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MARCH 12, 2004 | FRIDAY
THE NEWSPAPER OF SILICON VALLEY

Court halts S.F. gay weddings

REPERCUSSIONS

Legal limbo for the 4,100 gay weddings that have occurred in San Francisco.

Larger issue — whether the state's same-sex marriage ban is constitutional — left to lower courts.

San Jose's city attorney didn't know how decision would affect benefits extended to same-sex partners married to city employees.

INSIDE: Massachusetts Legislature gives preliminary OK to constitutional ban on same-sex marriage. **PAGE 8A**

JUDGES TO SAY WHETHER CITY EXCEEDED AUTHORITY

By Howard Mintz
Mercury News

The California Supreme Court on Thursday put an abrupt end to San Francisco's unprecedented gay weddings while the justices decide whether city officials overstepped their legal authority in defying state marriage laws.

In a series of brief orders, the court declined for now to take on the broader question of whether the state's same-sex marriage ban is constitutional, leaving that to be considered first by lower

courts in what is likely to be a lengthy legal process. But the substance of the court's actions suggest that San Francisco, which triggered a nationwide debate over gay marriage last month, faces an uphill struggle to resume the same-sex ceremonies any time soon.

Within minutes of the court's orders, the licensing window at City Hall was abruptly shut for same-sex marriages, leaving dozens of frustrated couples

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PAULINE LUBENS — MERCURY NEWS

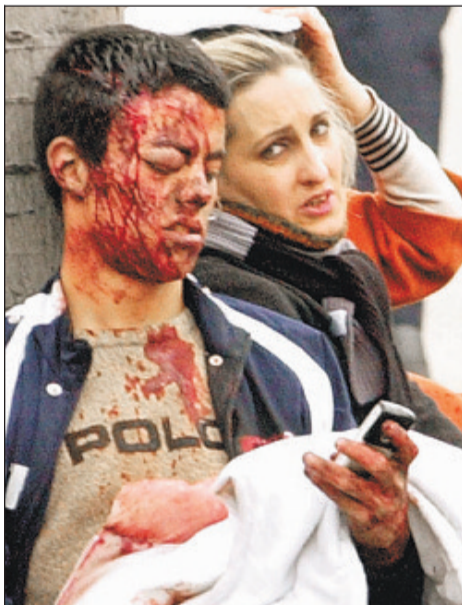
Manuella Hancock hugs Katrina Thompson during a demonstration in San Francisco on Thursday evening to express support for same-sex marriage after the state Supreme Court halted the practice in the city.

CARNAGE IN MADRID



DENIS DOYLE — ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rescue workers line up bodies Thursday after terrorists targeted commuter trains during rush hour in Madrid, Spain's capital. Authorities initially blamed Basque separatist group ETA.



JOSÉ HUESCA — EFE

Two victims wait for aid Thursday near Atocha station, as workers struggled to treat the overwhelming number of injured.

Possible Al-Qaida link in 10 train bombings

AT LEAST 192 KILLED, MORE THAN 1,400 HURT IN SPANISH BLASTS

By Matthew Schofield
Knight Ridder

MADRID, Spain — In the bloodiest such attack in modern Spanish history, a series of terrorist bombs ripped through trains during the Spanish capital's morning rush hour Thursday, killing at least 192 people and injuring more than 1,400 others.

Government officials quickly blamed the bombings, three days before national elections, on the Basque separatist group ETA, which has waged a bloody 40-year campaign for independence. But a letter to an Arabic-language newspaper in London later claimed the attacks were carried out by the Al-Qaida terrorist network.

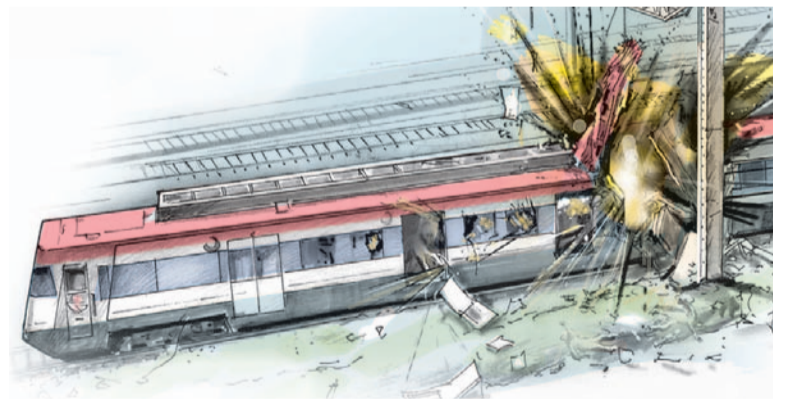
The letter warned the United States that a major strike is approaching.

"We announce the good news for the Muslims in the world that the strike of the black wind of death, the expected strike against America, is now at its final stage — 90 percent ready — and it is coming soon, by God's will," the letter said.

After the series of explosions, witnesses described scenes of confusion and carnage, with severed arms and legs strewn across blood-drenched platforms and bombed-out rail cars. Several trains were torn apart by multiple blasts.

The number of dead and wounded was overwhelming. Doctors and emergency workers performed rail-side surgery, city buses were pressed into service as ambulances and makeshift

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How it happened, where it happened: map and illustration.

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Al-Qaida and the Basque separatists: two suspect groups.

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Tips for traveling in risky areas and risky times.

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Could it happen here? A look at Bay Area transit systems.

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Stock markets plummet after terrorist attack.

PAGE 1F

Woman accused of aiding Iraq

EX-PRESS SECRETARY WORKED BRIEFLY FOR REP. ZOE LOFGREN

By Shannon McCaffrey and Ron Hutcheson
Knight Ridder

WASHINGTON — A distant cousin of White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card, who was a press secretary to four members of Congress including U.S. Rep. Zoe Lofgren of San Jose, was charged Thursday with working with Iraqi intelligence before the war started last year.

Investigators said Susan Lindauer, 41, had tried to influence U.S. policy toward Iraq by

presenting herself as an intermediary to a highly placed relative.

She was arrested Thursday morning by federal agents at her home in Takoma Park, Md., outside Washington. In New York, federal prosecutors unsealed an indictment that said she had met repeatedly with representatives of the Iraqi intelligence service starting in 1999 and that she had traveled to

See **ARREST**, Page 4A



Lindauer Accused of helping Iraqi intelligence, she is distantly related to a White House official.

Arrest in I-580 sniper shootings

TIPS, POLICE SKETCH LEAD TO FORMER SOUTH BAY MAN

By Lisa Fernandez and Thai Walker
Mercury News

A 27-year-old Stockton man who grew up in the South Bay was arrested Thursday and charged with eight counts of attempted murder in connection with a one-day spate of sniper shootings that terrorized drivers on busy Interstate 580 in Alameda County.

Christopher Charles Gafford, who al-

ready faces drug charges in another case, was arrested at 6:30 a.m. at his home in a neighborhood of neat, single-family houses. Tips from people who had seen a suspect sketch led detectives there, the California Highway Patrol said.

A black truck matching a description given by witnesses to the Feb. 23 shootings also was recovered. Investigators would not say if a weapon was found, and they added they still are seeking other possible suspects or

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Weather

High: 73-77
Low: 50-54



Mostly sunny.
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