

# **WorldWatch**

**by Staff**

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## **Earthquakes**

- » So far in the '90s only four earthquakes of 8.0 or greater on the Richter scale have occurred. These struck New Guinea, February 1996; Kuril Islands, Japan, October 1994; Bolivia, June 1994; and South Mariana Island, August 1993.
- » An Israeli expert predicts that a +6.0 quake could strike the Jordan Valley in the near future and damage Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa.
- » Final large earthquake totals for 1996:

+6.0: 135 (down 39 from 1995) +7.0: 17 (down 2)

## **Pornography**

The American porn industry has exploded in volume in the last decade. Rentals of hard-core videos rose from 75 million in 1985 to 665 million in 1996. Americans spent over \$8 billion on pornography last year. About 75% of porn videos are produced in Los Angeles County, California.

## **Islamic Fundamentalism**

- » Some South African Muslims are receiving military training in Sudan, Iran, Afghanistan and Libya. South African police fear "the threat of Islamic extremist fundamentalism is now on South Africa's threshold."
- » Chinese security officials have issued a warning to southern and coastal provinces to expect terrorist acts perpetrated by Muslim separatists from the far-western province of Xinjiang. They warn that all busy central districts and government buildings are at risk.

## **Alcohol**

The World Health Organization (WHO) regards alcohol abuse as "one of the most serious public health problems in the world." Canada reports that 90% of violent crimes there are committed under the influence of alcohol or drugs. In the U.S. 14 million people can be classified as alcohol abusers, costing the nation \$100 billion annually. Eighty percent of Lithuanians are alcoholics, while Russians drink more alcohol per capita than any other people. In addition, WHO considers alcohol the number one cause of the spread of AIDS.

## **Egypt**

Middle Eastern sources believe Yassir Arafat is clearing with Egypt all acts of violence by the Palestinians in the West Bank. The key to the timing of any future war between Israel and the Arabs, they say, lies in Cairo. An old saying in the Middle East runs, "The Arabs cannot make war without Egypt."

## **Israel**

A team of rabbinical experts has confirmed that a red heifer, born last September on a religious kibbutz in Israel, meets the biblical criteria for use in the ancient ritual for purifying sacred things that have become defiled. Religious Jews believe that this first flawless red heifer since the destruction of the Second Temple in AD 70 is a sign from God that work can begin on building a Third Temple in Jerusalem.

## **China**

The rumors of increased abortions and infanticides of female fetuses in China are true. The ratio between male and female live births is increasing. In 1984 the ratio was 108 males to every 100 females. Today, it is 131:100. This means that every year 750,000 more males are born than females. By 2000, China could have 90 million unattached men—and little idea what to do with them. Observers fear that this "Chinese problem" may not remain an internal one. Could this portend the 200 million-man army of Scripture?