

United States that would start sometime in 1997.² He based his predictions on the prophecies of Nostradamus, the Book of Revelation in the Christian Bible, Buddhist scripture, and other personal revelations. In 1993, Asahara publicly reiterated his predictions of Armageddon. In a book titled *Shivering Predictions by Shoko Asahara*, he stated that,

From now until the year 2000, a series of violent phenomena filled with fear that are too difficult to describe will occur. Japan will turn into waste land as a result of a nuclear . . . attack. This will occur from 1996 through January 1998. An alliance centering on the United States will attack Japan. In large cities in Japan, only one-tenth of the population will be able to survive. Nine out of ten people will die.³

When Armageddon came, the evil forces would attack with the most vicious weapons: "Radioactivity and other bad circumstances—poison gas, epidemics, food shortages—will occur," he claimed. The only people who would survive were those "with great karma" and those who had the defensive protection of the Aum Shinrikyo organization. "They will survive," Asahara said, "and create a new and transcendent world."⁴

Most of Asahara's prophecies predicted that Armageddon would occur in 1997 or 1998. But documents that the Japanese police seized after the Tokyo attack indicated that, sometime in 1994, Asahara had

² Indeed, Asahara repeatedly alleged that the U.S. military was attacking Aum and its facilities with chemical weapons. See, for example, John Parachini, "Aum Shinrikyo," in Brian A. Jackson, John C. Baker, Peter Chalk, Kim Cragin, John V. Parachini, and Horacio R. Trujillo, *Aptitude for Destruction, Vol. 2: Case Studies of Organizational Learning in Five Terrorist Groups*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-332-NIJ, 2005, pp. 11–36, p. 14.

³ U.S. Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, *Staff Statement, U.S. Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (Minority Staff): Hearings on Global Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction: A Case Study on the Aum Shinrikyo*, Washington, D.C., 1995.

⁴ Shōkō Asahara, *Disaster Approaches the Land of the Rising Sun: Shoko Asahara's Apocalyptic Predictions*, Shizuoka, Japan: Aum Publishing Co., 1995, pp. 135–136.