



## NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE



P. O. Box 65798  
Washington, D. C. 20530

JAN 17 1997

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are very pleased to submit to you the attached Interim Report of the National Church Arson Task Force (NCATF). The Task Force has been in operation for slightly more than seven months and has made significant progress in investigating and prosecuting the recent attacks on houses of **worship**.

Your actions have enabled us more effectively to pursue the **guilty parties**, prevent additional fires and help the victims **rebuild**. In June 1996, you declared that the investigations and prevention of church **arsons** would be a national **priority**. By calling upon the Departments of the **Treasury, Justice**, and Housing and Urban Development and the **Federal Emergency Management Agency**, you harnessed the resources and energies of your Administration for this **effort**. You also invited Governors from the **Southern states** to join in our effort to combat these crimes and encouraged religious and private organizations to help communities **rebuild the churches**. Your support has been vital to our success thus far.

The National Church Arson Task Force has been responsible for overseeing the law enforcement effort and ensuring a coordinated response by **federal, state and local law enforcement authorities**. We have been aided in our task by **Congress**, which provided additional resources and enacted the **1996 Church Arson Prevention Act**.

We have achieved striking **results**:

- The NCATF has opened investigations of **328 arsons, bombings or attempted bombings** that have occurred at houses of worship between **January 1, 1995, and January 7, 1997**.
- As a result of the exceptional partnership among **federal, state and local law enforcement**, many of the incidents investigated have been **solved**, mainly by a combination of federal and state arrests and **prosecutions**.