

# THE SUN



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## Md. woman held as Iraqi agent

Ex-congressional aide accused of aiding regime

'I'm proud of what I've done'

By GAIL GIBSON  
SUN STAFF

A former congressional press secretary and distant cousin to the White House chief of staff was arrested at her Takoma

Park home yesterday on charges that she acted as an agent of the Iraqi intelligence agency, collecting \$10,000 and allegedly plotting to help resistance groups loyal to Saddam Hussein.

Susan P. Lindauer, 40, who was also known as "Symbol Susan," and has claimed in the past to be the target of covert surveillance and death threats, was released to a halfway house with orders from a magistrate judge in U.S. District Court in

### More inside

**Suspect:** Vocal, anti-war; attested to Libya's innocence in Pan Am case, feared surveillance. **Page 8A**

Baltimore to undergo a psychiatric evaluation.

A White House spokesman said last night that Chief of Staff Andrew H. Card Jr. has cooperated with authorities investigat-

ing Lindauer, including reporting attempts by her to contact him in recent years.

According to the indictment, Lindauer delivered a letter "to the home of a United States government official" on Jan. 8, 2003 — about two months before the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq — in which she described contacts she had within Hussein's regime "in an unsuccessful attempt to influence United States foreign policy." [See Agent, 8A]



GENE SWEENEY JR. : SUN STAFF  
Surrounded by reporters, Susan P. Lindauer leaves federal court in Baltimore. "I'm an anti-war activist, and I'm innocent," she said.

## Hospital was told of faulty HIV tests

Ex-Md. General worker sent letter in December

Former employee files suit

Woman says flawed gear infected her with diseases

By WALTER F. ROCHE JR.  
SUN STAFF

A former laboratory worker at Maryland General Hospital warned her ex-boss last year of serious safety and accuracy problems in equipment used to perform HIV and other tests — problems the hospital had said it didn't learn of until January.

Kristin S. Turner wrote her former boss Dec. 7 reminding him he had known for many months of equipment defects that could cause patients to receive inaccurate test results and that led her to become infected with HIV and hepatitis C.

State officials investigated in January and concluded that hundreds of patients tested for HIV and hepatitis C might have been misinformed about the findings, *The Sun* disclosed yesterday.

Maryland General President Timothy D. Miller said this week in an interview that the hospital had "absolutely no indication" of problems until the state investigation ended.

Yesterday, however, Maryland General spokeswoman Joan S. Shnipper acknowledged that the hospital had received and looked into the four-page, Dec. 7 letter.

"We did receive a complaint from a former employee," Shnipper said in a statement. "We took the complaint very seriously and began an investigation in anticipation of a lawsuit."

Turner filed a multimillion-dollar lawsuit yesterday in Baltimore Circuit Court against the 245-bed Baltimore hospital, an affiliate of the University of Maryland Medical System, and Adaltis Inc., manufacturer of the test equipment.

Shnipper, citing the suit, said she could not comment further or directly address the conflict between the Turner letter and Miller's statement this week.

Turner's for- [See Tests, 7A]

# Bombs rip Spanish trains



PABLO TORRES GUERRERO : EL PAIS  
Victims sitting on the tracks at Madrid's Atocha station are cared for by rescue workers after explosions of dynamite in backpacks.

## 'Today, all of Spain cries'

By TODD RICHISSIN  
SUN FOREIGN STAFF

MADRID, Spain — Fernando Gonzalez was apologetic yesterday, partly for his struggle to speak English but mostly for his tears, which he could not stop.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry," said the 37-year-old truck driver, who lives in the capital's Atocha neighborhood, less than a mile from the train station of the same name, which took the brunt of 10 bombs that exploded here yesterday.

"I'm sorry," he said again, "but today all of Spain cries."

