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Editor's Note:

When these articles were written, a peace euphoria was overtaking the Korean Peninsula. Not only had North and South Korea achieved a momentous peace summit, but U.S. President Donald Trump was also signaling his desire for a peace treaty; taking his cue, North Korea reciprocated with sincere and significant gestures (the release of prisoners, destruction of its nuclear testing facilities); South Korea worked tirelessly to fan the winds of peace. For the first time, all the pieces appeared to align. Might peace finally visit the Korean Peninsula and end the 70 year old Korean War?

Trump's recent vacillation over the mid-June U.S.-North Korea summit exposed the fragility of the moment but also tested the strength of North and South Korea's commitment to peace. In South Korea, the Panmunjom summit's televised images planted visions of peace in those that watched. Yet, this is not our first time here. We were here before in the 2000s. Historic inter-Korean summits enveloped the peninsula with peace, only to be dissipated in U.S. President Bush Jr.'s axis of evil, South Korean hawkish conservative presidents and U.S. President Obama's strategic patience.

The road to peace is precarious, but we can't stop envisioning and fighting for the world we want. The Panmunjom summit granted us momentary peace of mind. It afforded us the mental headspace to imagine peace and to discuss our tasks for building a society ready for peace. We dedicate this issue to exploring peace and justice in Korea.

. Rooted in struggle

Peace, A New Beginning

National Security Law, Our Task Ahead

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By Kim-Hwang Kyung-san (General Secretary, Korean Women's Peasants Association)



On April 27, 2018, Chairman Kim Jong-un crossed the military demarcation line to be greeted by President Moon Jae-in in the South Korean side of Panmunjom. After a few exchanges, with the eyes of the world still on them, Kim and Moon held hands, then crossed into the North and back to the South. Stepping over the border diminished that which held us back: separation, war, conflict.

The Panmunjom Declaration was announced: "There will be no more war in the Korean Peninsula. A new era of peace will open." It was further declared that the ceasefire agreement would become a peace treaty, thus ending war. Peace has found its way to the Korean Peninsula. The declaration dared us to imagine a life free from threats, conflicts and confrontation. Maybe our lives could also change.

Yet, for a brief moment, conservatives clamored that Moon's crossing into North Korea for ten seconds before returning back into the South violated the National Security Law (NSL) for infiltration and escape.¹

However, against the yearnings for peace inspired by the North-South Summit, the conservatives' clamors about the the NSL simply went down as the obstinate cries of those stuck in the past. The April 27 Panmunjom declaration made clear that the National Security Law impedes peace,

¹ Article 6 of the NSL states that "any person who has infiltrated from, or escaped to an area under the control of an anti-government organization, with the knowledge of fact that it may endanger the existence and security of the State or democratic fundamental order, shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than ten years."

reunification and democracy and must be abolished.

The National Security Law in the Era of Peace

The origin of the NSL was the Maintenance of the Public Order Act under Japanese colonization to imprison those fighting for liberation and independence from the Japanese. In 1945, we were liberated. Then the regime that pushed for South only elections ratified the NSL in 1948. Utilizing the Yeosun Uprising of Nov. 1948, the NSL was ratified to eliminate left-wing forces in the South.

The law, different only in name, was used to catch and lock up those that opposed the dictatorship or demanded peaceful reunification on the Korean Peninsula. It wasn't possible to even express one's thoughts freely in daily life. Simply uttering criticism of the government or speaking favorably of North Korea while having some drinks could get a person arrested. This earned it the nickname "Makkeoli (Rice Wine) Security Law."

What's Wrong with the National Security Law?

The NSL violates freedom of belief and conscience as guaranteed in article 19 of the Constitution. As a result, no criticism was allowed of the existing structure and state. Yet, if you don't criticize what is wrong, then it cannot change. By shutting down critical thinking, it shuts down the source and the growth of people's creative processes. Based on its prohibition of communist and socialist convictions and beliefs, the NSL punishes those that join such organizations, make such speeches, or own or read such books. As such, it violates the freedom to develop and maintain one's beliefs or conscience freely. By also punishing those that fail to report such actions, it not only forces relatives and friends to report on each other but also prevents a critical discussion of the NSL.

The NSL also violates freedom of expression as guaranteed by article 21 of the constitution. Freedom of expression is the freedom to express one's beliefs and opinions through language or writing to unspecified and varied people as well as the right to know, to access news media, and to speak in public. Article 7 violates this basic right by punishing anyone for praising, propagating, inciting or even agreeing with the activities of an enemy organization or a member or person who has received orders from it.

