

**NLWJC - Kagan**

**DPC - Box 038 - Folder 008**

**Race-Church Burnings**

FIRST YEAR REPORT FOR THE PRESIDENT  
Draft -- Thursday 3:30

### Overview

In early 1996, federal officials began to detect a sharp rise in the number of reported attacks on our nation's houses of worship, especially African American churches in the South. This trend troubled communities, challenged law enforcement agencies, and stirred the nation's conscience.

In June 1996, President Clinton made the investigation of these fires a top priority of federal law enforcement and called upon all Americans to come together in a spirit of respect and reconciliation.

The President directed his Administration to implement a strategy to (1) identify and prosecute the arsonists; (2) help communities rebuild the burned churches; and (3) offer assistance in preventing more fires. Working together with state and local law enforcement, federal officials achieved great success on these fronts. Significantly, many Americans came together as a result of these arsons, often independent of this effort, to lend assistance in many ways.

### PROSECUTIONS

- Federal and state authorities have arrested 199 suspects since January 1995.
- The 35% rate of arrest in church arson cases is more than double the 16% arrest rate for arsons in general.
- More than three quarters of all defendants arrested since 1995 were arrested after the President established the NCATF.
- Federal and state prosecutors have successfully convicted XXX individuals in connection with fires at XX houses of worship.
- Overall, the NCATF has opened investigations of 429 arsons, bombings or attempted bombings that have occurred at houses of worship between January 1, 1995 and May 27, 1997.

## REBUILDING

- The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is working closely with the National Council of Churches and the Congress of National Black Churches in the rebuilding effort.
- As a result of this cooperation, XX churches have been rebuilt and XX churches are undergoing construction.
- HUD is administering a \$10 million Federal Loan Guarantee Fund to assist with the rebuilding of houses of worship and other non-profit organizations that have been damaged or destroyed by arson. This fund was established by Congress as part of the 1996 Church Arson Prevention Act.

## PREVENTION

- Arson prevention efforts continue across the nation. The Department of Justice awarded \$3 million in grants to counties in 13 states to intensify their enforcement and surveillance efforts around vulnerable houses of worship.
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) established a Clearinghouse for arson prevention resources that has received over XXX telephone inquiries from all 50 states and the District of Columbia, and has distributed over XXX 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. [ADD MORE!!!]

Led by James E. Johnson, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury (Enforcement) and Isabelle Katz Pinzler, Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, who replaced Deval L. Patrick, former Assistant Attorney General, the NCATF formalized the coordination of investigations already underway. The NCATF brought together the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (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 were formed where needed, and federal authorities supported every prosecution. Their efforts have been aided significantly by support from the Congress, which provided additional statutory authority and resources for these investigations.

## I. Prosecuting Perpetrators

### A. Coordinating the Investigations

In 1996, following a series of fires around the time of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, federal authorities began to focus on the sharp increase in reports of attacks on churches, particularly African American churches in the South. The pattern of church fires led officials to take steps to improve the coordination within federal law enforcement and between federal, state and local law enforcement.

In June 1996, President Clinton established the National Church Arson Task Force to better coordinate the efforts of federal, state and local law enforcement. Shortly thereafter, Attorney General Reno directed U.S. Attorneys to establish local task forces focusing on church arsons, or to join an existing local task force. The local task force is to include state and local law enforcement and fire prevention officials, representatives of the ATF and FBI, mediators from the Community Relations Service, and victim/ witness coordinators.

In addition to the local task forces, the NCATF established an operations team in Washington staffed by special agents of the ATF and the FBI, as well as seasoned prosecutors from U.S. Attorney's Offices and the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division. Working with local task forces, the operations team continues to investigate incidents, analyze potential connections and prosecute cases.

Since the formalization of the task force, more than 200 ATF and FBI investigators have been deployed to work with more than XX federal prosecutors and state and local authorities. It is one of the largest series of arson investigations in history and is currently the largest civil rights investigation underway.

### B. Conducting the Investigations

For years, many arsons at houses of worship were handled by local authorities, and not reported to federal authorities. As a result, local law enforcement often did not benefit from the resources of the federal government in pursuing these incidents. Following the formation of the task force, local law enforcement began regularly reporting these incidents to federal authorities and they are now receiving greater assistance.

From its inception, the NCATF developed a protocol for investigating and prosecuting suspected arsons. The protocol sets forth procedures for facilitating the exchange of information among task force agencies, developing an investigative plan for each incident, and ensuring that investigators pursue all lines of inquiry, including whether the

crime was motivated by race or religion, and whether any one incident is connected to any other.

Once an investigation is opened, the NCATF compiles statistical information about the investigation in a unified database. In addition, the databases and computer systems of the ATF and FBI are used to track and analyze evidence about attacks on houses of worship and to generate investigative leads.

During the investigation, the FBI calls upon its experience in conducting civil rights investigations and the ATF relies on its experience in conducting arson and explosives investigations. In fact, since the inception of the task force, FBI agents have trained ATF agents on how to conduct civil rights investigations, and ATF agents have trained FBI agents on how to conduct arson investigations.

As the past year has proven, arson cases are among the most difficult criminal cases to solve. Forensic evidence is often destroyed with the fire. Moreover, because some of the churches burned are located in isolated, rural areas, there are often no eye witnesses to the incident. For these reasons, the arsons can often take years to solve. Further, as with many criminal acts, it is difficult to discern the motive for setting fire to a house of worship.

### C. Strengthening Laws and Adding Resources

Over the past year, Congress has offered tremendous support to the investigatory efforts of the task force, both in terms of toughening federal laws and providing additional resources.

When the task force was formalized, federal prosecutors relied on several statutes to prosecute arson cases. They had authority, under the Anti-Arson Act of 1982, to prosecute those who used fire to destroy property involved in interstate commerce (18 U.S.C. 844(i)). Under criminal civil rights statutes, they also had the authority to prosecute those who conspired to deprive persons of their civil rights or who desecrated religious property or a house of worship (18 U.S.C. 241 and 247).

On July 3, 1996, President Clinton signed the Church Arson Prevention Act of 1996, which granted federal prosecutors greater power in pursuing church burnings and desecrations. Sponsored by Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA), Senator Lauch Faircloth (R-NC), Congressman Henry J. Hyde (R-IL) and Congressman John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI), the statute was passed unanimously by both chambers of Congress.

Under the new law, which amended 18 U.S.C. 247, federal prosecutors no longer have to demonstrate that the incident involved the use of interstate facilities or show that the resulting damage totaled \$10,000. In addition, prosecutors can now seek sentences of up to 20 years imprisonment for arson.

In August 1996, Congress provided more than \$12 million to support ATF's role in the task force, until the end of the fiscal year. The next month, Congress appropriated an additional \$12 million for ATF's role in the following fiscal year. Additional funds for task force activities by the Justice Department and the FBI also were appropriated or reprogrammed.

#### D. Progress

##### 1. Opening Investigations

The NCATF has opened investigations into 429 arsons, bombings or attempted bombings that have occurred at houses of worship between January 1, 1995, and May 27, 1997. This number does not include vandalism or other desecration at houses of worship, which continue to be investigated and prosecuted by the FBI, the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division and U.S. Attorneys offices. Nor does it include fires that the investigators have determined are accidental.

Of these 429 incidents, 162 have involved African American churches. Three quarters [??] of the fires at African American churches have occurred in the southern United States. While arsons at houses of worship appeared to reach a peak in June 1996, federal authorities continue to receive reports of such arsons. For instance, the NCATF launched 17 investigations in March 1997, 21 investigations in April 1997, and 12 investigations in May 1997. [See "Chart A" identifying the numbers of NCATF investigations launched each month over the past year.]

For every new suspicious fire, the NCATF continues to launch a new investigation. As of May 27, 1997, arrests were made in connection with 150 incidents. The task force remains committed to expending the necessary time, resources and effort to solving these crimes and prosecuting those who are responsible.

To expand the sources of information available to investigators, the NCATF established a toll-free tip line for citizens to report information on church arsons.

1-888-ATF-FIRE

To date, the NCATF has received more than XXX calls through its tip line service. The ATF and FBI also are offering rewards for information in a number of arson cases. [ADD: Private rewards -- Nationbank, et.al. offering up to 500,000?]

## 2. Arrests

The partnership between various enforcement agencies has produced significant number of state and federal arrests that have solved many of the incidents.

Since January 1995, federal and state authorities have arrested 199 suspects in connection with 150 fires at churches and other houses of worship. This 35% rate of arrest is significantly higher than the general arrest rate for arsons, which is approximately 16%, according to Department of Justice statistics.

[DELETE??] Since the formation of the task force, the number of arrests has increased significantly. XXX persons, representing more than three quarters of all defendants arrested since January 1995, were arrested following the formation of the task force.

Of the 199 persons arrested, 34 are African American, 5 are Hispanic and 160 are white. XXX are juveniles. Of the XXX suspects arrested for arsons at African American churches, XXX are white, XXX are African American and XXX is Hispanic. Of the XXX suspects arrested for arsons at non-African American houses of worship, XXX are white, XXX are African American, and XXX are Hispanic. XXX additional white suspects have been arrested for

arsons at both African American churches and non-African American churches.

### 3. Convicts

Since January 1, 1995, XXX defendants have been convicted in federal and state prosecutions in connection with fires at XXX houses of worship. [See "Chart B" for a list of incidents in which a conviction has been obtained.] These successes include the first convictions under provisions of the 1996 Church Arson Prevention Act. Prosecutions in connection with XXX of the XXX incidents have occurred during the first year after the formation of the task force.

Federal charges are pending in a number of cases, and grand jury investigations are ongoing in many others. Conspiracy charges have been filed, and convictions obtained, in a number of cases involving small numbers of fires. Investigators continue to pursue the question whether broader conspiracies were responsible for some of the fires.

In still other cases, state prosecutions have been initiated in consultation with federal prosecutors or investigators. The NCATF actively monitors these prosecutions to ensure that any federal interest is vindicated and to ensure that accurate information is compiled regarding law enforcement's response to attacks on houses of worship. Often, state prosecutors need not demonstrate motive in order to obtain a conviction.

