

4. The Demise of the Protest Movement, and Afterwards

(3) 〈Conditional Requisition is Decided, and the Sit-ins are Fully Stopped〉 (August-October, 1953)

At the end of August, Mayor Nakajima issued a statement saying, “Shouldn’t we consider negotiating with the government about the land requisition?”, and on September 5th at the Villagers’ Conference, the group decided to turn towards conditional acceptance of the land requisition and to begin official negotiations with the government. On September 14th, the Uchinada Village Authorities and the national government came to an agreement that contained two conditions:

(1)The American military would be allowed to use the testing range for an additional three years

(2)If for some reason the American military decides that they do not have a use for the dunes, they are to promptly sell them to Uchinada

Furthermore, the Gongen Woods—which were at the center of the sit-in movement and had been privately-owned land—were placed under state management. This meant that nearly the entire sand dune system became within the boundaries of the testing range, effectively making the continuation of the sit-ins next to impossible. Even still, a portion of the villagers continued the sit-ins.

On October 4th, the final sit-in was held. The three remaining sit-in huts were torn down, and the Village Executive Committee was disbanded. This became the nail in the coffin for the Struggle.