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Length of interview: 2 minutes 4 seconds

Name of Interviewer: De Wet Potgieter

Name of interviewee/s: Inspector Joppie van Staden

Name of translator (if any): De Wet Potgieter

Name of transcriber:

Notes on access and use (if any):

Audio file name/s of interview: AL3283_PTA_VANSTADENJOPPIE_20091208_1

De Wet	<p>It is Tuesday, 8 December 2009, Pretoria, and I am sitting here with Inspector Joppie van Staden, retired policeman. From his student days in the police, he was firstly attached to the riot squad, stationed at Unit 19 and thereafter promoted to an inspector with the bomb disposal unit.</p> <p>Now, Joppie, I would like to talk to you about the days at the riot squad, Unit 19, it were difficult days in the eighties when the ANC regularly staged riots and upheavals and so on, you guys were the sharp edge of the police to quell these unrest. Tell us under what circumstances these culprits were treated. Those were tough days. Over to you.</p>
Joppie	<p>In 1987, I was during that first semester in the police college, did a course in riot control and while we were still merely students under training, we were posted out to Johannesburg during the time that people were burning trains.</p> <p>We were in Johannesburg for two months and based at the old John Vorster Square and were working most of the times shifts in Soweto, searched suspects and we knew it all were part of an ANC strategy. We showed no mercy to the people setting trains alight. When we caught them we shot them to death or tortured them half dead.</p>

	<p>From there on I finished my training at the college and was transferred to Unit 19.</p> <p>Unit 19 was, look every region had its own riot unit. Johannesburg, Pretoria, each one had its own Unit 19. Unit 19 was known as the brave thousand.</p> <p>We were part of police headquarters, but we could deploy to any place in the country within hours.</p> <p>During 1987 we were deployed to Bosbokrant when riot broke out there and we were in the area within a matter of a few hours.</p> <p>The next one which was also quite fun was when we deployed towards the end of 1988 in Pinetown. It was in a black township, Shongweni. We camped right in the middle of the township. It was the UDM against the ANC. The UDM was friendly towards us and supplied us with information.</p> <p>We mostly hunted down the ANC blokes and then we had ways and means to make them talk. From a tube to electricity. We had no shock machines. They were kept in dog kennels, fed dog biscuits and everything...</p> <p>One day they attacked our base camp and we shot four... no five of them. Afterwards we had a peaceful time, but we did follow-up operations continually. There were no more attacks on our base.</p> <p>The riots basically still carried on until the end of 1989.</p>
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