## II. Helping to Rebuild

### A. Coordinating the Rebuilding Effort

Working together with a wide array of private organizations and religious organizations, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has forged a coalition with the National Council of Churches, the Congress of National Black Churches, local financial institutions and other organizations. Together they have assessed the overall arson damage and worked to target resources to affected houses of worship as quickly as possible. As a result of this cooperation, 25 churches have been rebuilt and 62 more are currently being constructed.

### B. Strengthening Resources to Help Rebuild

At the request of President Clinton, Congress enacted legislation that authorized a HUD loan guarantee program that can be used for church rebuilding. The legislation, which also strengthened the law, made HUD responsible for administering a \$10 million Federal Loan Guarantee Fund to assist with the rebuilding of houses of worship and other non-profit organizations that have been damaged or destroyed by arson.

Through its work with local financial institutions, HUD is working actively with approximately 20% of the churches identifies as candidates for loan assistance.

In addition, the National Rebuilding Initiative will be awarding "rebuilding resource packages" to 79 churches in 18 states in the form of grants from the National Council of Churches, federally guaranteed loans, and volunteer labor and in-kind materials. Of these 79 churches, 13 are eligible for a HUD loan, 20 have received or are eligible for a National Council of Churches grant, and 46 are eligible for a blended resource package of a grant and loan.

### C. Reaching out to the Communities

The private-public partnership is continuing to identify other areas where help can be provided. They are conduct on-site visits and group workshops where technical advice and guidance is offered. HUD is also organizing regional workshops to bring together ministers from the burned churches with organizations and financial institutions, volunteers, and other grant-making agencies.

## III. Preventing Arsons

### A. Coordinating Prevention Efforts

The NCATF, as part of the federal response to church arson, participates in a coordinated effort to enhance local and state programs to prevent fires at houses of worship and to promote arson awareness generally. The National Arson Prevention Initiative, spearheaded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), has focused on coordinating federal resources to support community-based grass roots efforts to prevent arson.

In June 1996, FEMA established a Clearinghouse for arson prevention resources. To date, the Clearinghouse has received over XXX telephone inquiries from all 50 states and the District of Columbia, and responded to requests for over XXX packets of arson prevention materials. Included in those materials is the Church Threat Assessment Guide prepared by the NCATF, which informs congregations about steps they can take to make their churches safer, as well as steps to take after an incident has occurred.

### B. Strengthening Prevention Resources

#### 1. Providing Grants

In an effort to help communities prevent future arsons, Congress provided additional resources. For instance, the Justice

Department awarded \$3 million in grants to counties from 13 states to intensify their enforcement and surveillance efforts around vulnerable houses of worship. The states were: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

In addition, FEMA released \$774,000 in training grants to enhance state and local arson investigations and prevention capabilities. These grants have been used to deliver National Fire Academy courses by the state fire training organizations, and also to support the training of state and regional arson task forces.

[IAAI -- add their efforts!!!]

## 2. Educating Communities to Prevent Arsons

The NCATF updated and distributed a Church Threat Assessment Guide containing valuable information on the steps that may be taken to prevent fires at houses of worship and the steps to follow after an incident has occurred. Working with FEMA, the task force has distributed over XXX of these booklets.

The NCATF is working closely with FEMA, the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the National Sheriffs' Association and southern governors to develop a series of interdisciplinary training conferences and workshops on arson prevention that will be conducted in thirteen targeted southern states in 1997. An additional four regional conferences outside the southern region are also planned.

FEMA has developed a pilot community action program for arson prevention in three communities: Nashville, Tennessee, Charlotte, North Carolina, and Macon, Georgia. A coalition of fire prevention personnel, law enforcement, community, school and business leaders will be recruited to develop local arson prevention programs. These can include workshops on juvenile firesetters, an arson risk assessment survey, an arson hot-line, improved building and fire code enforcement and neighborhood watch programs.

## IV. Reconciliations

### A. Reaching Out to the Affected Communities

Without the confidence and cooperation of the congregations whose churches burned, many of these investigations, which were difficult at the outset, would have been destined to fail. The NCATF took steps early on to ensure solid, working relationships between law enforcement and the affected communities.

Less than a week after being formalized, the NCATF met with FBI and ATF Special Agents in Charge and U.S. Attorneys from the Southeast region to emphasize the critical importance of pursuing the investigations with vigilance, determination and dispatch, as well as with sensitivity to the needs of the victims.

President Clinton, Vice President Gore, Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin and Attorney General Janet Reno have helped reach out to the affected communities, by bringing church arsons to national attention, speaking out forcefully on the commitment of the federal government to solve these church arsons and meeting with ministers from the burned churches.

In June, President Clinton travelled to Greelyville, South Carolina to help dedicate a new church in place of . . . . In August, the President and Vice President travelled to Fruitland, Tennessee to help rebuild. . . And in June, the President

organized an interfaith breakfast where he called on leaders of all faiths to open discussion to resolve our nation's divisions.

Also, Treasury Secretary Rubin and Attorney General Reno instructed Assistant Secretary Johnson and then-Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Patrick to remain in close contact with the affected communities.

In addition to meeting regularly with representatives from the National Council of Churches, the NAACP, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Congressional Black Caucus, Assistant Secretary Johnson, then-Assistant Attorney General Patrick, and current Acting Assistant Attorney General Isabelle Katz Pinzler, have travelled throughout the South to meet with church and community leaders and to view personally the devastation these arsons have wrought.

#### B. Dispatching Conflict Resolution Experts

The Community Relations Service (CRS) also has been an important partner in Task Force outreach efforts. Conflict resolution experts from CRS have worked in many communities affected by church burnings to identify and resolve racial conflicts and reduce racial tensions, to foster healthy relationships between law enforcement and minority communities and to facilitate communications among all parties.

The NCATF also developed, with the help of CRS, and distributed to every ATF and FBI supervisor and U.S. Attorney a "Best Practices" guide for conducting community outreach activities. The guide noted the sources of tension that arson investigations could create both for [and by] law enforcement.

CRS plays an integral part in the Administration's response in local towns and cities, working with over 150 local communities in reducing racial polarization, bridging law enforcement and minority communities, facilitating a biracial rebuilding effort, and training law enforcement on cultural diversity and race relations. Throughout the South, CRS convened a series of dialogues on race relations at which community members learned to better understand their neighbors.

#### C. Watching the Nation Respond

In addition to the efforts of Congress, federal law enforcement agencies and the states, many private companies and organizations, as well as an untold number of Americans did their part in responding to the arsons.

Private companies offered funds and materials to help rebuild. Airlines reduced fares for individuals travelling south to offer a hand. Religious organizations and private groups organized work camps to construct new churches where old ones once stood. And thousands of Americans donated their time and money to show they cared.

Forty-four VISTA and AmeriCorps volunteers travelled to 18 rural communities in which church arsons have occurred and to 73 other communities in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. In these communities, volunteers conducted community and church threat assessments, organized arson watch groups and town hall meetings on arson prevention, and engaged in community relations projects.

In the end, Americans of all walks of life refused to let these acts of destruction tear apart our communities or our nation.

#### V. Drawing Preliminary Conclusions

- **Multiple Motives**

The arsons at African American churches raised significant fears about an increase in racially motivated crimes. As a result of our efforts to date, we have determined that the arsons were motivated by a wide array of factors, including blatant racism or religious hatred, but also financial profit, burglary, personal revenge, and plain old vandalism. The task force continues to investigate many cases. When sufficient evidence of racial motive is developed, we will continue to bring criminal civil rights charges, as we have in cases in Alabama, Nevada, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas.

- **National Conspiracy**

There is still no evidence to date to prove a national conspiracy. For instance, federal authorities have not found links between many of the individuals who were charged with arson. But in several instances, more than one individual was found to be responsible for more than one fire. These conspiracies, though, tend only to exist in defined geographic areas.

- **No Hate Group Conspiracy**

To date, the task force has not found a national conspiracy behind all the arsons. Each defendant or group of defendants were responsible for either one or a handful of arsons. While XX of the XX arrested in XX cases were determined to belong to a hate group, most of the defendants were either not part of a hate group or could not be proven to belong to one. In fact, prosecutors need not show that a

defendant belongs to a particular hate group in, order to gain a conviction.

- **No Final Conclusions**

The task force continues to investigate and prosecute those responsible for burning our nation's houses of worship. It is therefore too soon for the task force to speak conclusively to the motivation behind many of the fires at churches and other houses of worship. While it was the number of fires at African American churches that brought these crimes to national attention, the NCATF will continue to investigate and prosecute attacks on all houses of worship, regardless of their denomination or racial composition.

- **Damage**

Hundreds of churches burned, congregations were temporarily displaced, and many people were left wondering how this could happen in the 1990's. According to ATF, damage ranged from.... But, those communities which suffered a burned house of worship came to realize that thousands of Americans really care. The arsonists may have sought to divide our communities by burning our houses of worship, but in the end they only helped bring them closer together.

### **Conclusion**

We need to continue prosecuting, investigating, and rebuilding, but we also know there is more work to do. We have seen how communities can pull together to rebuild. We hope we can build on the progress that we have made here to further address the divisions in our society.

### **Acknowledgement**

The co-chairs of the Task Force would like to thank all of the investigators, prosecutors and others who have worked tirelessly and so well over the course of the last year.

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Johnson  
Assistant Secretary  
Department of the Treasury

Isabelle Katz Pinzler  
Acting Assistant Attorney General  
Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Justice

## QUOTES FOR THE NCATF REPORT

"When we got there it was about a group of Jews wanting to help out and experience the Southern black Christian community--a community which had never seen a Jew before. By the end of the week, it was about a group of blacks experiencing the Jewish community. Soon, whites and blacks were singing Hebrew Hanukkah songs in a Missionary Baptist Church in Alabama. It was a unique experience of coming together."

Gail Foorman, a San Francisco resident who traveled with a group of Jewish community leaders to Greensboro, Alabama to help rebuild the Rising Star Missionary Baptist Church.  
415-474-3247

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"It's important for the history of this country, it's important to remember the struggle of this country. It serves as a reminder as to how we all pulled together as a country to fight racism and hatred. This is the first time I've seen FBI, ATF and local and state law enforcement all working together to solve these crimes. That is significant."

Reverend Terrance Mackey, Mt. Zion AME Church in North Charleston, S.C.

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"I think that many black and white people...in Florence who did not previously know each other or would probably not even talk to each other became friends when they worked together to rebuild the church. It sort of brought the people together."

