## **REGIONAL BRIEFS**

#### Owners warned

BEND (AP) — The destruction of houses by forest fire will become more common as more people move into the woods, the state warned Wednesday.

Doug Decker, spokesman for the Oregon Department of Forestry, said 187,000 houses in Oregon face a risk from forest fires, and 8,000 of them, worth \$530 million, are in Deschutes and Jefferson counties.

In a news conference held at the starting point of the devastating Aubrey Hall fire that destroyed 23 homes near Bend this summer, Decker said people who build houses in the forest should recognize the risks and take steps to protect their homes.

He suggested clearing brush around houses, installing fireproof roofs and making sure trucks can get through to fight a blaze.

"One of the frightening facts that resulted from the discussion is that fires like the Aubrey Hall fire are going to happen again," Decker said after the news conference. "These high-risk areas, many of them are just disasters waiting to happen."

## Trial set to begin

PORTLAND (AP) — Racist and civil rights forces will collide in Oregon next week as white supremacist leader Tom Metzger faces charges that he incited the bludgeoning death of a black man.

Three men were convicted in the slaying of Mulugeta Seraw, an Ethiopian whose head was split open by a band of batwielding "skinheads" in 1988.

But Seraw's relatives weren't satisfied. They sued Metzger for \$10 million, claiming he incited the attack by sending agents to Portland with a message of hate.

Metzger is the founder of White Aryan Resistance and a former Ku Klux Klan grand dragon from Fallbrook, Calif.

His Oct. 8 trial will be the focus of activities by national civil rights organizations. It has drawn threats from a white supremacist group that's suspected of bombing the federal courthouse in San Diego.

The previously unknown group, which calls itself The Holy Church of the White Fighting Machine of the Cross, is under FBI investigation in the Sept. 15 bombing.

No one was injured in the explosion. But a letter the group sent to San Diego television station KNSD says it cannot guarantee there won't be injuries in the future. And it "warns all concerned to drop the lawsuit in Portland, Ore."

Metzger said he has never heard of the group, but that other supporters will be in town to stage a fund-raising event during the trial.

Meanwhile. Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice will conduct their national conference in Portland as the trial begins. Three rallies and a march have been scheduled by other civil rights groups.

## Police action justified

PORTLAND (AP) — Officers were justified in the methods they used to arrest 51 protesters outside a hotel where Vice President Dan Quayle was speaking, the police union president said Wednesday.

Some of those arrested in Monday's demonstration accused police of using excessive force

On Tuesday, Mayor Bud Clark said the police bureau would review the officers' actions at the demonstration. Clark encouraged people with specific complaints of police misconduct to contact the bureau's internal investigation unit.

Stan Peters, president of the

Portland Police Association, said Wednesday that Clark's statements implied that police did something wrong at the protest.

"Mayor Clark once again demonstrates that he hasn't the faintest idea what it takes to police the streets of this city," Peters said at a news conference.

About 300 protesters were met by more than 100 police as Quayle spoke to a Republican Party fund-raiser inside the Hilton Hotel. No one was seriously hurt during the five-hour protest, although some demonstrators threw rocks, bottles and firecrackers at police. Those arrested were cited for various minor offenses and released.

### Senators differ with Bush

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. Sens. Mark Hatfield and Bob Packwood were on the winning end of a 63-35 roll call Wednesday, by which the Senate voted to overrule Bush administration

regulations on federally supported family planning clinics.

The Senate vote overrules regulations prohibiting clinics from providing abortion counseling or information.

The two Republican senators were among 46 Democrats and 17 Republicans who voted to add language permitting the abortion counseling to a family planning reauthorization bill

planning reauthorization bill.

Nine Democrats and 26 Republicans voted to keep the Bush administration prohibition in place.

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