JUSTICE FOR MARK CURTIS !

An Injury to One is an Injury to All!

Mark Curtis is a union activist and a socialist who was framed-up and beaten by Des Moines, Iowa police on March 4, 1988. On September 14 he was convicted on trumped-up charges of attempted rape and burglary. He faces a mandatory sentence of 25 or 35 years. He was severely beaten in the city jail by police who called him a "Mexican-lover, just like you love those coloreds," as they broke his cheekbone with a club.

The international campaign for justice for Mark Curtis involves union members, farm activists, students and political activists throughout the United States and in Canada, Britain, New Zealand, Sweden and other countries. International Defense Rallies for Mark brought together 250 people in Des Moines July 3, and over 400 September 4. The police and the County Prosecutor have received thousands of letters, telegrams and petitions protesting the prosecution of Mark Curtis.

Mark Curtis was known at work as a vocal opponent of the offensive by the packing house bosses against the safety, working conditions and pay of the workers. He helped organize solidarity activities with other meatpackers on strike at Hormel in Austin, Minnesota, Ottumwa, Iowa, and Fremont, Nebraska; Morrell in Sioux Falls, South Dakota and Sioux City, Iowa; Cudahy in Cudahy, Wisconsin; IBP in Dakota City, Nebraska; and Swift in Marshalltown, Iowa.

Mark Curtis was arrested after leaving a meeting with other workers from the Swift meat packing plant where he worked. They were protesting an immigration raid three days earlier when one Salvadoran and 16 Mexican immigrant workers were arrested. They were charged with having false Social Security numbers and falsifying employment records. The raid undermined the basis of the immigration amnesty program then in effect. The felony charges against the workers were dropped after protests.

Mark Curtis did not get a fair trial. The court prohibited him from introducing key evidence of:

- the brutal beating by the cops in the city jail;
- the record of lying and brutality by the cop who accused him.
- misconduct by the prosecutor before the trial;
- illegal FBI spy files on him gathered in the investigation of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES).

All this information was kept from the jury.

On the all-white jury of nine women and three men there was only one factory worker who may have been a union member, and no farmers. The one Mexican American chosen for the jury was removed by the judge. Another juror stood in the courthouse with the family of the alleged victim.

Mark Curtis was not convicted by a jury of his peers.

He was presumed guilty from the beginning, despite the overwhelming evidence that he did not commit these crimes. The defense proved:

- Mark Curtis was not present when the alleged victim claimed she was attacked.
- He does not remotely match the description she first gave investigators of the person who attacked her.
- Police investigators - testifying for the prosecution! - proved there was absolutely no physical evidence linking Mark Curtis with the alleged victim.

There is no appeal bond available for the crimes Mark Curtis was convicted of, and he is now in jail. But the fight for justice will continue.

After the verdict was read the judge allowed Mark to make a statement to his supporters in the courtroom.

"This conviction is just the end of one stage in the struggle that we are going to keep carrying out until we win. This is not just a blow against me, but against every working person in Des Moines, in Iowa and in the United States. Wherever I am, I'll be carrying on this fight with you. Stay strong everyone."

At a defense committee rally that night, one speaker said: "Justice will prevail, not in the courtroom, but in the court of public opinion of the great majority of humanity. Mark Curtis will be released and Mark Curtis will be vindicated."

FREE MARK CURTIS! PROSECUTE THE COPS WHO BEAT HIM!

PLEASE PRINT NAME	ADDRESS	ZIP	PHONE	UNION / SCHOOL / ORGANIZATION
1.				
2.				
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Name _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Country _____ Phone _____

Local address of Supporters of Mark Curtis Defense Committee:
Name:
Address:

Phone:

* Please circulate this petition, then send it to Polk County Attorney James Smith, 408 Courthouse, 500 Mulberry St., Des Moines Iowa 50309.
* Send a copy, with the coupon filled out, to Mark Curtis Defense Committee, PO Box 1048, Des Moines, 50311. Phone (515) 246-1695.
* Funds are urgently needed to pay the legal expenses to appeal the conviction and to produce more literature getting out the truth in this case.

Where did you circulate this petition? _____

_____

_/ Enclosed is a contribution of $_____(Checks payable to Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Tax deductible contributions to Political Rights Defense Fund, Inc. Mail all checks to Mark Curtis Defense Committee at the address below.)

Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, IA 50311 Tel: (515) 246-1695

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