Michael Gutierrez, a 19-year old Montgomery (Maryland) County College student who travelled to help rebuild Effingham Baptist Church (CHECK THIS) in South Carolina.  
202-305-2967

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"I came down for a week and ended up staying five months. You meet so many people from so many different backgrounds and they are the most unselfish people. No one really cares whether they're arsons or not. It's just a matter of doing what needs to be done. It's an amazing experience."

Jason Horning, an 21 year-old Ann Arbor, Michigan resident who traveled to Greensboro, Alabama to help rebuild the Rising Star Baptist Church.

"The hard work and cooperation paid off in that we were able to conclude the initial investigation with the arrest of two individuals early on...Sunday."

G. Mike Davis, State Fire Marshal, Texas Commission on Fire Protection, commenting the efforts of federal officials working together with state officials. [ATF] (CHECK THIS)

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"When I was a student nearby, I helped move pews into the sanctuary. When I returned as an ATF agent, I was sifting thorough ashes to solve a crime. You could be sure I was going to proceed with compassion."

Dewey Webb, ATF RAC of the Oklahoma City Field Office, on his experience investigating the First Missionary Baptist church. (CHECK THIS)

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"At first there were so many different people from so many different backgrounds...and so many different religions....We were all a little on edge about our differences. But by the end of the week, no one cared about the differences...no one cared about who burned the churches. We just wanted to get the work done. It was the best experience of my life."

Elliot Panek, an Emerson College student who travelled to Greensboro, Alabama to help rebuild the Rising Star Missionary Baptist Church along with students from Boston University and Haverford College.

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"The second day we received a prepared lunch from the senior citizen Sunday School class...in Tuscaloosa. It struck me that I was not only helping to build a church, I was in some small way seeing the building of a community."

Debbie Gandy, Manassass, Va. [NOT CHECKED]

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"Nothing prepared us for what we were going to experience. The local community was so welcoming. The preacher even wondered whether the first guy who lit the first match understood how many people he brought together. In a way, I think it may have done as much good as it did harm. It's ironic that we had to travel hundreds of miles to address race relations. But now we're trying to foster community awareness right here on our campus."

Rob Donahue, who travelled to Greensboro, Alabama along with fellow Northwestern students to help rebuild the Rising Star Baptist Church.

05/29/97 THU 15:56 FAX

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"The local community was not bitter. They saw this as a way to come out of this ordeal stronger. This was a challenge. And they were going to rise and meet the challenge. I hope whoever did this saw me hanging drywall and putting the roof on--so they saw their act of hate backfired...it brought people together.

Earl Daniels, a Valdosta, Ga., resident who traveled to Boligee, Alabama, to help rebuild the Little Zion Baptist church.  
[912-244-2919]

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"At first I came here with the knowledge that I was to rebuild churches...What I did not realize was that I was also here to help rebuild the hopes and trust of the suffering community. What these people experience was an act of hate...We hopefully instilled the idea in these people that hate and racist-driven acts will not go unrecognized and that people will take action."

Elizabeth Miller 703-759-6021 [lm]

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"I witnessed an incredible outpouring of support to the community. I sometimes wonder...if people responded the same way when Hitler burned more than hundred temples in one night in Germany, maybe the Holocaust would never have occurred."

Rabbi Nancy Weiner [Not checked]

# National Church Arson Task Force

## Breakdown of House of Worship Arson/Bombing Investigations

January 1, 1995 - MAY 27, 1997

### Houses of Worship Nationwide

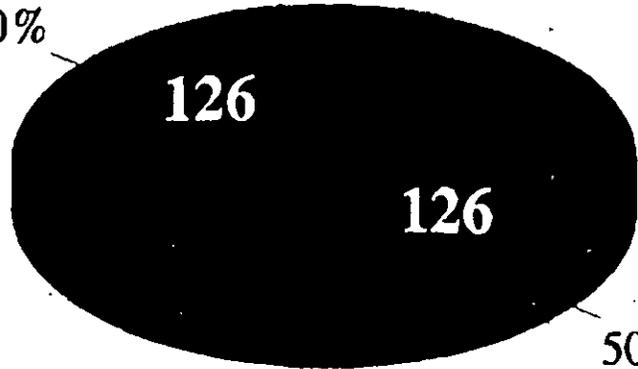
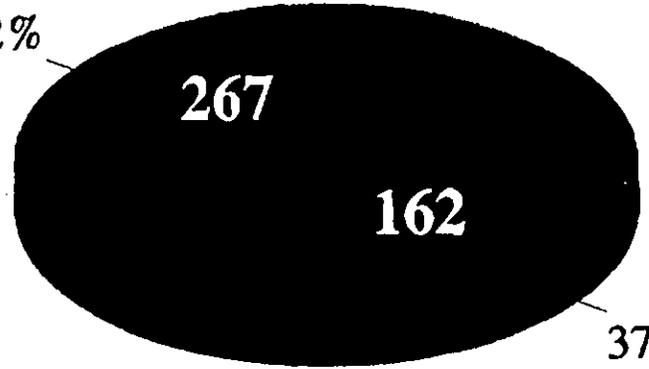
### Houses of Worship Located in the South

Other Houses  
of Worship

African American  
Houses of Worship

62.2%

50.0%



African American  
Houses of Worship

Other Houses  
of Worship

***Total House of Worship Arsons/Bombings - 429***

# NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE BREAKDOWN OF ARSON/BOMBING/ATTEMPTED BOMBING INVESTIGATIONS

*JANUARY 1, 1995 - MAY 27, 1997*

PENDING  
INVESTIGATIONS

65.0%

279

150

35.0%

INVESTIGATIONS WHERE  
ARRESTS HAVE BEEN MADE

**TOTAL INVESTIGATIONS = 429**

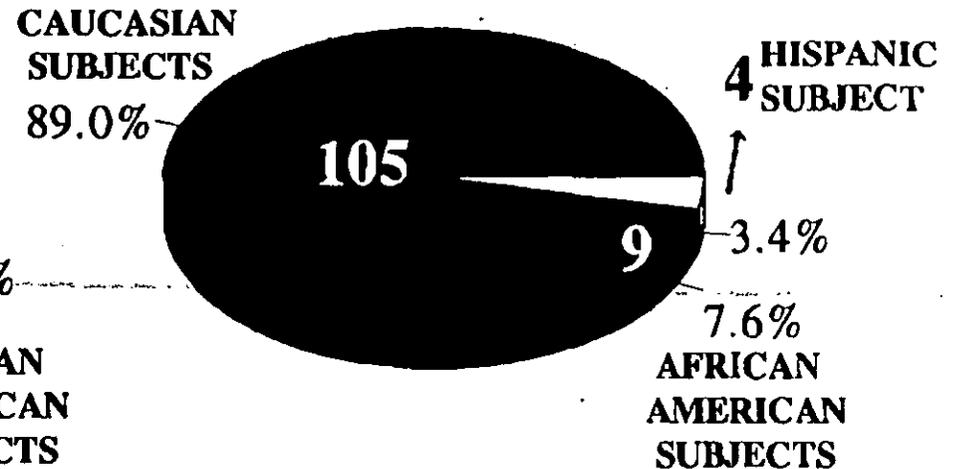
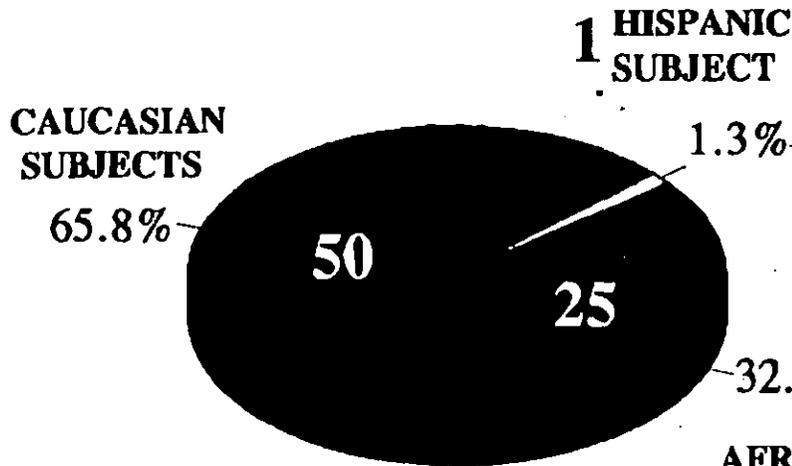
**NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE  
 RACIAL MAKEUP OF ARRESTED SUBJECTS  
 HOUSE OF WORSHIP ARSONS/BOMBINGS NATIONWIDE  
 JANUARY 1, 1995 - MAY 27, 1997**

