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36 White House Protesters Guilty

By Leon Dash

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D.C. Superior Court Judge Fred L. McIntyre yesterday found 36 anti-Vietnam war protesters guilty of unlawful entry because the group refused to leave the White House grounds during a demonstration March 1.

McIntyre had to gavel the courtroom to order several times because about 35 courtroom onlookers and the defendants applauded speeches made by several defendants before the judge gave them suspended sentences of 60 days in jail.

In addition, McIntyre imposed unsupervised terms of probation ranging from 15 months to two years.

At one point, McIntyre told the demonstrators that the courts had given them the right to demonstrate on the sidewalk in front of the White House and across the street in Lafayette Square. "Why do you find it neces-

sary to" demonstrate at the White House? McIntyre asked.

"We feel so concerned about (events in Vietnam) that we wanted to talk to (President) Ford," one demonstrator said.

President Ford and his family were at Camp David at the time of the demonstration, a White House spokesman said.

Earl L. Drescher, chief of the Executive Protective Service, testified that the demonstrators entered the White House about 11:30 a.m. through the East Gate as part of a public tour group.

In court papers outlining the sequence of events, it was said that the demonstrators left the White House with the tour group through the North Portico.

But then they separated from the tour group and stood on both sides of the northeast driveway for about 30 minutes. There they were permitted "to exercise their First Amendment rights through singing, praying and reading, without interruption by anyone," the papers stated.

At 12:20 p.m., the White House grounds were closed to the public and the demonstrators were warned by Chief Drescher that they would be arrested if they did not leave, the papers showed. "About half of the 100 to 125 demonstrators left" after the warning, Drescher said.

Sixty-two demonstrators—including Dick Gregory, Daniel Berrigan and Elizabeth McAlister Berrigan—submitted peacefully to arrest, the papers indicated. Gregory and the Berrigans were not present during the trial yesterday.

Ten additional demonstrators will be tried by jury on Monday.