GANGJEONG VILLAGE STORY

Vol. 3 2013

PEOPLE BUILD PEACE BARRICADE

The Monthly Newsletter Needs Your Support! HOW? Become A Member of GANGJEONG FRIENDS!

As the government opposes the village and has attacked peace activists withvanteful fines, GANGJEONG FRIENDS is one of the only means to finance the struggle. Anon globe is to support the regular publication of this monthly English newsletter, “Gangjeong Village Story.” Without your help, this newsletter is unable to continue printing and mailing publications due to shortage of funds.

Gangjeong Friends also supports the peace activists in Gangjeong who suffer from many hardships by dedicating their full-time energy. To support the village and activists, is to SUPPORT the LIFE LINES that ARE VITAL TO THE STRUGGLE.

Support the struggle and become a member of Gangjeong Friends by emailing GANGJEONGINTL@GMAIL.COM with your name, email address, region, and yearly donation. Thank you!

A Prayer for Gangjeong Village

By Pat Cunningham (based on a Catholic Father)

This Eastertide my thoughts and prayers are with Prof. Yang Yoon Mo as he recovers to full health! My thoughts and prayers are with the villagers and brave peacekeepers standing up for the life and peace of Gangjeong. They continue to stand strong despite the daily repression that has become a feature of the 6-year long nonviolent struggle against the building of the naval base!

During the Easter Triduum, we remembered the sufferings and deep humiliation that Jesus suffered at the hands of his oppressors and the subsequent humiliation of being put on trial and executed as a common criminal. Gangjeong villagers and activists are uniquely positioned to identify with the humiliation, hopeless and deep suffering of Jesus and like Jesus, questions--why me? We dare however to celebrate the risen Jesus who is raised from the dead and calls us to dream our dreams and our world amid the labor ranting and dangerous actions on the peninsula of Korea! His message peace he with you is a message our world badly needs to hear at this time! The Roman Authorities placed guards at the tomb of Jesus with the Imperial seal baldly declaring in as many words we've killed you and put you in the tomb and now you're dead. So stay there! However his resurrection became the perfect nonviolent revolution which changes everything and provides us with a renewed sense of hope and purpose to work for the life and peace of the world. The risen Jesus remains at large in Gangjeong forming his underground movement of nonviolent resistance amid the drum beats of war that have griped the country. He says peace be with you to those who sustainably resist the building of the base in Gangjeong. He lives on in the mighty and brave actions of people for justice and peace in our world! As people of hope and people of the resurrection we pray that justice will once again flow like a mighty stream, and that the village of Gangjeong will return to its rightful custodians—the villagers and not the navy!

Peace Gangjeong! gangjeong@peace.org

The 1948 Jeju April 3rd uprising and the subsequent massacre of up to more than thirty thousand innocent lives throughout its successive years until the end of the Korean war, cast on not just in the form of living memories and collective trauma that are remembered through award-winning films such as ‘Brawl,’ but also in the hoarding suppression of history in Gangjeong village and in Korea. ‘Gangjeong is 4.3.’ This year marks the 65th anniversary since 4.3 (April 3) with the publication of a new book titled, “You, Dear Gangjeong.”

A joint work by 43 peace activists, the book aims to bring forth the story of the struggle against the US naval base in Gangjeong using the testimony of those who lived through the uprising. In the 1940s, the US military under the 7.8 war exercises ‘Key Resolve’ and ‘Foal Eagle’ mobilized with US nuclear capable advanced weapons and ships while occupying the peninsula for two months. The shared accomplishments and tasks at hand were emphasized in the preface of 4.3 remembrance program titled, “Yes, True Peace Now.”

Film ‘Jeju Prayer’ (Binyeom) connects 4.3 with Gangjeong struggle

The film ‘Jeju Prayer’ (Binyeom) connects 4.3 with Gangjeong struggle. A comic book is also connected to this event. It is released under the title of ‘4.3 An 8th of History’ and contains 43 pages of drawings and stories describing the struggle against the US naval base. The story tells the story of a student who was refused for not joining the US military, and the movement of the students who opposed the 4.3 illegal and cruel “preliminary arrest”.

