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By Ad Hoc Committee Against the Militarization of CUNY

NEW YORK, 17 September -- Six students were arrested this evening in a brutal, unprovoked police attack on a peaceful protest by City University of New York students and faculty against CUNY's appointment of former CIA chief ex-General David Petraeus. Students were punched, slammed against vehicles and against the pavement by police captains and officers, after the NYPD forced them off the pavement and into the street. The demonstration was called by the Ad Hoc Committee Against the Militarization of CUNY.

The arrested students are presently being held and are to be arraigned this Wednesday, September 18, at some point between 9:00 a.m. and the afternoon at the Arraignment Court in the Manhattan Criminal Court at 100 Centre Street. All defenders of students' basic right to protest are urged to come to the arraignment and show their support.

"As students were chanting 'War Criminal Petraeus Out of CUNY Now,' I was shocked to see several police officers grab and brutalize one of the demonstrators," said City College student Yexenia Vanegas. "This was completely unprovoked, as demonstrators made clear that they were there to defend our university in a peaceful protest." The attack occurred in front of CUNY's Macaulay Honors College, where Petraeus has been appointed to teach a class on public policy.

"Protesters were marching in a circle on the sidewalk and chanting, but the police forced them into the street and then charged. One of the most brutal things I saw was that five police officers slammed a Queens College student face down to the pavement across the street from Macaulay, put their knees on his back, and he was then repeatedly kneed in the back," said Hunter student Michael Brian. The student was one of those pointed out by "white shirt" officers, then seized and brutalized. A Latina woman student was heaved through the air and slammed to the ground.

A broad range of CUNY students, faculty and staff members have been carrying out a campaign of "protest and exposure" against the Board of Trustees' appointment of Petraeus, whose documented actions as Iraq/Afghanistan war commander and CIA chief include drone attacks upon civilians, and the creation of torture centers and death squads. When Petraeus was setting up special police commandos, the "dirty tactics" that were used included the use of white phosphorus, a chemical weapon, against the population in Fallujah. "Petraeus' man" Col. James Steele, who organized death squads in Central America, had been brought to the area to organize death squads there.

With the NYPD being sent to brutalize and arrest CUNY students on behalf of a certified war criminal, organizers state that this blatant use of police brutality against peaceful protesters will not intimidate or deter those who expose the truth about the actions of David "Death Squad" Petraeus and oppose attempts to turn the City University into "a war college."

Resolution PASSES at Hunter Professional Staff Congress in defense of CUNY students right to protest

This resolution was presented and passed at the joint meeting of the PSC Hunter Chapter and the Hunter FDA on September 18, 2013.

Resolved: In light of the assault by the NYPD on Tuesday, September 17, 2013 against CUNY students who were protesting peacefully, in front of the CUNY Macaulay Honors College, the PSC Hunter Chapter and the Hunter FDA reaffirm their defense of students' right to protest peacefully and call for all charges against the students to be dropped immediately.