

## International Campaign to Free LJY 2017

### Free Lee Jin-Young! Stop the Repression of Labor Books!

On January 5th, a South Korean district court decided to detain Lee Jin-young, coordinator of Labor Books, a book-sharing web site, in violation of the notoriously draconian National Security Law. This abrupt decision is extremely shocking, considering historic candlelight protests against the political scandal of Park Geynhye government and the subsequent crisis and her impeachment.

On January 4th, the persecution suddenly applied for a arrest warrant for him long after the search and seizure operation over five months ago, when 9 plain-cloth police officers descended upon Lee's home early in the morning and confiscated his books and digital devices.

#### Search and seizure in 2016

In this outrageous attack on July 28th, 2016, the 4th Investigation Division for Public Security of Seoul Police Department seized 107 books, 10 papers, a hard disk drive, an SD card, and others, on charges of violating the National Security Law.

The list of confiscated books include Maxim Gorky's *Mother*, E.H. Carr's *The Russian Revolution*, Karl Marx's *Capital*, and Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy for the Oppressed People*, all of which are classics easily found in any public libraries and books stores.



Press conference in protest of the oppression in 2016

#### What is Labor Books?

Lee Jin-young is Coordinator of Labor Books, an internet web site and a virtual community of readers. He and his colleagues founded this virtual space to share social science and history books that are out of print, not available in print. He spent his time and energy, as well as money in getting by, copying and scanning old out-of-print books. His dedication and

commitment helped a small infinity group to develop into over 1,500 membership community.



## Who is Lee Jin-young?

Lee Jin-young is a railway worker and active member of Korean Railway Workers' Union. While dismissed, he worked at the Union head quarters, and he is currently a longtime union delegate representing his department.

In 1990s, he was convicted twice for violation of National Security Law in the course of fighting for the democratization and social justice in South Korea. And in 2010 he was dismissed and fined for leading a strike, and in 2016 he took part in the 74-day railway strike. And in spite of being prosecuted at any time, he courageously took part in the candlelight protests demanding the immediate resignation of Park Geunhye.

## Why now?

In this context, what is the real intention of the prosecution to detain him now? The police and prosecution labelled those confiscated books as "enemy-benefiting publications that agitate a violent revolution, and propagate the overthrow of the regime and a revolt against the state."

Furthermore, the court endorsed the prosecution's ridiculous claim on the danger of Lee's possible attempt to "run away or destroy evidences." The police already secured the enough evidence, and he has a job and family, so he has no reason to run away. Rather ironically, it is impeached president Park Geun-hye who systematically has destroyed evidences.

## National Security Law and candlelight protests

Basically, it is well-known that the raison d'être of the National Security Law is not for public security. Historically, this infamous law was used to suppress social and political protests and control freedom of thought and press. Though under dictatorships tens thousands of victims were convicted as criminals violating it, this anachronistic law is still

here to stay in the 21st century.

Then, what is the real purpose of the law enforcement authorities? It is regarded as part of the government's maneuver to contaminate the authenticity of candlelight protests. The extreme right-wing reactionary forces are organizing the anti-impeachment counter-attack on candlelight protest with dirty smear campaigns, especially attributing the protests to conspiracy of pro-North Korean forces.



Lee Jin-young speaking in a rally vs. Prime Minister Hwang Gyo-an

### **He is innocent! Let him free!**

However, the facts are crystal-clear: Lee Jin-young and Labor Books are never a threat to the national security in any sense of the word, and their activities are fully legal and legitimate, guaranteed by the constitutional rights. Rather, anachronistic National Security Law should have been abolished a long time ago.

The South Korean government, led by Hwang Gyo-an, acting president, known for Mr. Public Security, is fully responsible for the illegitimate detention of Lee Jin-young. The government should give up any dirty maneuvers and stop the illegitimate procedure. And it should immediately set him free.

We support Lee Jin-young's struggle for his freedom, and we'll struggle with millions of candlelights for full democracy and the abolition of the out-dated National Security Law. WE SHALL OVERCOME!

### **# Timeline of the oppression on Labor Books**

- Lee Jin-young, coordinator of Labors Books, is a member of the Korean Railway Workers' Union, and worked as a union leader at the national headquarter of the union head, and was a long-time union delegate.
- At 6 o'clock in the morning, on July 28th, 2016, 9 detectives searched his home and confiscated books and digital materials, long after these plain-cloth investigators from the 4th Division for Public Security of Seoul Police Department carried on extensive surveillance operation on him.
- After the search and seizure, Lee was temporarily arrested and interrogated at a secrete office in Shinchon, Seoul, but he exercised his right to remain silent, claiming freedom of thought against the National Security Law.
- After the search and seizure, several news outlets reported the incident, with critical

comments on the absurdity of the oppression.

- On August 24th, 2016, a press conference was held in front of Southern Seoul Police Station, to protest the police oppression on Lee and Labor Books.

- On January 4th, 2007, the Prosecution applied for arrest warrant on Lee.

- On January 5th, 2017, District Court of Southern Seoul issued the arrest warrant, and Lee was detained.

### **Our Demands:**

- ✓ **Immediately release Lee Jin-young, coordinator of Labor Books!**
- ✓ **Stop the attempt to fabricate a public security lawsuit!**
- ✓ **Stop the oppression on freedom of thought and expression!**
- ✓ **Abolish the Nation Security Law!**

January 7th, 2017

### **Joint Action against the Oppression on Labor Books under National Security Law**

#### **About Joint Action:**

- After the police attack, Joint Action against the Oppression on Labor Books under National Security Law was organized and has been taking actions to protest the oppression and protect the website Labor Books.

- In September 2016, Lee and his wife, Choi Do-eun, famous singer activist, held a music concert to financially prepare for the coming legal action.

- The Joint Action now focuses on the struggle to free Lee, as well as a wider struggle for freedom of thought and conscience, and to abolish the National Security Law.

#### **Please express your solidarity:**

# Visit the website Labor Books: <http://www.laborbook.org/>

# Send your solidarity message to: [gongdongact@gmail.com](mailto:gongdongact@gmail.com)

# Visit our petition site: <https://www.change.org/p/free-lee-jin-young-of-labor-books-now>

#### **Please donate for the legal battle:**

- SWIFT CODE <SCBLKRSE>

- Bank address: 38, Gonghang-daero, Gangseo-gu, Seoul, KOREA

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