

TEACHERS' NOTES

CURRICULUM LINKS:

KS3: 1.1b, 1.1c, 1.3b, 2.1a, 2.1b, 2.2c, 2.2d, 3a, 3b, 4a, 4i

KS4: 1.1b, 1.1c, 1.3b, 2.1a, 2.1b, 2.2c, 3a, 3b, 4a, 4i

DESCRIPTION:

Document 1

This leaflet was produced by the Steering Committee of Asian Organisations Against Racism, an *ad hoc* group started in East London at the end of the 1970s. It was designed to bring attention to the case of the Virk brothers, four siblings from an Indian (Sikh) family, who were sent to prison for defending themselves against a violent attack by white racists. The Virk brothers were fixing their car outside their home in east London when they were attacked by a gang of five white youths. They defended themselves with the tools they were using to fix the car and called the police. But when the police arrived they arrested the brothers, not their attackers, and charged them with grievous bodily harm. In court the judge did not allow any discussion of the racial context of the incident and the brothers received custodial sentences of between 3 months and 7 years. The document contends that 'at stake [is] the right of Asian people to defend themselves' and suggests ways for making the criminal justice system more fair.

FURTHER READING:

Homebeats: struggles for racial justice CDROM (Institute of Race Relations, 1997)

A. Sivanandan, *From Resistance to Rebellion: Asian and Afro-Caribbean struggles in Britain* (Institute of Race Relations, 1986)