



Fire causes 25 deaths in chicken factory

RALEIGH — The chicken nugget factory where 25 people died Tuesday in North Carolina's worst industrial accident on record had never received a safety inspection in its 11 years of operation, state officials said.

The state currently has fewer than 20 health and safety inspectors, said Labor Commissioner John Brooks, and about half of them are in training.

The number of inspectors is adequate for a county but "hardly supportive" for the state, Brooks said.

The plant had never received one of the 1,000 or so "general schedule" inspections a year in which safety officials randomly choose plants to inspect, said Charles Jeffress, assistant commissioner of the state labor department.

The state had never received a complaint about the Imperial plant, Jeffress said.

"We don't conduct nearly as many inspections as we need to," he said.

Several witnesses said employees couldn't escape because of locked doors.

But investigators and company officials said they could not verify that.

Zaire police fire on protesters

KINSHASA, Zaire — Parliament held an emergency session Tuesday after police battled pro-democracy protesters in the capital and in other towns, leaving shops looted and cars burned.

Witnesses said at least three people were killed.

Thousands of people were involved in the riots, throwing up barricades, burning cars and looting shops. It was not clear whether the violence started before or after police fired into the crowds, reporters said.

The demonstrations were called by leaders of the opposition to President Mobutu Sese Seko, a soldier who seized power 26 years ago.

The opposition wants a national conference held to appoint an interim government and to organize the first free elections since independence from Belgium in 1960.

— The Associated Press

WORLD Sterilization controversy plagues Brazilians

By Vicki Hyman
Staff Writer

Almost a third of Brazilian women are sterilized each year — but not by choice.

Harsh living conditions, ignorance of alternative family planning methods and papal opposition to birth control in this predominantly Catholic nation make sterilization the only viable choice in a country overpopulated and depressed.

While sterilization is illegal except in life-threatening cases, 28 percent of Brazilian women of childbearing age have been sterilized, usually by the tying of the fallopian tubes, or tubal ligation, according to a survey by the Institute for the Development of Resources in Washington, D.C.

"Many women didn't have any idea what had happened to their bodies," said Sara Costa of the National School for Public Health. "They thought they could have children after the operation, without knowing the procedure is practically irreversible."

A 1987 Census Bureau survey showed sterilization was the leading type of birth control among Brazilian

women. Only 5 percent of French women are sterilized, and only 2 percent of Swedish women are sterilized.

"The high rate of sterilization in Brazil is mostly related to a lack of other options," said Fatima Mello of the Brazil Network, a Washington, D.C., information center on Brazilian issues. "Women in Brazil don't have access to any other alternatives."

The government is investigating these controversial statistics.

"Sterilization is not birth control, but a form of violence," said Rep. Lucia Souto, head of the state investigations. "We don't want Brazilian women to have a dozen children apiece, but we do want them to have options."

The Carolina Population Center estimates Brazil's 1990 population was 150.4 million, up from 92.52 million in 1970. But the fertility rate, the average number of children a Brazilian woman could have in her lifetime, has decreased from 5.8 in 1970 to 3.3 in 1990.

"I've heard nothing about forced sterilization, so apparently what's happening is it's become the method of choice of women there," said Hal Burdett, director of information of the Population

Institute located in Washington, D.C.

The Brazilian government has never been a proponent of family planning. Between 1964 and 1985, the military rulers said family planning belonged in the "intimacy of the home." They also encouraged large families during a time when overpopulation was not a problem, and larger families meant more people in the work force.

In 1987, after democracy replaced a series of authoritarian regimes, church officials opposed a government-sponsored family planning program. They claimed birth control would lead directly to abortion, divorce and promiscuity. The program lacked adequate funding and soon collapsed.

The latest sterilization statistics are not indicative of a new phenomenon, said Magaly Marques, program officer of International Planned Parenthood. "This had been going on for many, many years," she said. "It's not something that's just happening right now."

Although doctors face up to eight years in jail for performing sterilizations, the government finds such penalties difficult to enforce.