The NSL can even punish actions that don't pose a serious threat to the state such as buying government banned books.

Furthermore, the NSL counters the constitution's article on peace and reunification. The NSL designates North Korea, our counterpart in peace and reunification, as an anti-state organization. Despite the constitution's clear pursuit of peace and reunification, the government has ratified a law that goes counter to this pursuit and arbitrarily enforces it based on who is in power.

The Struggle to Abolish the National Security Law

After passage of the NSL, it was used to harshly arrest and punish those that opposed its passage and the division of north and south. From 1981 to 1987, 1,512 people were prosecuted under the NSL with 13 of them being executed and 28 of them being imprisoned for life — this is why some say that the struggle to abolish the NSL started in the 1980s. At this time, there were many individual and group victims to the NSL. Torture was a given, with some dying.

The fiercest struggle against the NSL was in 2004. On Sept. 5 of that year, President Roh Moo-hyun stated in a televised interview that the NSL was not for the security of the country but for the security of regimes. He claimed that as it symbolized a barbaric era, it should be abolished. The Uri Party even incorporated the abolishment of the NSL into their party platform.

On Nov. 2 of 2004, the People's Alliance to Abolish the NSL set-up a tent in front of the National Assembly. In the cold bitter winter, a thousand people gathered and started a hunger strike. Some fasted for almost 60 days. At the end, there were some that didn't even drink water or take salt, putting their lives on the line during the hunger strike. Ultimately, political horse trading between the Uri Party and the conservative party sidelined the bill abolishing the NSL. Consequently, the Uri Party removed its abolishment from the party platform. The Grand National Party blocked introduction of such bill. Thus, the NSL continues today.

The National Security Law Must Be Abolished in This Peace Era

In 2001, a warrant for my arrest was issued simply for being a delegate for the Federation of Korean University Student Councils (FKUSC) that had been designated an enemy organization. Clause 3 of Article 7 of the NSL punishes anyone who is a member or joins an enemy organization. The arbitrary application of this clause meant that many student and labor movement organizations were designated enemy organizations. This violated the Constitutionally guaranteed right of freedom of assembly.

The NSL designated the FKUSC an enemy organization. In 2000, by a vote of the female students, I took up the role of president of my university's Women Students Association. After the arrest warrant, the police even visited my parent's home. They said that if I signed a statement withdrawing from my position, they would not arrest me. In a country where the freedom of political belief was guaranteed by the constitution, they were blocking my freedom of belief and forcing me to act against my beliefs. I refused, believing it improper to issue an arrest warrant simply for being a democratically elected representative of the students. So, starting in 2001, I became a fugitive. While the police were prohibited from entering the campus, nothing prevented them from apprehending me the moment I stepped outside of it. For three years, I lived on campus. After being elected president, Roh Moo-hyun promised to abolish the NSL. Starting in 2003, a full-fledged struggle against the NSL began. However, the NSL still failed to be abolished. In 2003, the Roh Administration rescinded the arrest warrants of some of the FKUSC delegates. As I was included in that list, I turned myself over to the police. However, in 2004, I was prosecuted nonetheless for violation of the NSL. I was sentenced to a year probation, with a violation resulting in 6 months in prison. The Roh Administration had betrayed its promises.

The restart of peace is calling into question the basis for the NSL. The NSL obstructs reunification. Now after the North-South Summit talks, the North Korea-US Summit talks will take place. The relationship between North and South and between the North and the U.S. is transforming. We can't build an era of peace and reunification with laws that breed enmity. The NSL is an outdated and unjust law holding back our times. It's not a law, it is an injustice. Because an injustice should not be law, it needs to be repealed. And all those incarcerated for trying to build a better future for the people and for peace and reunification should be allowed their freedom of conscience and be freed.

I dream of a tomorrow where North and South Korean peoples can freely cross back and forth across the military demarcation line. Let's eliminate that which drew the military demarcation line and that divides people's hearts in two, endlessly sowing conflict and confrontation. Let's welcome the warm spring of Peace and Reunification.

2. Solidarity

The Odebrecht case, Rousseff's impeachment, Lula's imprisonment: A timeline of Brazil's recent history

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By The Dawn News

The original article is at

<http://www.thedawn-news.org/2018/04/10/the-odebrecht-case-rousseffs-impeachment-lulas-imprisonment-a-timeline-of-brazils-recent-history/>



2003 to 2010 – Lula's Presidency

Luiz Inácio "Lula" da Silva was President of Brazil for two consecutive terms. During his administration, 29 million people were lifted from poverty, causing the middle class to grow to 51% of the population.