**AFRICAN AMERICAN  
 HOUSES OF WORSHIP**

**NON-AFRICAN AMERICAN  
 HOUSES OF WORSHIP**

**ARSONS - 50  
 BOMBINGS - 2**

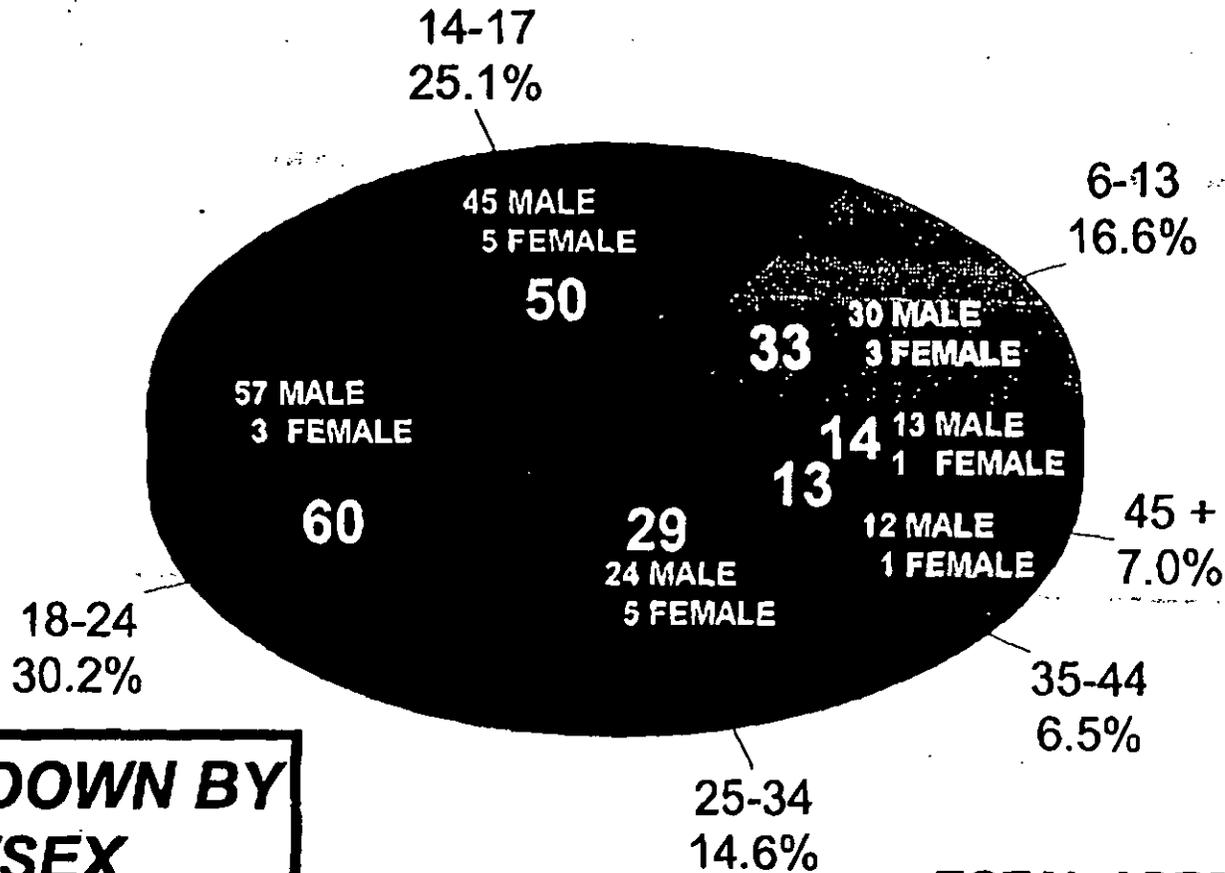
**ARSONS - 95  
 BOMBINGS - 3**



**FIVE (5) ADDITIONAL CAUCASIAN SUBJECTS ARRESTED FOR ARSON/BOMBING OF AN AFRICAN AMERICAN HOUSE OF WORSHIP AND A NON AFRICAN AMERICAN HOUSE OF WORSHIP.**

**199 SUBJECTS TOTAL**

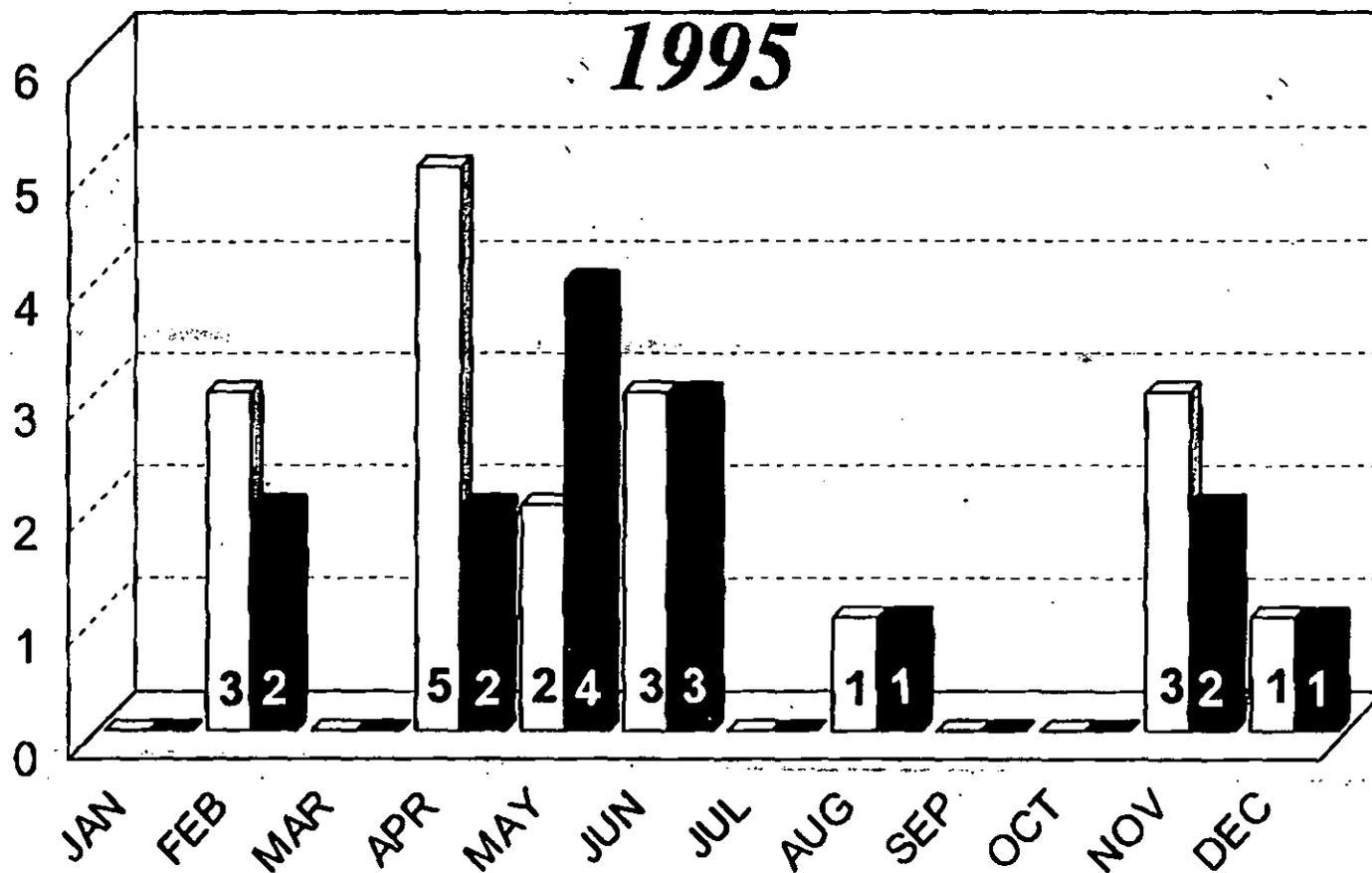
# NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE SUBJECTS ARRESTED FOR CHURCH ARSONS/BOMBINGS/ATTEMPTED BOMBINGS IN THE UNITED STATES JANUARY 1, 1995 - MAY 27, 1997



**BREAKDOWN BY  
AGE/SEX**

**TOTAL ARRESTS = 199**

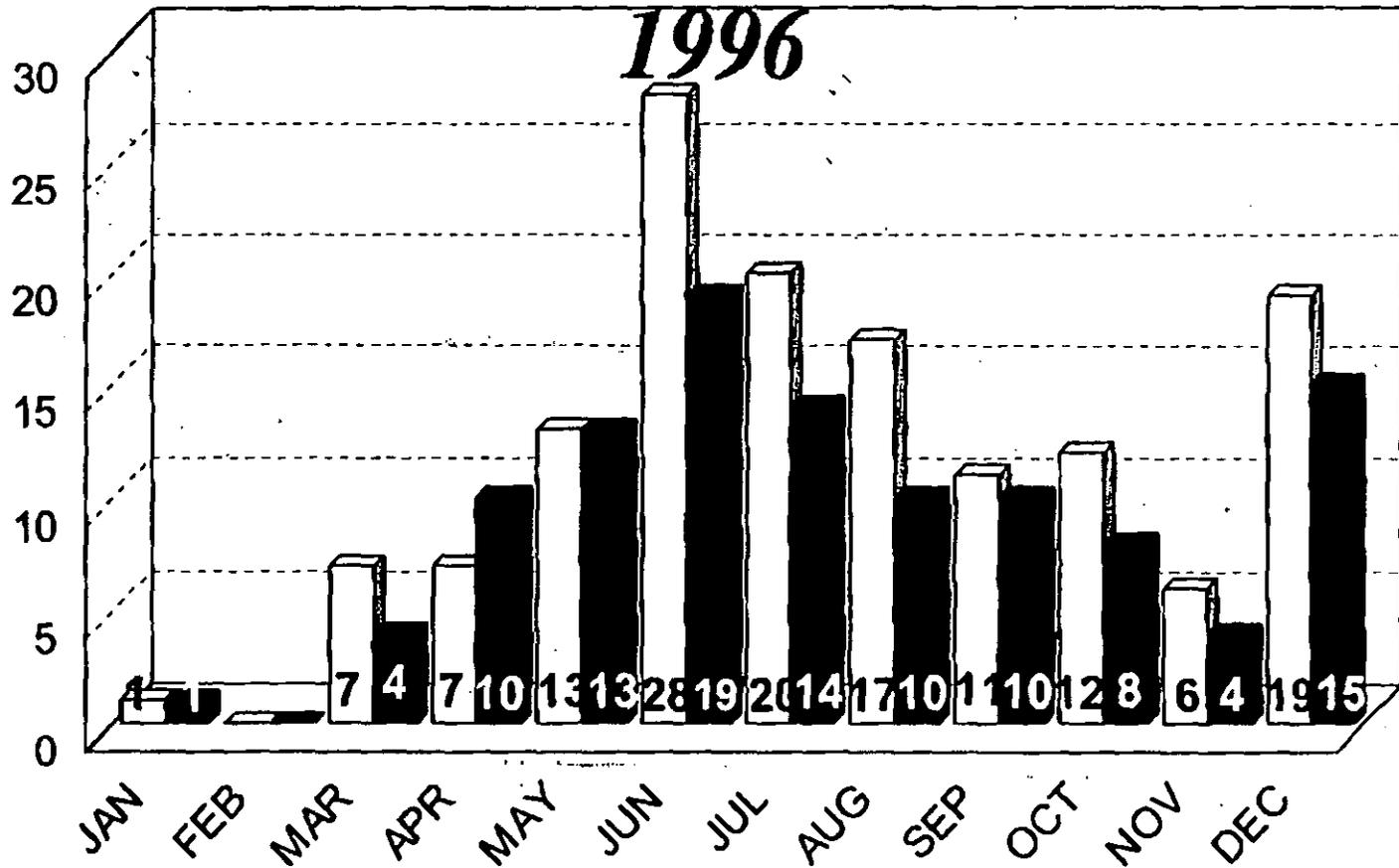
# NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE CHURCH ARSON/BOMBING/ATTEMPTED BOMBING INVESTIGATIONS RESULTING IN ARRESTS NATIONWIDE



