

By [Upstate Drone Action](#)

In a surprise move, DeWitt Town Court Judge David Gideon dismissed charges against all four Upstate Drone Action activists protesting the hunter/killer MQ9 Reaper drones piloted over Afghanistan by the 174th Attack Wing of the NY National Guard at Hancock AFB just north of Syracuse NY.

The four had staged a December 23, 2016 “Nativity tableau” in front of Hancock’s main gate, at 6001 East Molloy Road in the Town of DeWitt. The four were charged with trespass, disorderly conduct and obstruction of government administration. OGA is a misdemeanor requiring a jury and carrying up to a year’s sentence.

Judge Gideon explained the March 9, 2017 dismissal by noting that the accusatory documents provided by Hancock repeatedly referred to the 12/23 “Nativity” arrests as occurring on Federal property – which the Judge declared outside his jurisdiction.

In a three-day trial culminating on March 2, 2017, also before Judge Gideon, a six-person jury, after deliberating about a half hour, acquitted all defendants of the same charges for their “Big Books” action at Hancock on March 19, 2015.