With favorable winds at the international level, Lula stabilized the Brazilian economy, which allowed the country to grow an average 4.1% per year. He paid the national debt with the IMF in full, and reduced the unemployment rate from 10.5% in December 2002 to 5.7% in November 2010. He concluded his second term with the highest approval rating in the history of the country: 87%.

Brazilian law establishes that presidents cannot govern for more than two consecutive terms, but Lula was succeeded by a member of his party: Dilma Rousseff.



Lula in 2003 visiting a neighborhood in Recife, Pernambuco. Photo Credit: Agencia Brasil

2014 – Odebrecht (or “Lava Jato”) Case

Scandal erupts when a corruption network is exposed that involves several high-ranking officials and businessmen. The case is known in Brazil as “Lava Jato” (car wash) operation.

Brazil’s state-run oil company, tendered contracts to big engineering and construction companies in Brazil. One of these companies is called Odebrecht.

For years, Odebrecht bribed three of the main executives of Petrobras in order to win tenders. The bribe consisted in 3% of the cost of the contract, which was divided among politicians and businessmen.

\$8 billion dollars were laundered through a criminal network that operated across several countries in Latin America. Therefore, the scandal had repercussions beyond Brazil.

In Brazil, the network included politicians from several parties, from Michel Temer and seven ministers of his government to members of Lula’s Workers’ Party (PT). Unlike Temer, Lula asked the country for forgiveness, declared he had been deceived by some of his party-members and dismantled the leadership of the country and removed from government his right hand, former guerrilla José Dirceu, who according to the general prosecutor was the one who built the network.

2015 – Beginning of process to impeach Dilma Rousseff December

The impeachment of Dilma Rousseff begins with a petition for her impeachment accepted by Eduardo Cunha, the then president of the Chamber of Deputies, and continued into late 2016. Rousseff, more than 12 months into her second four-year term, was charged with criminal administrative misconduct and disregard for the federal budget (unrelated to the Odebrecht case).

Many pointed out that the method Rousseff had used to re-allocate budget had also been used by every president that had preceded her—and it had been widely accepted as a manner of funding government initiatives.

2016 – Parliamentary Coup – Michel Temer assumes the presidency



People protesting against the coup, the slogan 'Fora Temer' means Out Temer!

October

Former deputy Eduardo Cunha, who allowed (and promoted) the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff, is detained on accounts of corruption. In late March 2017 he was condemned to 15 years and 4 months in prison for corruption.

May

Rousseff is suspended from her seat. Michel Temer, Vice President of Brazil and member of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB) party, takes on as interim president.

A leaked conversation causes a minister of the interim government to step down. He will be the first of seven ministers that Temer will lose due to direct or indirect links with the Odebrecht corruption network.

June

Temer himself becomes a suspect in the Odebrecht case, after a declaration given to justice by Sergio Machado, former president of Transpetro, a subsidiary of Petrobras.

August

Rousseff is deposed by the Senate and Michel Temer is appointed President of Brazil. Protests break out throughout Brazil denouncing this as a Parliamentary coup, although opposition members back the ousting.

Since his inauguration, Temer has passed unpopular laws such as [lifting protections on Amazonia rainforest](#), a [pension reform](#) and a [labor reform](#).

2017 – Lula is persecuted

July

Lula is condemned to 9.5 years in prison for corruption and money laundering—without proof. This case is unrelated to Odebrecht, because no links were found between Lula and this case.

In 2008, Marisa Leticia, Lula's late wife, had begun making payments for an 82 square meter house in the city of Guarujá. But in 2015 she cancelled the purchase and requested a refund for the payments she had made. The unit was never under Lula's or his wife's name. However, Bancoop, the cooperative that had managed the construction project, had transferred everything to a company called OAS, whose president, Leo Pinheiro, later declared that Lula had received this property from the company as a bribe in exchange for contracts with Petrobras.

With only this testimony as proof, Judge Sergio Moro condemned Lula to 9.5 years in prison, and forbade him to occupy public seats for 19 years. Lula's lawyers appealed

December

[A survey by Datafolha](#) reveals that 34% of Brazilians intend to vote Lula in the 2018 elections, and in the case of a runoff Lula would win against any of the potential contenders.