□ INDIVIDUALS ARRESTED - 18  
■ INCIDENTS SOLVED BY THESE ARRESTS - 15

INFORMATION DISPLAYED  
BY DATE OF SUBJECT'S ARREST

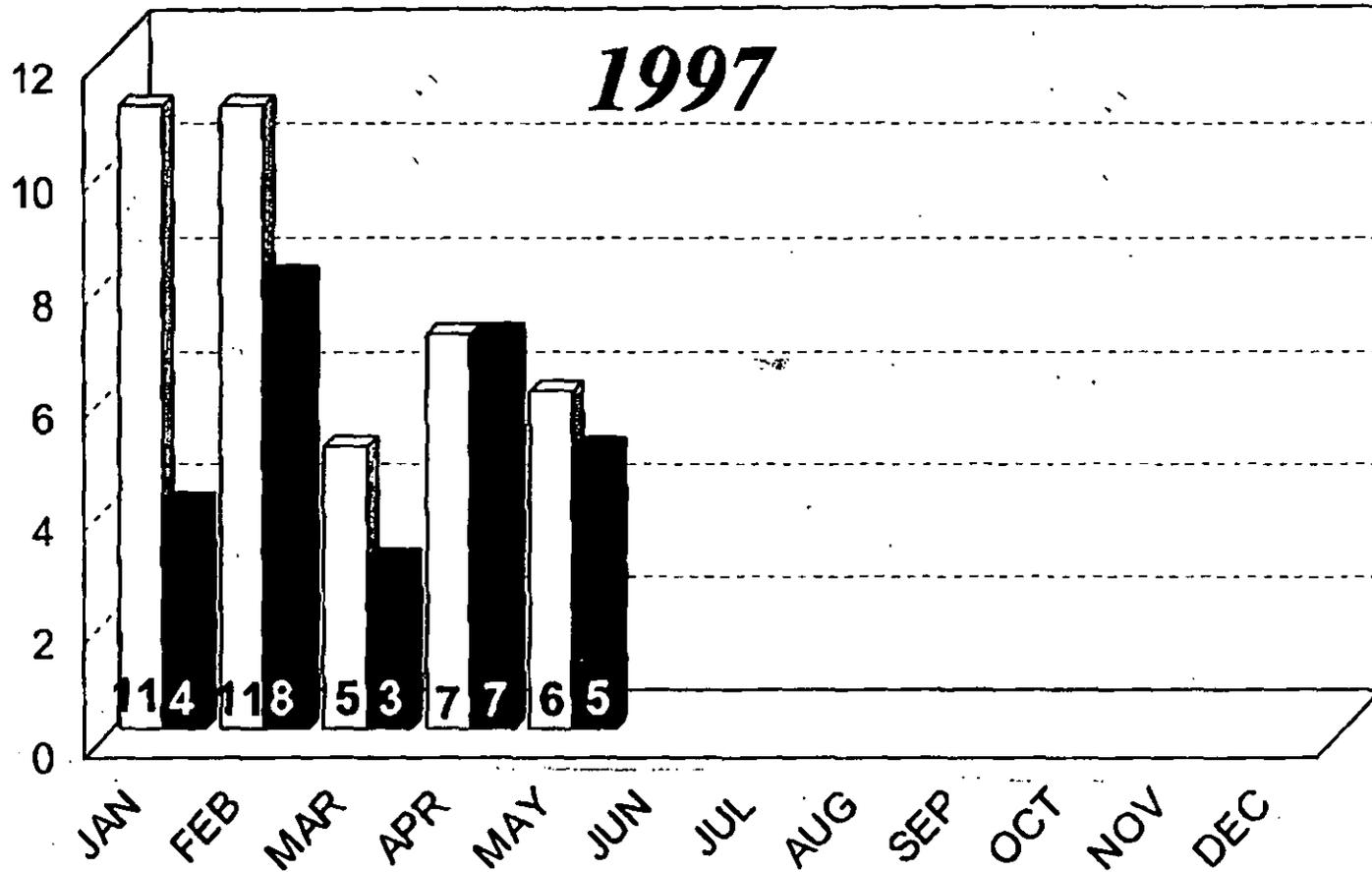
# NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE CHURCH ARSON/BOMBING/ATTEMPTED BOMBING INVESTIGATIONS RESULTING IN ARRESTS NATIONWIDE



□ INDIVIDUALS ARRESTED - 141  
 ■ INCIDENTS SOLVED BY THESE ARRESTS - 108

INFORMATION DISPLAYED  
 BY DATE OF SUBJECT'S ARREST  
 CHART REFLECTS ACTIVITY  
 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 1996

# NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE CHURCH ARSON/BOMBING/ATTEMPTED BOMBING INVESTIGATIONS RESULTING IN ARRESTS NATIONWIDE

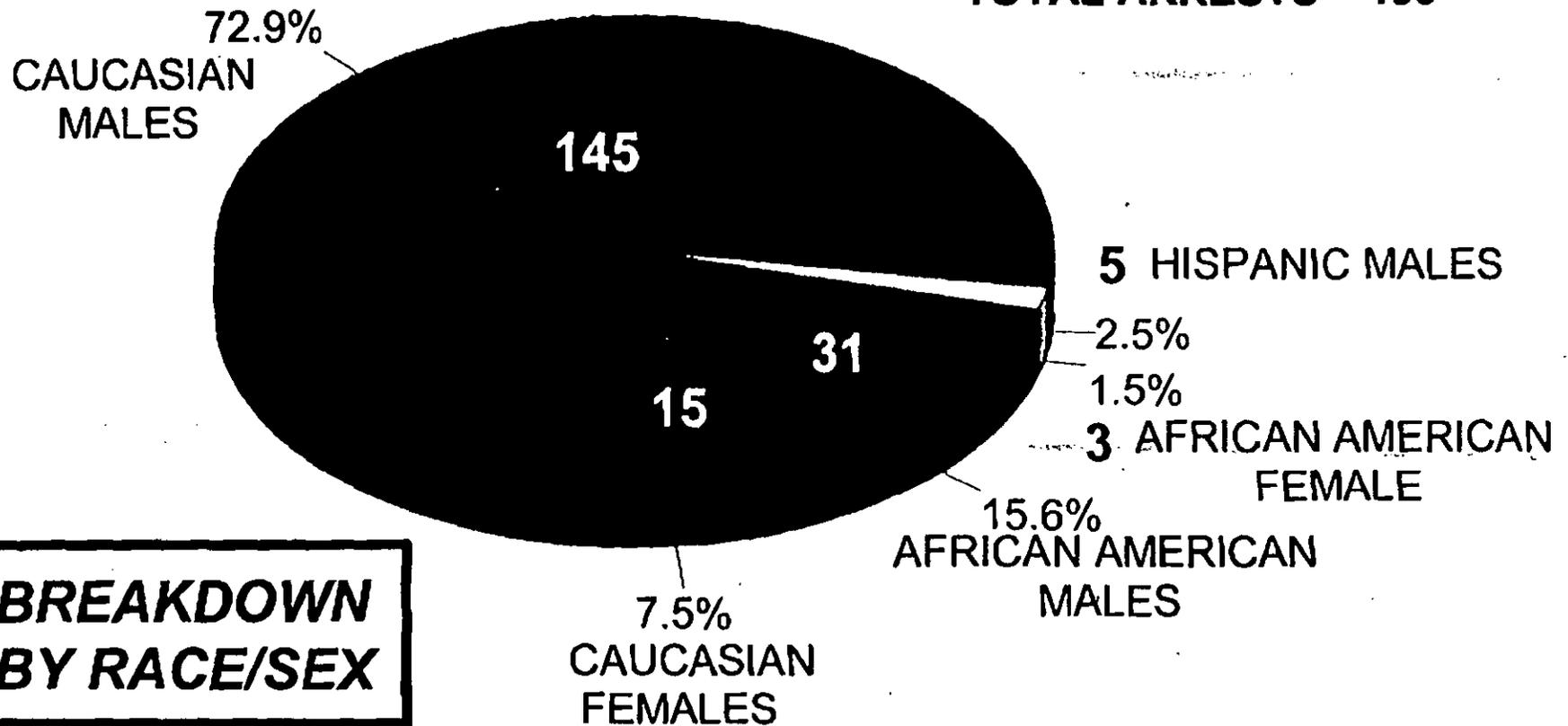


□ INDIVIDUALS ARRESTED - 40  
 ■ INCIDENTS SOLVED BY THESE ARRESTS - 27

INFORMATION DISPLAYED  
 BY DATE OF SUBJECT'S ARREST  
 CHART REFLECTS ACTIVITY  
 THROUGH MAY 27, 1997

# NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE SUBJECTS ARRESTED FOR CHURCH ARSONS/BOMBINGS/ATTEMPTED BOMBINGS IN THE UNITED STATES JANUARY 1, 1995 - MAY 27, 1997

