ıpporters of Mark Curtis

would you feel if this was happening to your daughter?

In order to maintain the claim that Curtis is the victim of a frameup, Curtis and his party had to deal with one big problem: how to explain how Curtis ended up inside my house on the night of March 4, 1988. They came up with a cock and bull story, which not even a little child would believe, about a mysterious woman who approached Curtis while his car was stopped at a red light, persuaded him to drive her to my address, brought him inside my house, and then disappeared. This story has so many holes in it that Curtis's own lawyer admitted that it was "very unlikely." How did this mystery woman get a key to my house? Where did she disappear to, since my back door is closed off due to remodeling, and you can only leave by the front door?

In the course of the trial, the evidence emerged which explained what really brought Curtis to my house on that terrible night of March 4, 1988. One day before the attack, a man named Keith Morrison, a reputed drug dealer, and his girl friend Bonita Brown, moved from their house across the street from Mark Curtis to a house at 1545 17th Street, three doors from mine. When Curtis knocked on my door on March 4 and asked for Keith or Bonita and 1545 17th Street, it appears that he was looking for this drug dealer at his new address and came to my house by mistake. Unfortunately, my daughter opened the door and became the victim of his attack.

At the trial, Curtis denied ever meeting Keith Morrison, and then claimed that members of the Socialist Workers Party are not allowed to use drugs. But Bonita Brown testified that Mark Curtis had spoken to Keith Morrison on several occasions.

This not only provides independent confirmation of the truth of Demetria's story, but it also exposes what kind of a man Mark Curtis is. I cannot believe that you are willing to associate yourself and your organization with a man who is a convicted rapist, a proven liar and probably a drug user.

Certainly if one of your members was arrested in a situation like Mark Curtis, caught in the act in a vicious crime, you would not tolerate his attempt to escape the consequences of his crime by claiming that his arrest, regardless of the facts and evidence against him, was an attack on your organization.

You may have supported Curtis because you believed it was a matter of police frameup and brutality. But you have not been given the true story of this case: besides Curtis and the police, there is my daughter and my family. What about our rights and justice for Demetria? Aside from the requirements of simple human decency, you have a responsibility as a labor leader to consider the fact that this case involves a vicious attack on a working class girl.

By supporting Curtis without knowing the real facts of this case, you are bringing disgrace on yourself and your organization. How will your members feel when the truth finally comes out, and they discover that their good name has been associated with a proven rapist? What will happen when there is a real case of police frameup or violence? Won't this phony case discredit the genuine ones?

Curtis's supporters, and the people who align themselves with Curtis, to me are like jackals. They can only find strength in an unthinking pack. They need this type of association, right or wrong, moral or immoral, to fill a void in their lives.

There is a definite danger here, not just because of what they're doing to my family, but in the total disregard of basic honesty. If you help them succeed in this, there is a question you must ask yourself: what are you willing to do next? Are you so morally weak that you will prostitute yourself and your standards for these people, blindly? If so, you are probably more dangerous than they are. You may find these words to be a little harsh, but it's a very harsh situation.

In closing, my family and I would like to say something about the charges of police frameup and police brutality. I have seen both ends of "law and order." I personally, along with others, fought against the police in the 1960s, and even afterwards, to win greater respect for people's rights, and in my opinion, conditions in Des Moines have improved greatly since then. Curtis and his followers are using the charge of police brutality as a smokescreen, but my family will always be grateful to the two Des Moines policemen who came to our house on March 4, 1988. These officers saved my children. They not only stopped Curtis from continuing his rape of my daughter, they may have saved the lives of Demetria and Jason.

This man lived only eight blocks from my house, and by asking for people who had just moved in on the block, Keith Morrison and Bonita Brown, and a number, 1545 17th Street, he left a trail of evidence leading to people who knew him and could identify him. The question is, could this man have left my children alive under these circumstances, and expected not to get caught? As we saw at the trial, it was their testimony which convinced the jury of Curtis's guilt. It is very likely that if Jason had not had the presence of mind to call 911, and the police had not responded so quickly, my wife and I would have come home to find our children murdered, and Curtis would never have had to answer for his crime.

If you now realize that your endorsement of Curtis was based on insufficient and false information, this letter is an opportunity for you to withdraw your support. Every fact which I have presented to you can be checked against the official court transcripts. At any rate, I would appreciate a reply explaining why you decided to take a stand against my daughter and my family, and what your attitude is now after reading this letter.

Sincerely yours,
Keith Morris

Three of the principal organizers of the Curtis antilabor provocation: defense campaign chief John Gaige, SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes and National Organizational Secretary Craig Gannon

Cross-Burning Attack on Morris Family

DES MOINES, Iowa — A cross was burned Wednesday morning outside the home of Demetria Morris, the black teenage girl who was sexually assaulted by Socialist Workers Party leader Mark Curtis.

The cross was burned into the lawn of the Morris family residence at 1529 17th Street on the north side of Des Moines. Keith Morris, Demetria's father, said he did not see those who set the fire, but he assumed they were connected to Curtis's supporters.

The fire was set in the early morning hours of October 19, the day after Keith Morris distributed to the press and to the leaders of several Des Moines-area unions a five-page letter he has sent out attacking the SWP campaign on behalf of Curtis. The SWP has attempted to portray the rapist Curtis as the victim of a police frame-up.

Asked if he thought that the cross-burning was in response to the issuance of the letter, Morris said, "I don't know. I just doubt very much that a white supremacist group picked out my house on this street. And I know my neighbors didn't do it."

Morris said he was watching television about 2 AM Wednesday when he saw the light outside. He went out, found the fire residue and called police and fire investigators. Morris speculated that the ground had been soaked with a flammable liquid in the daytime while no one was in the house, and then the culprits lit the fire and drove off quickly at night.

The attack was prominently reported in Thursday's issue of the *Des Moines Register*, which published the story on the front page of its Metro News section, under a large photo of Keith Morris standing behind the cross-shaped patch burned into the lawn. The attack and his charge of SWP involvement was also reported prominently on the television news that evening.

The incident has sparked widespread outrage among black and working class people throughout the Des Moines area.

The Socialist Workers Party has created the conditions for this racist attack through its continued assaults on the Morris family and its embracing of the rapist Curtis, who was convicted September 14 after a trial which provided overwhelming evidence of his guilt.

The Mark Curtis Defense Campaign has praised as a hero the white middle-class rapist of a black working class girl. Consequently, it has attracted the support of the most vicious racist elements, KKK scum and other right-wing forces.

The SWP immediately denied any connection with the cross-burning and condemned the attack "if this occurred," thereby hinting that the incident never took place.

Keith Morris told the *Bulletin* that the attack would have no impact on his family's campaign for justice and to expose the fraud of the Mark Curtis Defense Campaign. He said that he had sent out more than 100 letters to trade union officials, civil rights organizations and other activists who have endorsed the Mark Curtis Defense Campaign around the United States and in a number of foreign countries, pointing out the facts of the case and demanding a reply.