2018 – Lula is imprisoned – Upcoming elections

January

Three judges of a Porto Alegre court not only unanimously ratified the guilty sentence but increased the punishment to 12 years and a month in prison.

March

Luiz Gonzaga Schroeder Lessa, a retired general of the Brazilian Army, induces fear of a military coup by affirming that “the crisis will be solved at gunpoint” and that “blood will be shed”. He added that if Lula were to return to the presidency, the Armed Forces would have to “restore order”.

Later that month, [Lula's convoy is attacked](#). Some consider it an attempted murder, others an act of intimidation. While Lula traveled with his entourage through the state of Parana, the buses they traveled in were shot at and the tires were slashed. Lula's campaign team had already denounced roadblocks and aggressions that diffculted their tour through the states of Brazil before the elections.

April

[The Supreme Court rejected the habeas corpus](#) presented by ex-president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's defense. The habeas corpus would have permitted Lula to remain free while he appeals his criminal conviction in a corruption case for which he has been sentenced to 12 years of prison.

On April 7, after [a vigil](#) and a rally in support of Lula at the Metal Workers' Union where he began his social and political career, Lula voluntarily went to prison.

According to Lula's attorney, Cristiano Zanin Martins, his imprisonment [violates the presumption of innocence](#).



Lula leaving the Metal Worker's Union carried in the arms of the people. Photo Credit: Júlia Dolce

Future

Due to the loss of legitimacy by Temer's government and the Brazilian justice system, and the growing pressure from the grassroots to release Lula, many doubt that the former president will stay in prison for long. Presidential elections will be held in October.

3.Change

Is a Korean Spring Around the Corner?

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by Merci Llarinas-Angeles²(Solidarity correspondent, Peace Women Partners)

Since Korea's Candlelight Revolution of 2016, the changes on the peninsula seem to herald a spring. Amid high hopes that the country, divided for over 70 years, shall now attain reunification, Koreans as well as peace - and justice-loving citizens of the world need to remember the April 3 People's Uprising in Jeju and what it stands for.

"The 38th parallel doesn't only exist at the 38th parallel"³

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the April 3 Massacre and Uprising in Jeju. From April 3, 1948, to Sept. 21, 1954, Jeju islanders suffered through seven years and seven months of massacre as they stood up against the division of the Korean Peninsula that was enforced by [the U.S. government](#) and then - South Korean President Syngman Rhee.

Stigmatized for 50 years, those involved, including the killed, survived and families, were unable to speak out about such a great injustice. In 1978, the novel "Sun-I Samchoon" (Aunt Sun-I) and the work of other artists "allowing the dead to speak their grief"⁴ broke the taboo. On Jan. 12, 2000, the National Assembly passed the Jeju 4.3 Special Law, which launched a nation wide investigation. Its report officially labeled this period of massacre as an "incident." Although a precise calculation of the dead and missing is difficult, the report estimated the total to be between 25,000 and 30,000,⁵ about 10 percent of Jeju's population.

Is spring just around the corner?

On May 1, I joined 40,000 people celebrating Labor Day this year in front of Seoul City Hall. Union leaders called for workers' unity as the crowd chanted slogans in Korean. I could not understand their words, but the air electrified with the passion for workers' rights, especially as workers sang "The Internationale" in Korean.

² I came on an Education and Solidarity Tour with two members of the Peace Women Partners. We visited Seoul and Jeju Island. Our stay in Seoul was hosted by the ISC.

³ Quote from a deceased poet cited by Sun-Tag NOH..., Notes from the Artist, Forged into Collective Memory, Catalogue of the 25th Annual Exhibition of the April 3 Massacre and Uprising, p. 79 (Published by the Jeju Self-Governing Province.)

⁴ AN Hye-Kyoung, Speech at the Opening of the 25th Annual Exhibition of the April 3 Massacre and Uprising, Catalogue of the 25th Annual Exhibition of the April 3 Massacre and Uprising, p. 17 (Published by the Jeju Self-Governing Province.)

⁵ Damage Report, The Jeju 4.3 Incident Investigation Report, Jeju 4.3 Peace Foundation, December 2003, p. 455



Participants of a Labor Day rally in front of Seoul City Hall on May 1. The banner on the facade of the Old City Hall Building roughly translates to, “Catkins are waving at us, it seems spring is just around the corner.”



The Filipino solidarity team of the Peace Women Partners and ISC staff walk along a Seoul boulevard during the Labor Day workers' march.