TOTAL ARRESTS = 199



**BREAKDOWN  
BY RACE/SEX**

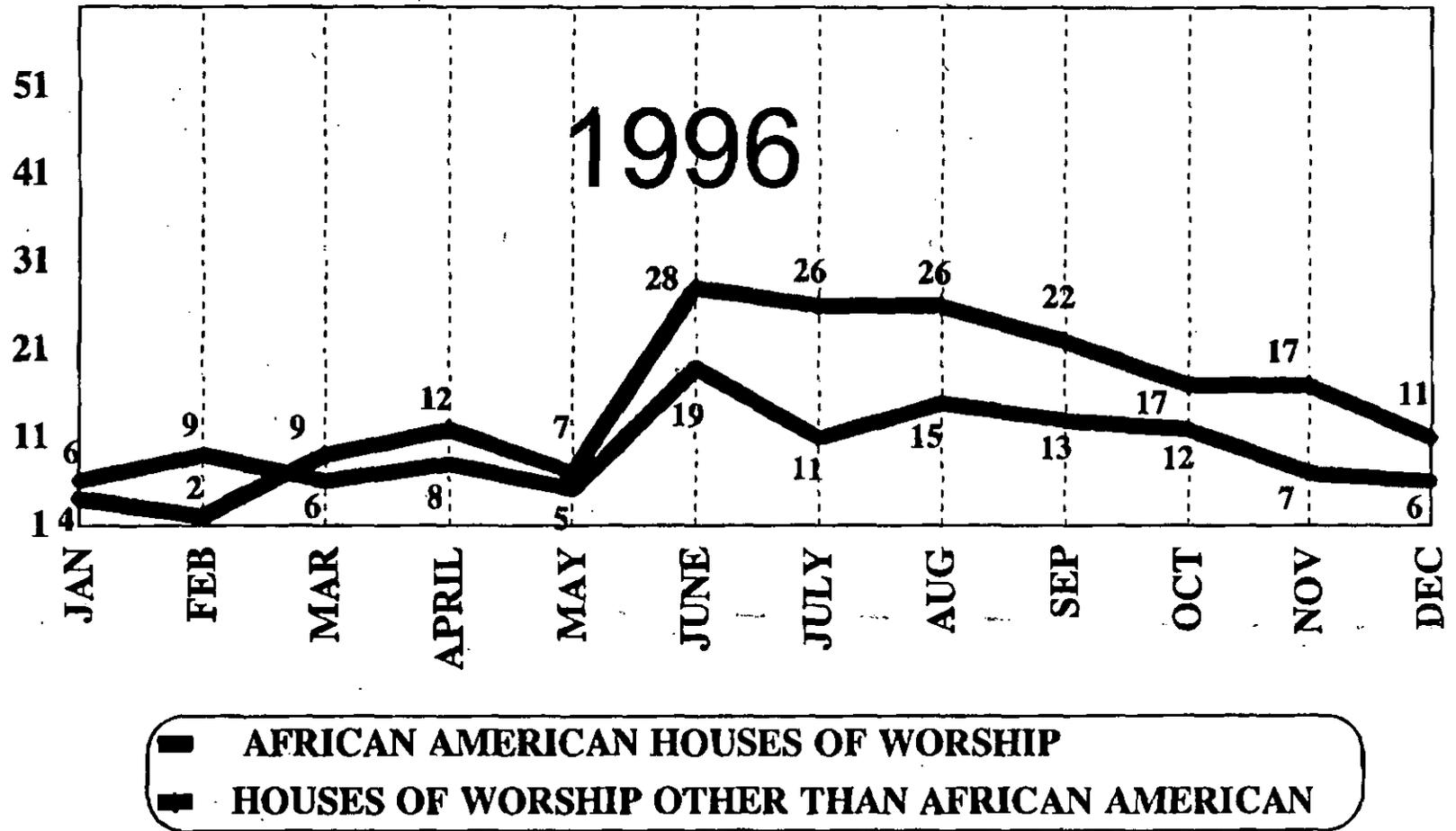
# NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE

## CHURCH ARSON/BOMBING/ATTEMPTED BOMBING INVESTIGATIONS

117 - AFRICAN AMERICAN HOUSES OF WORSHIP

181- OTHER HOUSES OF WORSHIP

### TOTAL INCIDENTS NATIONWIDE - 298



■ AFRICAN AMERICAN HOUSES OF WORSHIP  
■ HOUSES OF WORSHIP OTHER THAN AFRICAN AMERICAN

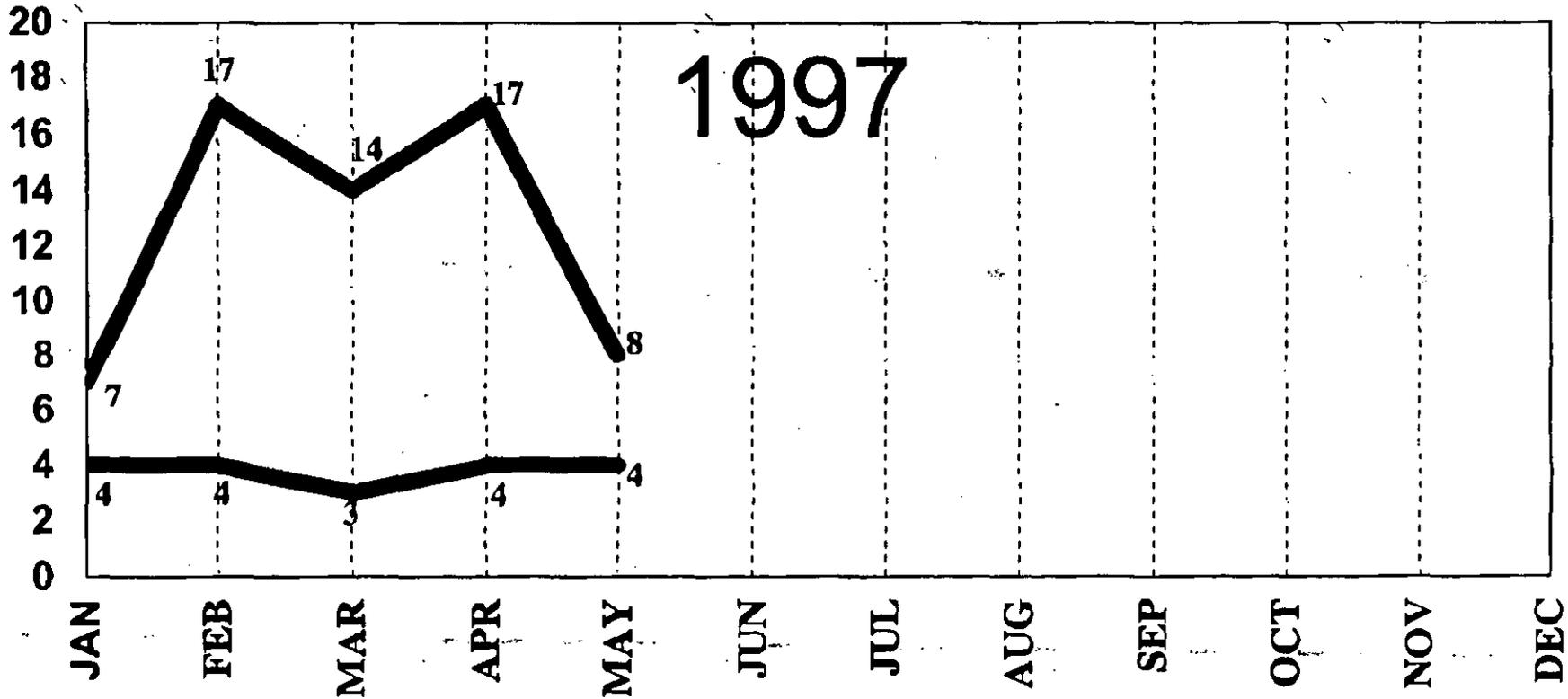
JANUARY 1, 1996 - DECEMBER 31, 1996

# NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE CHURCH ARSON/BOMBING/ATTEMPTED BOMBING INVESTIGATIONS

19- AFRICAN AMERICAN HOUSES OF WORSHIP

63 - OTHER HOUSES OF WORSHIP

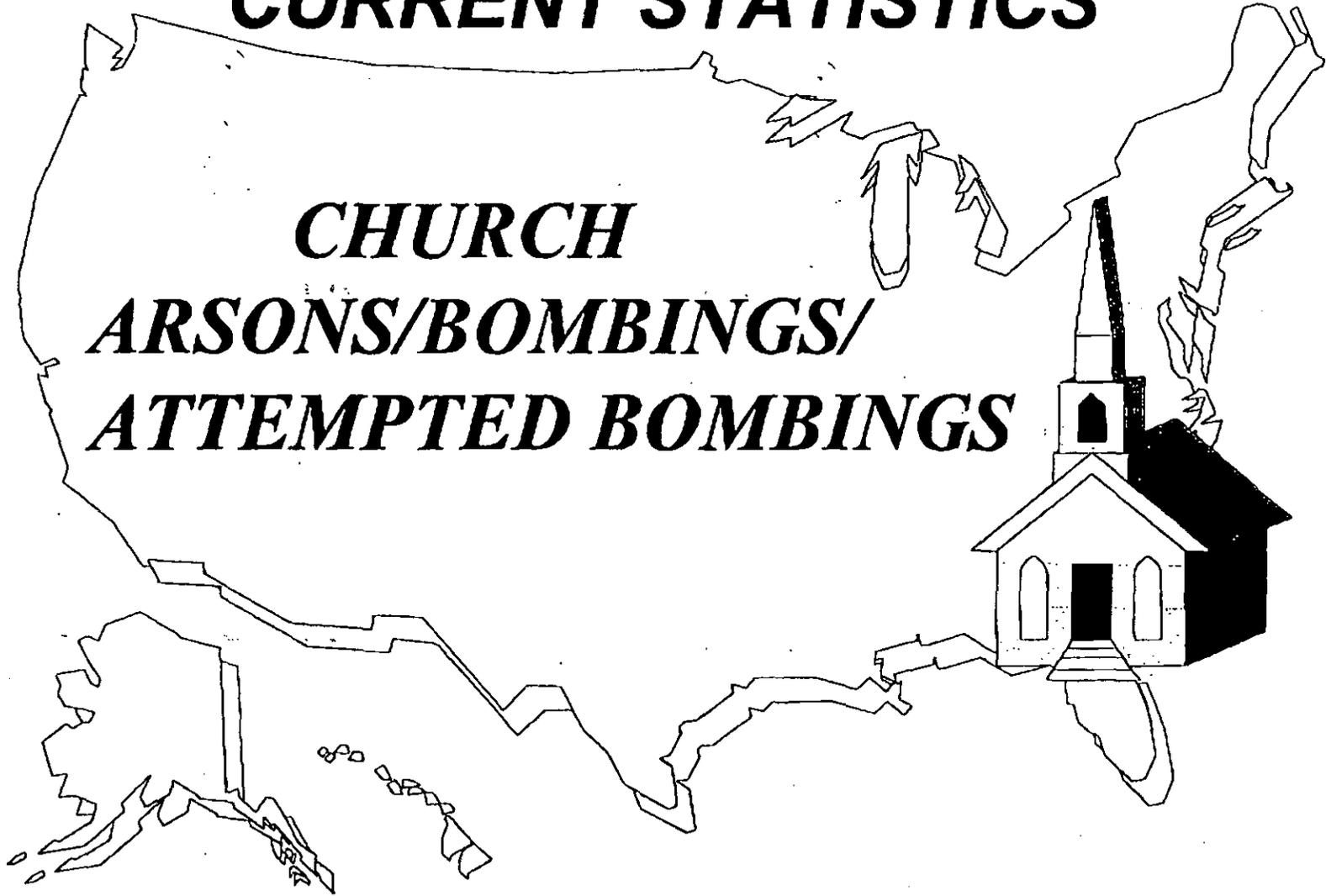
## TOTAL INCIDENTS NATIONWIDE - 82



■ OTHER HOUSES OF WORSHIP  
■ AFRICAN AMERICAN HOUSES OF WORSHIP

JANUARY 1, 1997 - MAY 27, 1997

**NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE  
CURRENT STATISTICS**

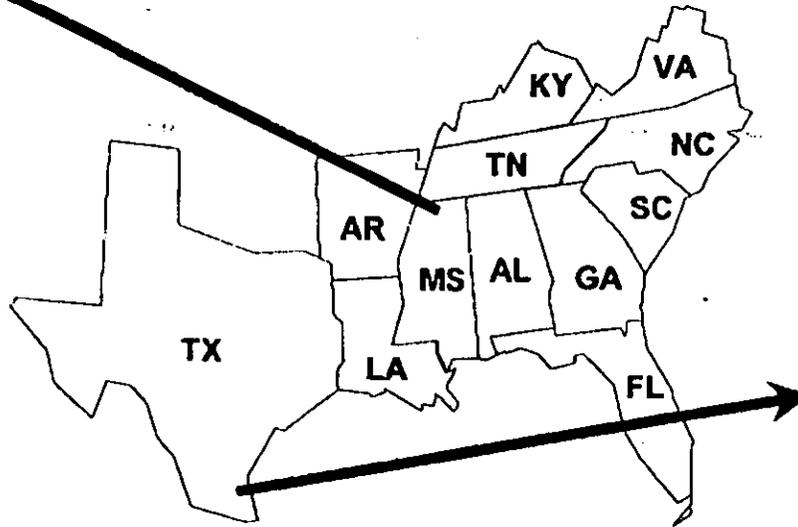


# NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE

## AFRICAN AMERICAN CHURCH FIRE INVESTIGATIONS IN THE SOUTH

### January 1, 1995 to May 27, 1997

- NOVEMBER 1, 1995
- \* Lynch Chapel United Methodist - Clinton, MS
- MARCH 5, 1996
- St. Paul CME - Halley, MS
- MARCH 20, 1996
- New Mt. Zion Baptist - Ruteville, MS
- MARCH 30, 1996
- \* El Bethel Church - Sartonia, MS
- JUNE 17, 1996
- Kossuth, MS
- Mt. Pleasant Church
- Central Grove Mission
- JUNE 30, 1996
- House of Prayer - Greenville, MS
- AUGUST 4, 1996
- Bescon Baptist - Yazoo City, MS
- SEPTEMBER 6, 1996
- \* First James Creek Missionary - Noxubee Co., MS
- SEPTEMBER 9, 1996
- \* First Missionary Baptist - Gulfport, MS
- OCTOBER 9, 1996
- House of Prayer, Church of God - Greenville, MS
- OCTOBER 29, 1996
- Mt. Olive Church of God - Tiptonville, MS
- DECEMBER 11, 1996
- \* Mollalieu Methodist Church - Meridian, MS
- APRIL 9, 1997
- Lakeview Missionary Baptist - Sledge, MS



- JANUARY 29, 1995
- Miles Chapel Christian Methodist - Houston, TX
- FEBRUARY 16, 1995
- Love Fellowship Church of God - Houston, TX
- JUNE 5, 1995
- \* Victory Baptist - Denison, TX
- NOVEMBER 14, 1995
- Greater Gospel Temple - Dallas, TX
- FEBRUARY 12, 1996
- Real Rock Church - Houston, TX
- FEBRUARY 16, 1996
- \* Real Rock Church - Houston, TX
- APRIL 12, 1996 Bombing
- Southwest Community Baptist - Houston, TX
- MAY 14, 1996
- \* Long Ridge CME - Waskom, TX
- JUNE 9, 1996
- \* New Lighthouse of Prayer - Greenville, TX
- JUNE 10, 1996
- \* Church of the Living God - Greenville, TX
- JUNE 18, 1996
- On Track Baptist - Houston, TX
- SEPTEMBER 10, 1996
- Church of Living God - Dallas, TX
- SEPTEMBER 26, 1996
- Soul Inspiration - Dallas, TX
- OCTOBER 17, 1996
- Garza Street Ch. of Christ - Dallas, TX
- OCTOBER 21, 1996
- God's Gospel Temple - Dallas, TX
- OCTOBER 23, 1996
- Sardis Primitive Baptist - Meade, TX
- NOVEMBER 20, 1996
- Full Gospel Powerhouse - Wichita Falls, TX
- DECEMBER 7, 1996
- Hopewell UMC - Centerville, TX
- JANUARY 4, 1997
- Harp Baptist Church - Fairfield, TX
- MARCH 18, 1997
- Garden Geth. C.O.G. - Houston, TX
- March 22, 1997
- \* Macedonia Baptist - Ferris, TX
- April 8, 1997
- \* West Oakland Bapt - Beaumont, TX

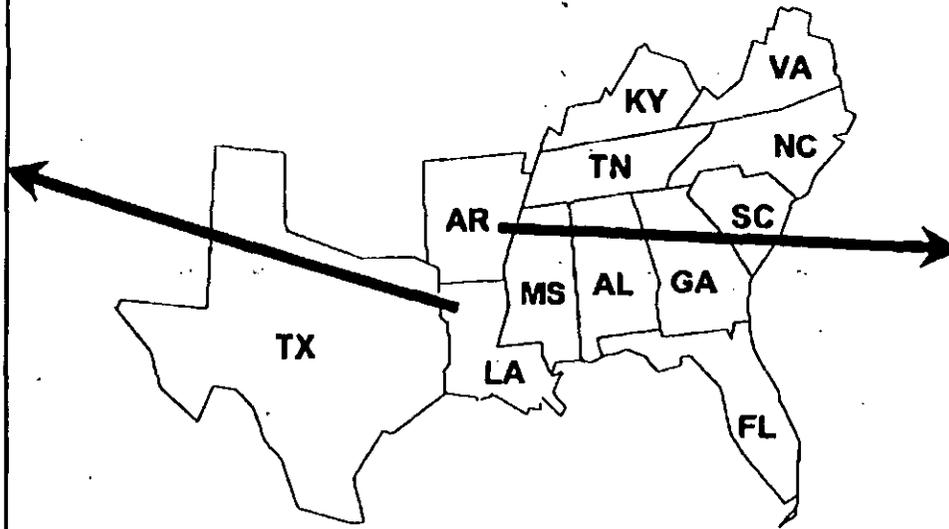
\* Arrest Made

# NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE

## AFRICAN AMERICAN CHURCH FIRE INVESTIGATIONS IN THE SOUTH

### January 1, 1995 to May 27, 1997

MAY 24, 1995  
 Mt. Corinth Baptist, Vivian, LA  
 FEBRUARY 1, 1996  
 Zachary, LA  
 Cypress Grove Baptist  
 Baker, LA  
 Sweet Home Baptist  
 Thomas Chapel Benevolent Society  
 St Paul's Free Baptist  
 APRIL 8, 1996  
 Oak Ridge Baptist - Calvin, LA  
 APRIL 11, 1996  
 St. Charles Baptist - Paincourtville, LA  
 JUNE 24, 1996  
 New Birth Temple - Shreveport, LA  
 JUNE 26, 1996  
 Greater Ebenezer - New Orleans, LA  
 AUGUST 2, 1996  
 St. Abraham Baptist - Shreveport, LA  
 SEPTEMBER 29, 1996  
 St. Johns Baptist - Haughton, LA  
 DECEMBER 1, 1996  
 Samuel Temple - New Orleans, LA  
 DECEMBER 10, 1996  
 \* New Birth Miss. Bap. - Lk. Charles, LA  
 FEBRUARY 2, 1997  
 Vision Baptist - Baton Rouge, LA



JULY 20, 1996  
 Clayborn Chapel AME - Arkadelphia, AR  
 JULY 27, 1996  
 New Calvary Church - Camden, AR  
 AUGUST 20, 1996  
 Mt. Zion Missionary - Marvel, AR  
 AUGUST 21, 1996  
 St. Matthews Missionary - Turner, AR  
 SEPTEMBER 26, 1996  
 Fredonia Missionary Baptist - Helena, AR  
 NOVEMBER 17, 1996  
 Princess Chapel Missionary - Luxora, AR  
 APRIL 2, 1997  
 El Bethel COG In Christ - Beardon, AK

