

Asahar as the group's legal representative and supervise the liquidation of Aum's assets (including its centers and commune), which were scattered across Japan and as far away as Russia and Germany.<sup>40</sup>

A number of other governments also took legal measures. For example, the Russian government banned Aum and ordered it to pay \$4 million in compensation to the Youth Salvation Committee, a group led by Russian parents who had filed a civil suit claiming Aum had brainwashed and kidnapped dozens of followers.<sup>41</sup>

While several pieces of legislation were passed in direct response to the sarin attack, the government chose moderate language and limited the measures that restricted civil liberties. Once the government brought charges, it chose to treat the attacks as individual violations rather than bring charges under articles 77 (carrying out civil war) and 78 (preparing for civil war) of the Japanese constitution.<sup>42</sup> In May 1995, the Public Security Intelligence Agency initiated procedures to apply the Anti-Subversive Activities Law of 1952 to Aum Shinrikyo. This law would have prohibited Aum Shinrikyo from recruiting and fund-raising, training followers, or publishing materials promoting its beliefs. To invoke the law, the Public Security Intelligence Agency first had to exhaust all other legal remedies and then prove that the violence that the group committed was politically motivated and that there was a significant possibility that future acts of violence would be committed.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, although there was significant public support for the measures invoked, the majority of the population did not support invoking the Anti-Subversive Activities Law. Many viewed it as compromising freedom of speech and other civil liberties.<sup>44</sup> The Public Security Intelligence Agency completed its investigation and hearings on July 11, 1996, and formally asked the Public Security Commission

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<sup>40</sup> Mullins (2001, p. 73).

<sup>41</sup> Kaplan and Marshall (1996, pp. 266–267).

<sup>42</sup> Katzenstein (2003, p. 746).

<sup>43</sup> Mullins (1997, pp. 37–46).

<sup>44</sup> Ian Reader, *Religious Violence in Contemporary Japan: The Case of Aum Shinrikyo*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000, pp. 224–225; Pangi (2002, p. 439).