

Older TI workers feel 'targeted'

DALLAS (AP) — A semiconductor giant that faces criticism from some employees about a literacy testing program is now under fire from older workers who say the company's new layoff policy targets them.

Texas Instruments Inc.'s older employees say the revised policy focuses on them because it places less emphasis on seniority.

Under the new policy, worker reductions will be based on an individual's years of service, current performance, flexibility and whether his or her job is crucial to the success of that employee's division.

The new policy, which applies to both salaried and hourly workers, went into effect last Sunday at the Dallas-based semiconduc-

tor manufacturer, which earlier this year announced plans to trim its work force by thousands.

One unidentified worker told the Dallas Times Herald that the company is trying to force out those who make the highest salaries and benefits — older employees.

"This policy is not right and without a doubt earmarks the more senior older employees for termination," the worker said.

But that's not true, according to Leslie Price, a TI spokeswoman.

No specific age groups are being targeted by the program, Ms. Price said. She said the program was not designed to force workers

into early retirement programs.

"I would think people would be more confident knowing that performance is a criteria," Ms. Price said. "You want to look at people who are your best performers. By having a set criteria, you're ensuring that you keep the most qualified people."

TI announced a \$15 million retraining program for about 5,000 workers earlier this month in wafer fabrication plants in Dallas, Houston and Sherman.

Some workers have complained the retraining project is discriminatory because it includes reading and math competency tests. Those employees who fail the tests four times could be terminated.

Nurse delivers baby, persuades gunman

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — A nurse who helped deliver a baby during a hostage standoff in a hospital's maternity wing said Sunday the first-time mother "did great" even with the agitated gunman nearby, carrying enough dynamite to wipe out half a block.

Margie Wyler, 37, a nurse with 17 years experience and 12 children of her own, talked the nervous mother through the delivery atop a desk in a hospital office while the other hostages provided assurance and encouragement.

The newborn then became the ninth hostage held Saturday by Richard L. Worthington, who earlier killed one nurse and threatened to detonate an 18-pound dynamite bomb that authorities described as "fairly sophisticated." Worthington also carried a .357-caliber handgun and a shotgun.

Wyler was credited by many as the calming force that persuaded Worthington to surrender and release his hostages after an 18-hour standoff at the Women's Health Center at Alta View Hospital in Sandy, 15 miles south of Salt Lake City.

She said the man was despondent at the end of the ordeal after talking to one of his young children.

"He got off the phone and said, 'Margie, do you want to walk out of here?'" Wyler said by telephone interview from her home in Salt Lake City. "And I says, 'Yeah, I do.'"

Minutes later, after calling police, he gave Wyler the gun.

Earlier, Wyler and nurse Susan

Woolley helped the young woman give birth in what Worthington said was a booby-trapped office.

Outside, Worthington paced the hall, occasionally peeking inside the office. He'd told the hostages that if they opened the door, they would be blown up.

The hostages included the pregnant woman and her husband, two family friends, the two nurses and two other infants.

Police and officials at Intermountain Health Care, which owns Alta View, didn't release the name of the mother. She and her healthy daughter were being treated Sunday at another IHC hospital.

Worthington was booked into the Salt Lake County Jail pending charges of aggravated murder, possession of an infernal machine — the explosives — and eight counts of aggravated kidnapping.

Worthington had stormed the health center apparently looking to kill a doctor who he said had operated on his wife two years ago without his permission.

Before taking the hostages, Worthington led 37-year-old nurse Karla Roth and Woolley outside.

"There was a struggle or a fight or ... one tried to get away and he ended up shooting" Roth, said police Sgt. Don Bell, one of a team of hostage negotiators.

Wyler said Woolley witnessed the shooting. She said Roth apparently tried to wrest the gun from Worthington.

Worthington herded the rest of the hostages into the third-floor offices of Dr. Glade Curtis.

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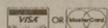
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perior to Alberta."

The Conservative government also will propose a constitutional change that would provide for the Senate to be elected rather than appointed by the prime minister and his government. This is meant to address concerns by Canada's western provinces, which believe elected officials would give them stronger representation in Ottawa.

Mulroney also will propose self-government for Indians and the Inuit, more powers for the provinces and central control over the economy.

A 30-member parliamentary committee is to travel the country to hear how the public feels about the plan and submit a report on Feb. 28.

"We think it is a sensible document and a sensible approach, but we are inviting constructive criticism," Mulroney told the House of

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Commons on Thursday.

Both of the main opposition parties, the Liberals and the New Democrats, have agreed to cooperate with the process but say they do not mean they will ultimately support the government's plan.

The Meech Lake accords finalized in June 1990 after failing to gain the approval of all 10 of Canada's provinces. Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa said he would no longer participate in interprovincial meetings, and his government passed a law calling for a referendum on sovereignty no later than October 1992.

Nationalist fervor seems to be cooling somewhat, but recent polls indicate about half of Quebecers favor independence from Canada. Others would like some sort of "sovereignty-association" with Ottawa.

Regents

financial Aid, said the program's low interest rates had made it the lender of choice for A&M students.

"Texas A&M has one of the lowest default rates in the country," Engelage said. "We loaned over \$8 million to about 3,300 students last year."

Regent Bill Clayton said murky wording kept the issue from passing the last time it came up in a local election.

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The Board also confirmed the appointment of Dr. K.L. Peddicord as interim dean of engineering at A&M and director of the Texas Engineering Experiment Station.

Dr. Edward Hiler's appointment as executive deputy chancellor of the A&M University System was also confirmed, as was Perry Beaumont's appointment as vice chancellor for communications for the University system.

Investigation

Gen. Thomas Darling, commandant of the Corps, was out of town at the time.

Mobley said in the statement, "I am disturbed deeply by the initial reports that a female member of the Corps of Cadets was intimidated and assaulted by a small group of other members of the Corps."

"The young lady involved and women in general have a right to participate in the Corps and all

other aspects of University life without fear of intimidation, harassment or personal safety. The overwhelming majority of the members of the Corps of Cadets and our University community condemn any infringement of these basic rights."

Mobley promised that the Corps leadership and the University would take "appropriate and strong" disciplinary action once all of the investigations have been completed.

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