

3. The Struggle Goes Nationwide

(4) 〈The Government Moves towards Permanent Requisition, Aggravating the Protest Movement〉 (June, 1953)

In spite of the fact that support for the protest movement had become a nationwide phenomenon, on June 2nd, the government decided in a cabinet meeting that the testing range would resume operations and be permanently requisitioned. Hearing this, at the Villagers' Association Meeting on the following day, the Village Executive Committee forced Mayor Nakayama to step down from the chairman position, and elected Gonji Dejima in his stead. Moreover, they decided to expand from 32 to 60 members and to pressure the prefectural governor into dismantling the barbed wire fences surrounding the testing range site within a week's time "lest we be forced to work together and demolish them ourselves."

Following these actions, the protest movement became all the more emboldened. On June 10th, groups of residents, labor organizations, and students numbering over 2000 people strong lie in wait outside Kanazawa Station, with the intent of staging a demonstration and blocking the government officials who were coming to Ishikawa to persuade local officials to move forward with the permanent land requisition. However, when the throng learned that the government officials had changed routes in order to circumvent the angry crowds, they too moved to meet them directly at the public square right outside of the prefectural offices, whereupon they collided with the police. Many were injured.

Additionally, the Hokuriku Railroad labor union staged a 48-hour strike and refused to ship any more military munitions to the testing range during this time.