After the rally, the workers marched across the boulevard from City Hall. I felt honored to march down streets where millions had walked with lit candles and forced President Park Geun-hye out of office in

the [Candlelight Revolution](#).⁶ In the series of protests between October 2016 and March 2017, millions of candles lit across the streets of South Korea sparked changes on the Korean Peninsula, proving that the people have the power to steer the path of their country toward peace and justice.

On April 9, Park was sentenced to 24 years in prison and ordered to pay billions of won in fines.⁷ A few days later, Lee Myung Bak, who served as president from 2008 to 2013, was charged with bribery, power abuse, embezzlement and tax evasion. If convicted, he might face life in prison.⁸

On April 27, South Korean President Moon Jae In and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un agreed to formally end the Korean War, which technically concluded with a cease-fire, and establish peace on the Korean Peninsula. Seventy years after the Jeju Uprising and Massacre, South and North Korea now greet unity and peace.

Jeong Yoon-ook of the Citizens United Yongsan and the Justice Party shared⁹ how the nationally televised Panmunjom summit scenes left a deep impression on Koreans. A North Korean had crossed the 38th parallel for the first time.¹⁰ The Candlelight Revolution enabled President Moon to push for peace. Furthermore, Jeong Yoon-ook said that North Korea's nuclear parity with the United States brought U.S. President Donald Trump to the negotiating table because they couldn't simply negotiate based on good will; they must negotiate based on power.

Everyone I met in Seoul expressed hope that peace and unity might, at last, be achieved.

When will spring come to Jeju Island?

As part of the Jeju Dark Tour,¹¹ I learned about Jeju's painful history by visiting the 4.3 Memorial Museum and some of the villages where the massacres occurred, including Bukchon-ri, the Village of Widows. As I stood amid the village's remnants, I pondered humanity's persistent capacity for cruelty. On a single day in January 1948, the village was burned down, and 300 people, including mothers and babies, were massacred.¹²

⁶ For a list of articles on the Candlelight Revolution, please check out:

<http://iscenter.or.kr/english/?s=candlelight+revolution>

⁷

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/apr/06/former-south-korea-president-park-geun-hye-guilty-of-corruption>

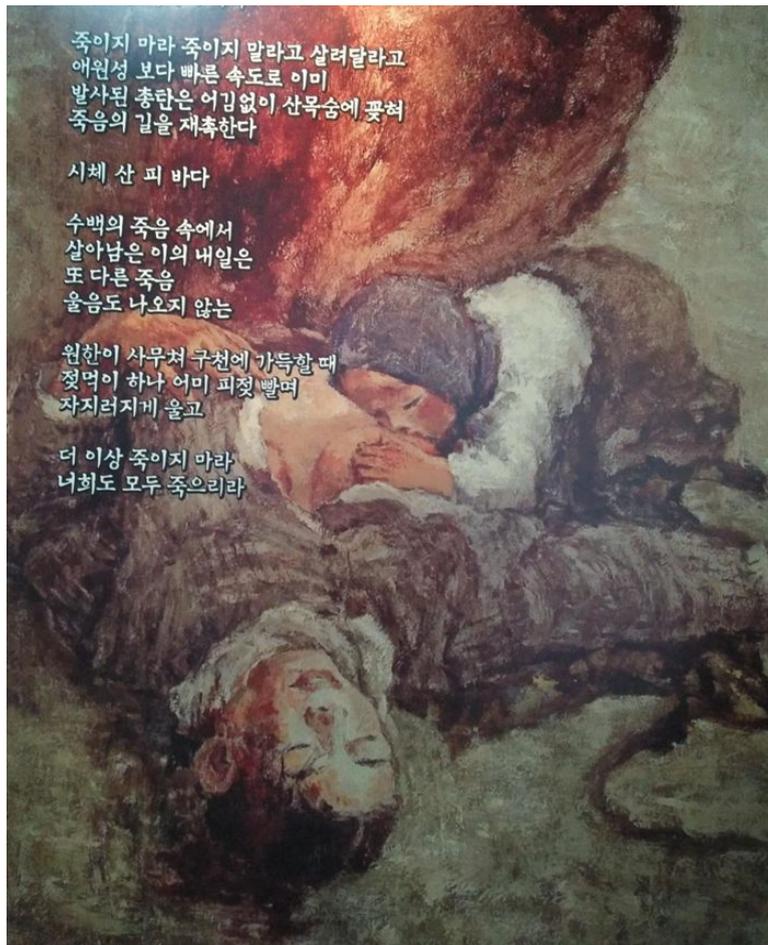
⁸ <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/east-asia/south-korean-ex-president-lee-myung-bak-indicted-for-corruption>

