:00

Second girl gas interview (Natasha + sister)



01:02:14

I was going home from school – and there was a lot of shooting back and forth
Then they fired gas
I reached the house and I collapsed at the door
My aunt came and took me inside and then to the hospital
At the hospital I had a lot of stomach cramps
The doctors came and took me upstairs and admitted me (end 02:43:17)



01:14:00:00

01:14:35

On the evening of the 12th

Within the space of an hour, about 50 gas inhalation cases arrived at Nasser Hospital

Their symptoms were as follows:

Severe excretions of fluids

Extreme difficulty in breathing

Recurrent convulsions

The patients didn't respond to treatments which were used in the past with teargas

15:31

This is the summary:

The hospital admitted more than 25–30 patients

We started treating them and their symptoms were recurring

The patients didn't respond to the normal treatment used in the past

Which led us to consult with the Ministry of Health to find out whether a new gas was being used.

16:07

This took time, so we treated the patients with an intensified regime of our normal treatment for teargas

Which consisted of oxygen, cortisone and steroids

And medication ease breathing

And anti-convulsant drugs

And the conditions started improving, but most people continued to complain of recurring symptoms – strange aches in the joints

Various Blotches on the skin

Chest pains, continuous headaches

Despite the fact that the routine blood tests showed nothing unusual

We still have 10 cases who we would like to send abroad for treatment (6 weeks later -- note)

(17:20)

The numbers in which the patients came to the hospital were frightening
The were from all ages; it affected the old and young
The impression was that this was a gas attack on civilians – most of the gas canisters
fell on peoples' homes.

18:04

This was a terrible feeling.

18:09

20:23

In what followed the cases of convulsions continued with many of the patients – and
cases of hysteria

And psychological complications as well – the patients were afraid of the next onset
of their attacks, and so even as they were suffering from their symptoms they also
feared the next onset

(end – 20:51)

20:52

Even now we still have patients suffering from recurrences of their original
symptoms: headaches, chest pains, aches in the knees, fatigue, blotches on the skin
that had not been their before

They vary in age from 60 to 15 years old. (end: 21:17)

02:16:00:00

Interview with Mohammed Sultan's cousin (also Mohammed, age 15) about his seeing
Mohammed Sultan in intensive care following the gas attack -- M. Sultan is present, with his
younger brother, in Haisam Sultan's ward in Amal Hospital – 02:17:15:00



02:17:18:00

We were just sitting

We heard that Mohammed joined a demonstration at a checkpoint

They (the IDF) fired gas canisters to break up the demonstration

He breathed some of the gas
17:24
He went to his mother and she sent him to the doctor
And she told the doctor what happened
17:48
When he went to the doctor, he told him that he was itching and had a bad headache
The doctor sent him home
But he kept having the symptoms
17:54
He told his mother that he is having a headache and itching
And then he started getting violent, hitting himself, his face
17:55
Then his father and his cousins came and took him to the hospital
17:58
in the ambulance he was hitting everything and everybody.
18:04
They took him to the ICU and gave him injections.
They gave him injections to calm him down
But every two hours he would wake up and have the same thing
18:13
After the effect of the injection wears off he starts breaking everything and hitting
everyone
18:18
anyone who comes near him – he strikes out at them
18:25
18:30
They took him to intensive care and he stayed there for 5 days
18:37
They kept giving him injection after injection – but the drugs wore off in a couple
hours and the symptoms continued.
18:47
After he left ICU they kept giving him injections but they would ware off
18:50
Doctors said that there is no cure for his case
He can become addicted to the injections
19:00
He was discharged and went home
But he kept on having the symptoms over and over
19:11
After we heard about it we were very frightened
19:28
When Shadi and I visited him in the ICU, he looked dead
19:39
I was so shocked I couldn't even look at him.
19:46
After he left and went back home, he didn't improve at all.
20:04
20:16
He was discharged and went back home
He kept having the symptoms every other hour
He gets violent
Hits himself, his mother, everyone

20:23

He breaks things in the kitchen – dishes, kitchen supplies

20:26

And he hits himself, scratches himself so badly

20:32

Then we took him back to the hospital

20:35

His case has no cure.

Unless they send some medication from abroad.

20:42

02:22:30:00