

### By Witness Against Torture

WASHINGTON, D.C. - On Monday, June 14, twenty-four activists with Witness Against Torture were acquitted in Washington, D.C. Superior Court of charges of “unlawful entry with disorderly conduct.” The charges stemmed from demonstrations at the US Capitol on January 21, 2010 - the date by which President Obama had promised the closure of the Guantanamo detention camp.

“With his decision, the judge validated the effort of the demonstrators to condemn the ongoing crime of indefinite detention at Guantanamo,” says Bill Quigley, legal adviser to the defendants and the Legal Director of the Center for Constitutional Rights.

“Our acquittal is a victory for free speech and for the right of Americans to stand up for those falsely imprisoned and abused at Guantanamo,” says Ellen Graves, one of the defendants. “We tried to shine a light on the unconstitutional policies of the Bush and now the Obama administrations. That light shone brightly today.”

“We will use our freedom to continue to work for the day when Guantanamo is closed and those who designed and carried out torture policies are held to account,” says defendant Paul Thorson.

On January 21, activists dressed as Guantanamo prisoners were arrested on the steps of the Capitol holding banners reading “Broken Promises, Broken Laws, Broken Lives.” Inside the Capitol Rotunda, at the location where deceased presidents lie in state, fourteen activists were arrested performing a memorial service for three men who died at Guantanamo in 2006. Initially reported as suicides, the deaths may have been - as recent evidence suggests - the result of the men being tortured to death (see Scott Horton, “Murders at Guantanamo, March 2010, Harpers).

*Witness Against Torture formed in December 2005 when twenty-five activists walked to Guantanamo to visit the prisoners and condemn torture policies. Since then, it has engaged in public education, community outreach, and non-violent civil disobedience. To learn more visit [www.witnesstorture.org](http://www.witnesstorture.org).*