⁹ We met Jeong Yoon-wook to discuss the situation of Korea and the Philippines on May 2,

¹⁰ The 38th parallel, which divides the Korean Peninsula roughly in half, was the original boundary during the United States and Soviet Union's brief administration of Korea after the end of World War II. (Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean_Demilitarized_Zone)

¹¹ www.facebook.com/jejudarktours

¹² The Case of Bukchon-ri, Jocheon-myeon, The Jeju 4.3 Incident Investigation Report, Jeju 4.3 Peace Foundation, December 2003, p. 503



This painting by Kang Yo-bae depicts the Bukchon Massacre, when a mother was shot to death as her baby sucked breast milk from the dead mother's body. It depicts the inhumane cruelty inflicted upon the people of Jeju Island during the April 3 Uprising and Massacre.

The 4.3. Incident Investigation Report described the massacre as a “violation of human rights by public power,” President Roh Moo-Hyun issued a public apology on Oct. 23, 2003. Despite the apology, the perpetrators were neither punished nor even identified. No proper acknowledgment has been given to the Jeju citizens who were killed while protesting war and division of their country. Instead they were just called “victims” and considered offenders against state power.¹³

While the spirits of the past are not yet at peace, new wounds have been inflicted upon the people of Jeju Island. Despite public opposition, Gureombi Rock in Gangjeong Village was blasted and destroyed on March 7, 2012 to make way for the construction of a naval base. Since opening in 2016, 10 U.S. warships, including an Aegis destroyer, have docked in Jeju. The U.S. nuclear submarine Mississippi entered Jeju on Nov. 22, 2017,¹⁴ confirming that the naval base had been constructed for the United States to gain a military foothold in Northeast Asia. A proposed second Jeju airport, which could act as an Air Force base, will extend U.S. militarism in Korea and Asia.

When I visited Jeju in 2016 and joined the Grand March for Life and Peace, the base was almost finished, but the people did not give up. This time, I visited Gangjeong and walked along its riverbanks again. The military facilities are like concrete monsters slowly killing the local habitat. The villagers

¹³ “What is the Jeju Uprising and Massacre?” Memorial Committee of the April 3 Uprising and Massacre, March, 2018. P. 36

¹⁴ “A Symposium for the Denuclearization of Jeju”, Gangjeong Village Story, February-March 2018, published by Gangjeong Village in Jeju, South Korea, p. 1

monitor the environmental pollution caused by the foreign military ships, which are ignored by the authorities.

While there are community members who may feel that all is lost because the base is operational, resistance continues. Gangjeong's villagers have not given up. "Even though the base was constructed, we still sow the seed of peace."¹⁵ On the sixth Anniversary of the blasting of Gureombi Rock, they sowed bean seeds in a garden near the naval base, sending the message that their peace action shall continue.¹⁶



Gangjeong villagers dance and form a human chain symbolizing their united protest in front of the naval base.

With their bodies facing toward the naval base, community members greet the dawn with a hundred bows. They hold a daily mass and form a human chain every day at noon in front of the base. Our PWP solidarity team joined the human chain and danced with the villagers. Where there is such celebration and strength in a struggle, victory comes. It will only be a matter of time and work.

All the photos were taken by the author during the Education and Solidarity Visit of the Peace Women Partners in South Korea from April 30 to May 11.

¹⁵ "The 6th Anniversary of the Gureombi Rock Blast", Gangjeong Village Story, February to March 2018, published by Gangjeong Village in Jeju, South Korea, p. 3

¹⁶ Ibid

Reclaiming Peace of Mind: The Fight Over Yongsan's U.S. Military Base

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By Casey Jong



My father and his family moved to the US from South Korea when he was just eleven years old. Now, at twenty, I made my first-ever trip to Korea. It has been relatively easy: I know little Korean, but enough people speak English to help me get by. I have no family in Seoul, but family friends are gracious enough to open a home so comfortable it's almost familiar. They live within the stone walls of the Yongsan US military base, formally the United States Army Garrison Yongsan (USAG-Yongsan). It feels like a small town within Seoul, with American three-pronged outlets where you can use US dollars to purchase American snacks. On my third day in Seoul, I attended a historical tour of the base's walls by the International Strategy Center. As a Korean American and a US citizen, my experiences have provided me with a unique lens through which to view USAG-Yongsan. Those lived experiences don't align with those of the Koreans whose words and actions have moved me to write this. Here are my observations of and reflections on the historical tour, which revealed to me the base as the remains of American imperialism in Seoul.