Three-fourths of sterilizations are performed during Caesarean sections.

"Doctors claim the Caesarean is necessary because of health risks," said Audnes Tenorio of the Civil Society of Family Welfare, a private health organization. "Then they charge INAMPS (the federal health service) twice the rate for the delivery, and the woman pays for the tubal ligation."

Caesarean sections are common in Brazil, Marques said. "Doctors use this method to facilitate sterilization."

"The state pays for the Caesarean section, and then they charge, without a receipt or anything, without anyone knowing, the patient a great amount of

money for the tubal ligation," Marques said. "These are women who have already had three, four, five kids. They're willing to pay any money."

Corrupt doctors are reaping benefits. "The doctors are making a lot of money," Marques said. "They're making money on the Caesarean section to begin with. They could have a natural birth but then the doctors would make less money."

Some women are sterilized without their knowledge due to misleading information from doctors, according to a Rio state commission.

There are few birth control alternatives. Marques said the pill is the only other form of birth control available in Brazil. "They don't have other forms like the IUD (intrauterine device), so people are resorting to sterilization."

Contraceptive methods are too expensive for the workers who earn too little and cannot afford day care.

"It will not solve the economic crisis to stop having babies," Mello said. "They should try to get a more equal distribution of income."

The Brazilian government is reluctant to put its funds into national family planning programs, Burdett said. Many Catholic countries think the people are going to be against birth control, and they will rise up in protest, he said.

"It hasn't happened," Burdett said. "You've had tremendous success in bringing down fertility rates with national programs in Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico. That's not to say that any of those countries have solved their problems, but they've brought their fertility rates down considerably."

Sterilizations are not helping the economy, and in such numbers are not healthy for Brazilian society. Census statistics show an increase in sterilization among young women.

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Campus Calendar

- WEDNESDAY**
- Future educators! SNAE (Students of N.C. Association of Educators) will be in Peabody Lobby today through Friday, or stop by 307 Peabody. Be a member today!
 - Noon: The Black Interdenominational Student Association (BISA) will hold an organizational meeting until 12:50 p.m. for all interested undergrad and graduate students. Check the Union Desk for room number.
 - 5 p.m. The Carolina Association of Black Journalists invites all minority journalism and RTVMP majors to its first meeting in 203 Howell. Please bring \$10 membership dues.
 - 5:30 p.m. The Asian Students Association will have its weekly meeting in 206 Union. Future activities will be planned. All interested students are warmly invited to attend.
 - 6 p.m. The Human Rights Week 1991 Committee will hold an organizational meeting to discuss programming and fund-raising at in the Campus Y Lounge. All interested students are invited to attend. Please bring friends and ideas.
 - Welcome to Wesley Foundation! What is it, you ask? It's the Methodist campus ministry. The fun begins tonight with dinner and a program called "Childhood Memories." Please come join our fun.
 - 7 p.m. "Student Activism for the '90s," a workshop facilitated by Ann Ards, Black Studies graduate student, will be held in the BCC, sponsored by the BSM and BCC.
 - UNC Pre-law Club meets in 206 Union. Bill Messing and Pat Devine, criminal defense attorneys, will speak. All are invited to attend.
 - JOB HUNT 101: Basic information about how to use the UCPS office for seniors and graduate students will be held in 210 Hanes.
 - 7:30 p.m. Allstagers! UNC Stag Club will meet in the Women's Gym behind Woolen. Any questions? Call Martin at 933-7005.
 - The Carolina Gay and Lesbian Association will hold its first general meeting in 210 Union. Anyone interested is encouraged to attend.
 - "Women in the Front Line": A program addressing human rights violations committed against women worldwide and the actions that can be taken to help eliminate these abuses will be held in 226 Union. Sponsored by Amnesty International Group 84.
 - 7:45 p.m. JOB HUNT 102: Resume Writing Workshop for seniors and graduate students will be held in 210 Hanes.
 - 8 p.m. Do you like to dive? UNC Scuba Club will hold an introductory meeting in 213 Union.

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