Reknown film director, Oliver Stone, talks candidly about Korea’s history of occupation, war and division, the 4.3 uprising and the Island people’s uprising against the US military occupation in his new film, ‘Born on the Fourth of July.’

Japanese Delegation Visit Gangjeong Village

By Kang Dong-Seok

Dong-Kyun, who lived in Japan for many years, explained to them in Japanese the main gates and Gangjeong port in a group bus. In Gangjeong port, Mayor Kang Kang explained the construction of the naval base in Gangjeong. He lives on in the mighty and brave struggle of the people who rose up during 4.3: ‘Where there is oppression, there is uprising.’

Villagers Refuse the Military Housing Project

“The navy is trying hard again with the matter of the military housing in Gangjeong village. The naval base project would bring lots of conflicts such as radar base, helipad, powder magazine, training facilities, military airport, and more and more military residential projects.” ~Gangjeong Village Association

The navy had planned to hold a presentation on the Gangjeong village military housing project on March 26, 2013, when about 100 Gangjeon villagers and peace keepers stormed into the hall and managed to disrupt it in 10 minutes. The villagers have already protested the presentations on May 29 and June 15, 2012.

The navy plans to build 616 new households in the 99,500 square meters area between Gangjeong elementary school and the area is composed of more than 60% dry and paddy tfields, the best farming fields in the village.

The villagers denounced the navy, saying: “We did not receive an official letter from you.” “If you rob us of our farming lands, we will die, for there is nothing left.” “Does it make sense that the navy talked about coexistence while destroying the central paddy cultivation government and foreign powers that supervises it- and the people’s urgent aspiration for peace and democracy.”

The accomplishment of the 4.3 projects make a profound statement on the Gangjeong struggle. And it is also a reminder of the historic tasks at hand in the struggle against the Jeju war base and the continued struggle for peace in Korea. It is that much more unjust when the crisis of war has been unnecessarily escalated with the US-BOK war exercises of Folds Eagle and Key Resolve, mobilized with US nuclear capable advanced weapons and ships while occupying the peninsula for two months.

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During 4.3 remembrance week, a peace delegation of 70 Japanese guests, who were in Jeju for the memorial service, visited Gangjeong village on April 1st and 4th respectively. They came to express their concern and support for the struggle.

On April 3rd, 4 of the Japanese guests toured the naval base construction area, the main gates and Gangjeong port in a group bus. In Gangjeong port, Mayor Kang Kang explained the construction of the naval base in Gangjeong. He lives on in the mighty and brave struggle of the people who rose up during 4.3: ‘Where there is oppression, there is uprising.’

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Moetppuri

A zone (based in Berlin, recently spent a month in Gangjeong)

It was at the end of January that Oh Young-Ae, mother of activist, Kim Gami, started her hand-raising efforts when she heard the news that about a dozen young activists were sentenced to prison due to their attempt to stop the naval base construction and therefore were willing to go to prison.

In the beginning, Soo in 20th. Gami's mother traveled nation-wide with a "healing" snail-vending truck. Since then, she has traveled throughout the 11 cities of all the provincesin South Korea, until its final arrival in Jeju on April 6. Her story moved many people nationwide, not to mention young activists who volunteered to help her with her daily physical labor. She finally achieved her original goal to raise 48,000,000 KRW for young activists’ fines. On April 6th, her great achievement was met with deep gratitude and cheers in Gangjeong village.

She said in an interview with Catholic News that her daughter who suffered from the news of her friends, awakened her consciousness again after distancing herself from any political activities that she once participated in the past.

The village suffers from fines totaling about $450,000 USD (about $200,000 USD has been paid as well as damages compensation fees that was due to the damage caused to trees and property) and a fine of around $200,000 USD.

Activists Suffer from Injuries

Activists suffer from intentional or non-violent intentional by police and company workers. On March 11, Mr. Kim Hak-ki suffered from injuries when the police deliberately pulled down a chair he was walking on to pretext the base construction. On March 18, Mr. Lee Min-Jong's foot was haphazardly run over by a truck driver who could not see him during the time. He was immediately arrested on April 6.

On the day of arrest, Mr. Kim was standing with a sign next to the naval base construction gate. It was illegal and unreasonable for the police to arrest Mr. Kim simply for doing his job.

Mr. Bae Gi-Cheol (45), co-representative of the Jeju Pan-Island Committee to Stop the Military Base and for the Realization of Island was also arrested on April 6. And Mr. Lee Jin-Ho (47), Jeju branch co-representative of the Korea Federation for Environmental Movement (KFEM) was arrested on April 16. These arrests happened during everyday people's protests at the construction against the navy's illegal construction (destruction of the environment) that threatens the UNESCO and government-designated soft coral habitats near the construction area.

In the meantime, Mr. Park Sung-Soo, an independent video documentarist, became the first victim of the new government strategy to attack with fines against the people. On March 25, he was convicted as a victim with a fine of $150,000 won. Anonymous people paid the fine on his behalf.

When Park was jailed along with Yang, international peace activist showed their support for them, expressed in their written messages. Prof. Yang expressed his gratitude for the overtime of international support by saying that it was his honor to be one with peace activists from around the world.

WHY WOMEN MUST END THE KOREAN WAR

* full text at www.F.WP.ORG

By Christine d'Entremont from an article published on May 18, 2014, Foreign Policy in Focus

We are facing, once again, perilous times as tensions escalate in the Asia-Pacific. Most women governments and the mainstream media point to North Korea's nuclear test and perceived belligerence as the cause of the escalation when in fact there are 2 major factors fueling this militarized trend. 1- The so-called "s enlargement. In 2011, the Obama administration announced a plan to reduce the United States military in Asia and the Pacific, including expanding bases, surveillance, and equipment. The Pentagon has committed to deploying about 10% of its air and naval forces to the region. 2- The perennial U.S.-ROK joint military exercises against North Korea. North Korea justifiably views this as a variety of games as a provocations. The annual U.S.-ROK joint military exercises against North Korea. North Korea justifiably views that as a variety of games as a provocations. The annual U.S.-ROK joint military exercises against North Korea.

When I think about the impact of all this militarization, I think about the elderly twin farmers in Pyeonggang who used their bodies to defend their village from the expansion of a U.S. military base. I think about the singing farmers and women大海 who sang in front of the construction gate. I think about the farmers who lost their crops and had to work for 34 years until it was finally cleared in 2008, thanks to the people's persistence and dedication.

KCTU Laborers Gather in Gangjeong

It has been more than a decade since the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions visited the island for the remembrance of #3. This year, they held its annual event in Gangjeong village again to express their support and solidarity with the struggle against the Jeju naval base construction.

KCTU stated: ”[Since the armed group of the Jeju branch of the Workers Party of Korea was established in January 2008, they] have created a spectrum of political, religious, and social groups focusing on the issue of the Jeju naval base. From this point, they launched joint protests and demonstrations in front of the KCTU headquarters in Seoul, calling for the resignation of the president and his government. On the 29th, after a series of protests and demonstrations, a group of workers were arrested on Jeju Island during the process of armed conflicts and (US-backed) subjugated army's oppression on the people, until [Sept. 21, 1954].

“ This year marking the 60th anniversary of the Crash Site Group of Seoul is the cold war with war-conflicting countries and the time of the crisis is higher than ever on the Korean peninsula, we uphold the workers' resolution commitment to succeed the spirit of the Jeju #4's people's uprising and to fully realize peace and unification of the homeland.”

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