

Management Agency (FEMA) established a Clearinghouse for arson prevention resources that has received over 10,000 telephone inquiries from all 50 states and the District of Columbia, and has distributed over 300,000 packets of arson prevention materials, including the NCATF Church Threat Assessment Guide. FEMA efforts also include a three city pilot project in Nashville, Charlotte and Macon to develop grass-roots arson prevention programs.

Led by Deval L. Patrick, Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division, and James E. Johnson, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury (Enforcement), the NCATF formalized the coordination of investigations already underway. The NCATF brought together the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), the FBI, Justice Department prosecutors, the United States Attorneys, victim/witness coordinators, the Community Relations Service and the U.S. Marshals Service, in partnership with state and local officers and prosecutors.

As a result of this partnership, local task forces have been formed in the affected states, and federal authorities have supported every prosecution. Their efforts have been aided significantly by support from the Congress, which provided additional statutory authority and resources for these investigations.

Well over 200 ATF and FBI investigators have been deployed and are working with over 75 federal prosecutors and state and local authorities. This is one of the largest series of arson investigations in history and the largest current civil rights investigative effort.<sup>1</sup>

## II. Strengthening the Federal Effort

### A. Unifying the Federal Effort

In an investigative effort of this size and scope, coordination among federal agencies and between state and federal law enforcement is essential. To that end, the Attorney General directed U.S. Attorneys either to establish a local task force focusing on churcharsons or to join an existing local task force. These local task forces include state and local law enforcement and fire protection officials, as well as representatives of the ATF, FBI, the Community Relations Service and victim/witness coordinators.

The local task forces in North and South Carolina are examples of effective coordination between local and federal authorities. Where local task forces are still being developed, the NCATF co-chairs will continue to work with the U.S. Attorneys and the agencies participating in the Task Force to ensure maximum cooperation and effectiveness.

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<sup>1</sup> This Interim Report contains only public information. The fire and arrest statistics in this Report were complete as of January 7, 1997. The investigations are continuing.