

## Why Nuclear Weapons Alone?

By Hatakeyama Noboru

Last month the new President of South Korea, Roh Moo-hyun, visited the United States for the first time in his life and met President George W. Bush of the United States. They issued a joint statement confirming their common position of not allowing North Korea to possess nuclear arms. They also expressed deep concern about North Korea's reprocessing of nuclear spent nuclear fuel rods. But the requirement for North Korea not to develop biological or chemical weapons was not referred to. More recently, Prime Minister Koizumi Jun-ichiro met President Bush at his Crawford ranch. They reportedly warned North Korea that they would take tougher measures if North Korea takes steps to strengthen its nuclear arms program. However, they do not seem to have discussed bio-chemical weapons. Furthermore, last April, the United States, China and North Korea held talks in Beijing. As far as I know, there was no discussion of bio-chemical weapons on this occasion either. Even in the case of the joint statement between Japan and North Korea announced on Sept. 17 last year, the bio-chemical issue was not mentioned.

In the case of Iraq, the issue has always been the abolishment of weapons of mass destruction, including bio-chemical weapons. Since Iraq has used its chemical weapons in the past, the focus of the inspections was on bio-chemical weapons rather than nuclear weapons. Even after the end of the war with Iraq, the necessity to find weapons of mass destruction seems to have increased to demonstrate the legal legitimacy of the allied forces having entered into the war. However, when it comes to North Korea, why do the leaders of Japan or the United States mention nuclear weapons alone without mentioning weapons of mass destruction? It has been reported that North Korea

has more than 5,000 tons of chemical weapons as of now and, although it does not possess biological weapons yet, it has already completed a system to culture bacteria to be loaded on a missile whenever necessary. [*Monthly GENDAI*, 2003 June] North Korea has already declared that it possesses nuclear bombs. Perhaps this declaration may be Pyongyang's effort to distract the world leaders' attention from the bio-chemical weapons North Korea possesses now. When one performs a magic act in a dark theater, one often waves one's right arm with a pure white handkerchief conspicuously enough to attract the attention of the audience to it, while the real trick is being prepared with one's left arm. It is often reported that North Korea's nuclear bombs are too big to be loaded on to a missile at this stage. I don't know if this report is true. However, one thing for sure is the fact that those bio-chemical weapons are much smaller in size and can more easily be loaded on a missile and transported to any location than nuclear weapons. It is also said that it is very difficult to identify the base for launching the Nodong, a short-range missile of North Korea, because it is small, mobile and sometimes underground as opposed to identifying the base for launching the Taepodong, a long-range missile of North Korea, which is big and immovable. Of course the Nodong can reach Japan, South Korea and China whereas the Taepodong can reach the United States. It would be a nightmare, especially for Japan, to be attacked by a Nodong with bio-chemical weapons attached. Last October, when the United States disclosed that North Korea was developing an enriched uranium project, North Korea seemed to have contended that it was not violating the U.S.-North Korea Agreement in 1994 which allegedly prohibited only pluto-

nium weapons. North Korea might be very much interested in finding loopholes in the international agreements. Therefore, unless the entire issue of weapons of mass destruction is addressed in any talks or negotiations with North Korea, the leaders of other countries will have to regret the loophole found in their argument with North Korea in the future.

It is important to remove nuclear weapons, if any, from North Korea as quickly as possible and prohibit the country from possessing them in the future. North Korea's nuclear arms development plan should be abolished in a verifiable and irreversible manner as was agreed in a joint statement between the United States and South Korea on April 14 in Washington D.C. Not only the United States and South Korea but also Japan, China and Russia have to cooperate together for this purpose. Furthermore, it would also be imperative for those countries to do the same with regard to North Korea's bio-chemical development plan.

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