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World news

Group cites S. Africa jailings

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) — Police have jailed nearly 9,000 people this year in their attempt to quell rioting against white rule, including many children and teen-agers who have been beaten or confined with criminals, a monitoring group said Thursday.

"Never in the recent history of South Africa has repression been greater," the Detainees Parents' Support Committee said.

Witnesses said police used rubber whips and clubs on about 150 white people who held a candlelight procession Wednesday night in Cape Town. Police began using such methods last week to disperse groups of people holding candles in protest of arrests under the state of emergency imposed on riot-torn black and mixed-race districts.

There were unconfirmed reports that police detained Jabu Ngwenya, head of a committee in Soweto, the huge black city outside Johannesburg, that is organizing Christmas season boycott of white-owned stores.

The boycott has spread, and chambers of commerce say it has cost some merchants in the Johannesburg and Pretoria areas up to 90 percent of their business in recent days.

Boycott organizers in Pretoria said they were trying to control groups of young "enforcers" who confiscate and destroy goods bought from white shops. Some people have been forced to eat or drink what they bought, including soap and motor oil.

Police reported no new deaths Thursday in scattered rioting against apartheid, the official system of race discrimination that keeps South Africa's 5 million whites in control and denies rights to the 24 million blacks.

At least 900 people have been killed since the violence began almost 16 months ago, nearly all of them black. The South African Institute of Race Relations, which compiles statistics from police reports and newspaper accounts, puts the figure well above 900.

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Congress gets nowhere on funding measure

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congress, unable to agree on a multi-billion dollar funding measure for the full fiscal year, whisked through a stopgap bill Thursday needed to tide many federal agencies over for the weekend and prevent disruption of government services.

At the same time, administration officials reported progress in their efforts to cajole Republican lawmakers into reviving proposals for major overhaul of the tax laws — the top item on President Reagan's second-term domestic agenda.

The stopgap spending measure replaced an existing bill due to expire at midnight, and was approved first by a voice vote in the House. The Senate quickly followed suit, with Sen. Mark Hatfield, R-Ore., chairman of the Appropriations Committee, saying that the alternative could be the "furloughing of federal employees" if the federal till ran dry.

Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole said it would be an "abdication of everything we've done all year" if Congress left town without finishing work on the spending cuts. But others said agreement would be difficult, since many of the proposed cuts involve domestic programs.

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Seattle FM radio towers not dangerous, FCC says

WASHINGTON (AP) — People who live or work on Cougar Mountain near Seattle are in no danger from radio waves emitted by the seven FM radio towers there, a Federal Communications Commission scientist said Thursday.

Robert Cleveland of the FCC's Office of Science and

Technology said a report by the Environmental Protection Agency convinced him that residents of the area have "no...reason to be concerned."

"We don't perceive that they are in any danger," he said.

An FCC statement said "the measured values are relatively low when compared to the limits developed by various standards-setting organizations."

A consulting engineering firm retained by the National Radio Broadcasters Association has said that non-ionizing radiation — the type sent out by FM radio stations — "in large quantities can...cause difficulties such as the heating of body tissue."

The radiation in FM radio waves dissipates within a few hundred feet.

Although there is no federal standard for radiation tolerance by humans, the FCC relies on a standard set by the American National Standards Institute of 1,000 microwatts per square centimeter.

Other standards set the limit at 200 microwatts.

The FCC said it selected ANSI guidelines because "they are scientifically based, widely accepted, and applicable to the general population."

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