Upon arrival at the starting point of the tour, I knew nothing of the base's history, which dates all the way back to the Japanese occupation of Korea. It served as the Imperial Japanese Army's headquarters until 1945, when the United States took over the base after overseeing the surrender of the Japanese and then occupying South Korea. Today, it is the headquarters for the US military forces in South Korea. Despite a plan to relocate the base more than a decade ago, the base has yet to be returned to the Korean people. The tour's first stop peered into the base from Itaewon Shrine

while discussing the legislation passed to create a National Park in its place. The base isn't simply a plot of land, but also contains many historical relics that Koreans want access to.

Korean citizens haven't had access to the base in over one-hundred years. There are Koreans whose families have lived in Seoul for generations, and even their grandparents have never understood what goes on inside of Yongsan base. For those unfamiliar, the base occupies an incredibly large and central plot of land, directly north of the Han River, essentially bisecting the city. It is enclosed by high stone walls topped off with barbed and razor wire. What long-term impact might a barbed wire-rimmed wall constructed and maintained by colonizers to house their military and officials in the center of your city have on its environs?

Not only have Koreans been unable to use that land in any capacity, but even construction in the area *outside* the base are impacted by the base's secrecy of its internal activities from official military and embassy business to residential units to recreational activities. For example, a bridge originally designed to be built over what was once the base's golf course was split into two and redirected to prevent citizens using the bridge from peering into the base and witnessing the egregious land use in one of Seoul's most expensive and crowded areas. Throughout the tour, questions like, "What do the houses look like?" and, "What kinds of things are there to do inside?" revealed just how shut-out Koreans have been, and it's not for a lack of interest.

One of the recurring themes of the tour was the lack of information flowing out of the base to Koreans, who have been demanding answers to the same questions for decades. We discussed at length the environmental impact of the base and the consistent burden placed on Koreans to bring these issues to the attention of the responsible party. We stopped at an oil-collecting well and learned that, in 2001, oil leaks were discovered flowing out from USAG-Yongsan. The US military denied involvement until the presence of JP-8, a jet fuel used only on-base, was discovered. To this day, despite claims that the leaks have been addressed, oil still collects outside its walls.

These environmental accidents are not uncommon from USAG-Yongsan, and the Freedom of Information Act helped civil society identify about 100 incidents that have taken place within the base. Standing outside of the US military morgue, I learned that a staff member had disposed of 480 bottles of concentrated formaldehyde into a drain leading to the Han River. This highly toxic substance was dealt with carelessly, and once again, the US did not take responsibility until a Korean environmental group campaigned to make it the base's only case of environmental pollution to be fully prosecuted.

The tour ended at the National Museum of Korea, overlooking the south end of the base. At this final stop, our attention was brought to the discovery that anthrax was being tested within the base between 2009 and 2014. Apparently, anthrax is typically tested in the desert, not in old facilities at the heart of a heavily-populated city like Seoul. Yet again, Koreans are digging into incidents like these, which aren't being formally looked into or publicly discussed by those responsible. These are just some of the investigative necessary to ensure the safety of the base, especially now that the base will become parkland. One of the biggest demands of the community group — Full Recovery of the Yongsan Military Base — is the full investigation of such environmental accidents by the US. This demand should be met for the solutions to the problems caused by the US military base are the responsibility of the US government. The other demands of this community organization and others include the removal of the buildings that are set to remain, including the Dragon Hill Hotel (whose usage is restricted to US military officials) and the adjacent US military's helipad. The final major demand of the group and other civil society is that the plans to build a US embassy building on the north end of the National Park be scrapped.

When USAG-Yongsan becomes a National Park, a project long delayed since its 2008 finalization, the Korean people should be receiving not just land, but peace of mind. From where I'm standing, this all reflects the oppressive white savior complex the US took up in the eighteenth century, especially

given the over-simplified Korean War narrative familiar to most of the world. The full investigation of the environmental accidents that have taken place on the base should be carried out and made public to combat the US's failure to hold itself accountable. The hotel, helipad, and embassy should be removed or relocated off of the National Parkland. No other country in the world houses its military or lands its helicopters within our US National Parks. No foreign embassy exists on any US National Parkland, because, wouldn't that just seem "un-American"? But then again, what could be more American than continuing to build on land that was never rightfully ours?

