

The American people can take pride as well in our steady support for Russia's democratic reform. As the results are counted, we will

shortly learn the choice of the Russian people. But one thing is clear: Today was a triumph for democracy in Russia.

Statement on Signing the Church Arson Prevention Act of 1996

July 3, 1996

Today I have signed into law H.R. 3525, the "Church Arson Prevention Act of 1996," which will make it easier to prosecute those who set fire to churches. I applaud the Congress' swift, unanimous, and bipartisan passage of this bill. I have signed it promptly upon its transmittal to me so that the new law can go into effect as soon as possible, but I plan to acknowledge the Congress' role more formally and discuss

the importance of this measure at an appropriate occasion next week.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 3, 1996.

NOTE: H.R. 3525, approved July 3, was assigned Public Law No. 104-155.

Memorandum on the Western Power Outage

July 3, 1996

Memorandum for the Secretary of Energy

Subject: Western Power Outage

Yesterday, there was an unexplained power failure in the Western power grid, disrupting electric service to hundreds of thousands of customers in 15 Western states. The outages had a ripple effect as power stations across the vast grid automatically shut down as the result of experiencing a surge. The outages caused numerous problems throughout the region, including disruptions of train service, traffic problems, loss of air conditioning, interruption of telephone service, and interference with water supplies.

I direct you to provide to me a report within 30 days, that:

1. Analyzes the cause of yesterday's outage;
2. Describes the extent and duration of the outage;

3. Analyzes whether the outage could have been prevented and whether the Western Systems Coordinating Council (WSCC) electric reliability system responded as anticipated to the initial outage;
4. Makes recommendations for any operational or regulatory changes at WSCC; and
5. Assesses the adequacy of existing North American electric reliability systems and makes recommendations for any operational or regulatory changes.

I have directed that these steps be taken to assure the reliability of the Nation's electricity infrastructure. A steady supply of power is a vital factor in both the local and national economies and is essential for the safety of all Americans. The swift implementation of this directive will assure that these interests will be protected.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON