

Washington, D.C. -- January 4, 2011/:Anti-war military veterans and other activists celebrated a breakthrough victory today in DC Superior Court, when charges were dropped, following arrests in front of the White House, on December 16, 2010. Over 131 people were arrested in a major veteran-led protest while participating in non-violent civil resistance in a driving snowstorm. US Park Police charged all 131 protesters with "Failure to Obey a Lawful Order," when they refused to move. All remained fixed to the White House fence demanding an end to the continuing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and further US aggression in the region. Among those arrested were members of the leadership of the national organization /Veterans for Peace/, Pentagon Papers whistleblower Dr. Daniel Ellsberg; Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Chris Hedges; former senior CIA analyst Ray McGovern; and, Dr. Margaret Flowers, advocate for single-payer health care. Forty-Two arrested opted to appear in court and go to trial with the first group appearing in DC Superior Court on January 4, 2011. Prosecutors from the DC Attorney General's office stated that the Government "declined to file charges due to missing or incomplete police paperwork." Presiding Magistrate Judge Richard Ringell confirmed that the cases were dropped and defendants were free to leave. Those who participated in this action make this statement: "\*/This is clearly a victory for opposition to undeclared wars which are illegal under international law, have led to the destruction of societies in Iraq and Afghanistan, bled the US Treasury in a time of recession, and caused human rights violations against civilians and combatants. Many of us will return to Washington, DC, to support an action on Tuesday, January 11, 2011 to protest the continued use of Guantanamo detention facility, including torture of detainees in violation of international law."/\*

The defendants were represented by co-counsels Ann Wilcox, Esq. and Mark Goldstone, Esq. Ms. Wilcox stated: "clearly the Government and Police felt that these veterans and their supporters acted with the courage of their convictions, and did not wish to spend the time and funds necessary for a trial proceeding. This is a major victory for the peace movement."