\* Arrest Made

# NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE

## AFRICAN AMERICAN CHURCH FIRE INVESTIGATIONS IN THE SOUTH

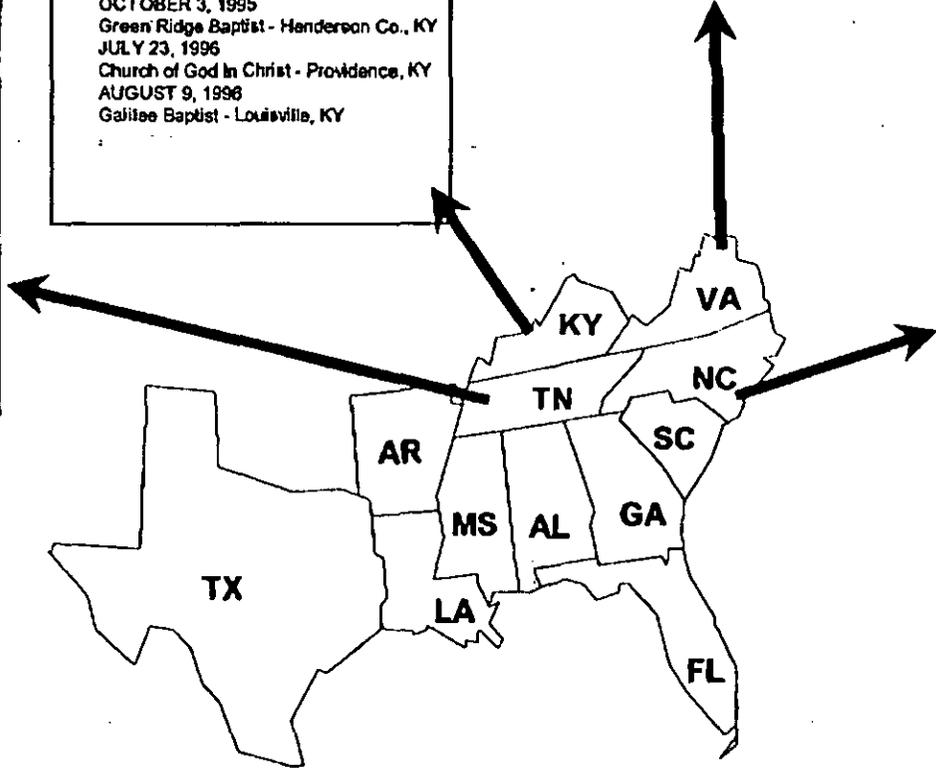
### January 1, 1995 to May 27, 1997

**JANUARY 13, 1995**  
 Johnson Grove Baptist - Bells, TN  
 Macedonia Baptist - Denmark, TN  
**JANUARY 29, 1995 Bombing**  
 \*Friendship Missionary - Maury Co., TN  
 \*Canaan AME Church - Maury Co., TN  
**JANUARY 31, 1995**  
 Mt. Calvary Baptist - Hardeman, TN  
**DECEMBER 30, 1995**  
 Salem Baptist - Fruitland, TN  
**JANUARY 8, 1996**  
 Innerscity Church - Knoxville, TN  
**MAY 14, 1996**  
 Mt. Pleasant Baptist - Tigrett, TN  
**AUGUST 5, 1996 Bombing Attempt**  
 Knoxville Comm Invest. (Innerscity) - Knoxville, TN  
**OCTOBER 29, 1996**  
 Springhill Missionary - Memphis, TN  
**NOVEMBER 12, 1996**  
 Greenwood CME - Memphis, TN  
**MARCH 23, 1997**  
 Pleasant Ridge Methodist - Pulaski, TN

**OCTOBER 3, 1995**  
 Green Ridge Baptist - Henderson Co., KY  
**JULY 23, 1996**  
 Church of God in Christ - Providence, KY  
**AUGUST 9, 1996**  
 Galilee Baptist - Louisville, KY

**MAY 15, 1995**  
 Greater Mt. Zion - Portsmouth, VA  
**FEBRUARY 21, 1996**  
 \*Glorious Church of God - Richmond, VA  
**APRIL 16, 1996**  
 First Baptist Church of Centralia - Chesterfield, VA  
**OCTOBER 12, 1996**  
 \*Peace of Mind Baptist - Reston, VA

**MARCH 14, 1995**  
 New Outreach Christian - Charlotte, NC  
**OCTOBER 31, 1995**  
 Mt. Pisgah Baptist - Raeford, NC  
**DECEMBER 25, 1995**  
 Mt. Moriah Baptist - Cheek Crossing, NC  
**JANUARY 6, 1996**  
 \*Ohovah AME Church - Orrum, NC  
**MAY 23, 1996**  
 \*Mt. Tabor Baptist - Cerro Gordo, NC  
**MAY 24, 1996**  
 \*Pleasant Hill Baptist - Lumberton, NC  
**JUNE 6, 1996**  
 \*Matthews-Murkand Presbyterian - Charlotte, NC  
**JUNE 30, 1996**  
 \*St. James AME Church - Maysville, NC  
**JANUARY 3, 1997**  
 Soul Saving Baptist Church - Charlotte, NC



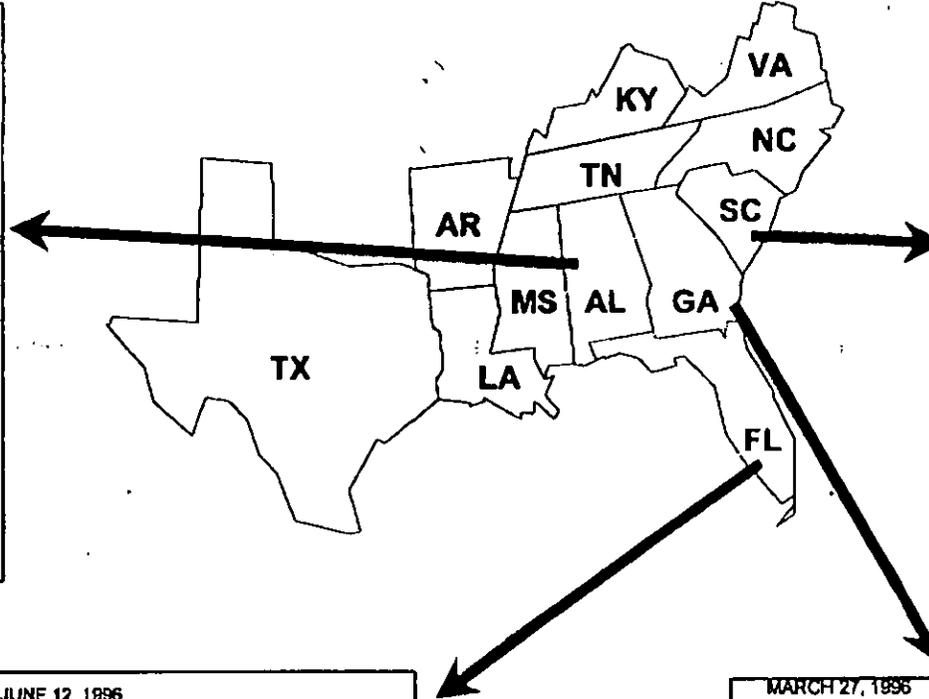
**\* Arrest Made**

# NATIONAL CHURCH ARSON TASK FORCE

## AFRICAN AMERICAN CHURCH FIRE INVESTIGATIONS IN THE SOUTH

### January 1, 1995 to May 27, 1997

- OCTOBER 31, 1995
- \* Faith Whole Truth Holiness - Pennington, AL
- DECEMBER 22, 1995
- Mt. Zion Baptist - Boligee, AL
- JANUARY 11, 1996
- Little Mt. Zion Baptist - Boligee, AL
- JANUARY 12, 1996
- Mt. Zoar Baptist - Boligee, AL
- FEBRUARY 26, 1996
- \* New Liberty Baptist - Tyler, AL
- MARCH 25, 1996
- Central Baptist - Browns, AL
- MAY 5, 1996
- \* Ashbank Freewill - Nauvoo, AL
- JUNE 3, 1996
- Rising Star Baptist - Greensboro, AL
- JULY 22, 1996
- \* Isabella Baptist - Tyler, AL
- JULY 28, 1996
- Emanuel Outreach - Decatur, AL
- OCTOBER 27, 1996
- Sunlight Baptist - Eastaboga, AL
- NOVEMBER 14, 1996
- \* Born Again Ch of Christ - Hefelin, AL



- MAY 20, 1995
- Summergrove Baptist - Aiken, SC
- JUNE 20, 1995
- \* Mount Zion AME Church - Williamsburg Co., SC
- JUNE 21, 1995
- \* Macedonia Baptist - Manning, SC
- AUGUST 15, 1995
- \* Saint John's Baptist - Lexington Co., SC
- DECEMBER 1995
- \* Mount Hill Missionary - Montmorenci, SC
- JANUARY 25, 1996
- St. Paul AME Zion - Hartsville, SC
- MARCH 31, 1996
- \* Butler Chapel AME - Orangaburg, SC
- APRIL 13, 1996
- Rosemary Baptist - Barmwell, SC
- APRIL 26, 1996
- Effingham Baptist - Effingham, SC
- JUNE 11, 1996
- \* New St. Paul Apostolic - Florence, SC
- JULY 16, 1996
- \* Johns Island Church - Johns Island, SC
- AUGUST 1, 1996
- \* Springhill AME - Flordale Community, SC
- DECEMBER 22, 1996
- Arm Oak Baptist - Jasper, SC

- JUNE 12, 1996
- \* Evangelist Temple - Marianna, FL
- AUGUST 7, 1996
- \* Bethel Baptist - Jacksonville, FL
- SEPTEMBER 8, 1996
- New Life Tabernacle - Deland, FL
- SEPTEMBER 15, 1996
- Apostle Faith Church of Jesus - Indiantown, FL
- OCTOBER 27, 1996
- Shiloh Metropolitan - Jacksonville, FL
- JANUARY 12, 1997
- \* Plantation Center Minis. - Miami, FL
- March 19, 1997
- \* Covenant Missionary Bap - Ocala, FL

- MARCH 27, 1996
- Gay's Hill Baptist - Milton, GA
- AUGUST 7, 1996
- Swift Creek Missionary - Macon, GA
- OCTOBER 22, 1996
- Holy Band of Inspiration - Brunswick, GA
- NOVEMBER 30, 1996
- Greater Zion Hill Missionary Baptist - Macon, GA
- FEBRUARY 19, 1997
- Antioch Holiness Church - Savannah, GA
- FEBRUARY 22, 1997
- \* Oak Grove CME Church - Elko, GA
- APRIL 1, 1997
- New Covenant Missionary - Atlanta, GA
- MAY 1, 1997
- \* Graham Temple Holiness - Nashville, GA
- MAY 7, 1997
- Galilee Missionary Bap - Marietta, GA
- MAY 16, 1997
- Mt. Sinai Baptist - Taylorville, GA

\* Arrest Made

Rack: church fires



Jose Cerda III

05/29/97 03:03:33 PM

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Record Type: Record

To: Sylvia M. Mathews/WHO/EOP, Maria Echaveste/WHO/EOP  
cc: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP  
Subject: One-Year Report on Church Arson

Sylvia/Maria:

Treasury has mentioned to me that they and Justice are preparing to release a one-year report on church arson. If I'm not mistaken, they're planning to leak the report next weekend, release it -- officially -- on June 8th and follow-up with a National Council of Black Churches meeting. I'll double check the facts and try and bring the draft report to the 4pm.

More importantly, though, shouldn't this report play into our media planning for the reconciliation event/speech.

Jose'