4. Korean News Summarized

The Day Moon and Kim Met

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By Won Jong-il [ISC, member]



(photo: Nocut News)

On April 27, 2018, a historic event took place at Panmunjom when South and North Korean leaders met. They shook hands smiling at each other. North Korea's Chairman Kim Jong-un had crossed to the South. Then, holding hands with South Korea's President Moon Jae-in, they crossed the 5cm demarcation line to North Korea then stepped back to the South. During the one day event, the leaders shared many conversations, ate Pyongyang Naeng-myeon and watched performances prepared by the South Korean government.

It was the first time North Korea's leader crossed to the southern side of the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone). For 11 years, the tensions between South and North had been escalating. Yet, right before South Korea's Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, the North's hostile attitude towards the South shifted to being amicable. In the historic Panmunjom inter-Korean summit, the North confirmed it would denuclearize.

Even before the Moon administration, various attempts to mend relations with North Korea had taken place paving the path to the Panmunjom declaration between Moon and Kim.

In 1972, South and North Korea signed the July 4 Joint Statement. Both parties established reunification would be achieved: free from intervention by external forces; peacefully; with respect for the different ideologies and political systems. In 1991, the December 13 joint testament once again reaffirmed these three principles. That same month, both Koreas signed a joint declaration for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Denuclearization was mentioned for the first time between

both Koreas. However, the political fallout from the sudden death of North Korea's leader, Kim, Il-sung prevented its implementation.

On June 13, 2000 South Korea's president visited Pyongyang and met North Korean leader face-to-face for the first time and had a summit talks. On June 15, the two leaders adopted the historic June 15 South-North Joint Declaration. Once again, the declaration reaffirmed the three principles of reunification and resulted in the exchange of visits by separated family members and relatives and the release of political prisoners. The most significant improvement was economic cooperation to build the Gaeseong Complex, just north of the DMZ. On Oct 4, 2007 South Korea's president Roh, Moo-hyun visited the North and reaffirmed the Jun 15. Joint Declaration.

Despite the various declarations and efforts by both sides to improve relations, tensions between both sides heightened when South Korea's conservative party seized power in the South from 2008 to 2016. Even after the change of government to the liberals in 2017 after the impeachment of corrupt President Park, it seemed relation between both sides would not resolve so easily.

However, the recent Inter-Korean Summit suggests signs of relieving the conflict between them. While rooted in a historical trajectory for peace, the Panmunjom declaration differs from past inter-Korean summits in that the summit was open not only to the people of the South but also those of the North and globally. North Korea actually showed the world it is a normal country. Furthermore, unlike the historic 2000 declaration, North Korea declared its willingness to denuclearize and a peace treaty ending the Korean War was mentioned for the first time.

For 11 years, Koreans suffered from the threat of an unending Korean War. While the inter-Korean Summit inspired us to once again dare hope for peaceful reunification, we should not forget reunification and the peace treaty hang on the will of the U.S.

On June 12 North-U.S. Summit will be held in Singapore. May both Koreas persuade the U.S. to help bring down the barriers to the peace on the Korean Peninsula.

Peace in the Korean Peninsula, but War in Soseongri

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(Hwang Jeong-eun, ISC General Secretary)



(source: Joongang Daily)

With the South-North Korea summit in April and the upcoming North and US summit in June, the winds of peace are blowing over the Korean peninsula. There is even talk of “complete denuclearization” and “ending the war by the end of this year”. However, in Soseongri, a southern city in Seongju where the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (Thaad) was deployed in 2017, the mood is completely different. The Moon Administration decided to resume construction of Thaad, repressing villagers opposed to its deployment in order to bring in construction trucks and other supplies.

In April and September in 2017, the U.S military in Korea deployed a Thaad battery: six truck-mounted anti-ballistic launchers and a radar system. On Apr. 23, 2018, 3,000 riot police dispersed 200 people (villagers and members of Anti-Thaad organizations) to bring in 14 construction trucks and 20 construction equipment. In the process, 10 people were injured and hospitalized.

Currently, the government is using the construction equipment to improve the power supplies and accommodation for U.S. and South Korean troops inside of the base. The construction was halted after negotiations between Ministry of National Defense and Anti-Thaad organization broke down on April 16 to 19.

Those in the Anti-Thaad organization state that Thaad’s was deployment to defend against North Korea’s nuclear or missile attack are no longer legitimate given the current path towards peace. Thus, they are demanding reconsideration of Thaad’s deployment and its withdrawal.

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