Yesterday was a day of tears in a city known for its bright



ALBERT GEA : REUTERS  
In Barcelona, Spain, citizens place candles in a vigil to condemn the bombings in Madrid that killed 190.

gait, a day of trepidation in a city known for its optimism. Everywhere — in the city's cafes and restaurants where red-eyed women and red-eyed men sat silently or talked in low voices, on the roads eerily missing the usual cacophony of car horns, in the neighborhood of Atocha, where people walking dogs stood and gazed at the station hit so hard — there was an unmistakable deflation of people usually pumped so full of pride in their country.

"This is not like Spain," Gonzalez said, standing next to a bouquet of flowers left at the station. "What happened is more like Baghdad or, I'm sorry to say, like what happened to New York."

That comparison — to continuing attacks by militants in Baghdad and the events of Sept. 11, 2001 — was made over and again by people here. Spain has had its battles with home-grown militants, but nothing that could compare with yes- [See Madrid, 13A]

## At least 190 dead, 1,200 are injured

10 blasts in 15 minutes shatter rail cars full of morning commuters

Basques, al-Qaida are suspects

By TODD RICHISSIN  
SUN FOREIGN STAFF

MADRID, Spain — In one of the deadliest attacks in modern European history, 10 bombs exploded yesterday in this city's train system with the most destructive possible timing, blasting apart cars filled with morning commuters, killing at least 190 people and injuring more than 1,200 others, many of them critically. Authorities initially blamed

the violence on Basque separatists in the militant ETA, but a London-based Arabic newspaper said last night that it had been contacted on behalf of al-Qaida, which claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Although Spain sent no troops to fight in Iraq, it publicly supported the invasion by the United States and Britain and later sent about 1,500 peacekeepers to the region.

Spain's Interior Ministry, responsible for internal security, said last night that police searching a van in a parking lot near where the bombed trains originated found explosive detonators and an audiotape of verses from the Quran. Spanish officials appeared to be qualifying their early certainty that [See Bombs, 12A]

### INSIDE

#### Halliburton billing draws U.S. scrutiny

Halliburton Co., the biggest contractor for rebuilding Iraq, is grilled by Congress over charges that it systematically overbilled the government; Justice Dept. begins an inquiry. [Page 3A]

#### Nation

Gay marriage dealt setbacks in Calif., Mass. [Page 3A]

#### Weather

Windy. High, 43; low, 26. Yesterday's city high, 56; low, 36. [Page 14B]

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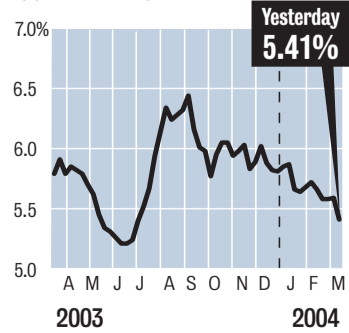
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News updated all day

The Sun's 167th Year: No. 72

### 30-year mortgage rate

Freddie Mac's Primary Mortgage Market Survey reported yesterday that the 30-year mortgage rate has dipped to 5.41 percent.



## Mortgage rates fall to near-record lows

30- and 15-year figures down sharply this week

By EILEEN AMBROSE  
SUN STAFF

Interest rates on 30-year home mortgages fell sharply to near-record lows this week, a development likely to give the long housing boom renewed energy while offering procrastinators who missed last year's record pace of refinancings another

chance to cut their mortgage costs.

The average rate on a 30-year-fixed mortgage dropped to 5.41 percent, down from 5.59 percent a week ago, according to Freddie Mac's weekly national survey released yesterday.

The last time 30-year rates were as low was the first week of July, the mortgage giant said.

The new rate also isn't far from the 5.21 percent reported in mid-June, the lowest rate in 45 years.

"It's unbelievable that they're this low again. It's amazing," said Charles DiPino Jr., vice president of Universal Trust Mortgage Corporation in Pikesville, which has seen an increase in business in recent weeks.

"The phones have just been ringing off the hook again," DiPino said. "People are starting to get excited about the rates being low again."

Many experts had been anticipating a rise in mortgage rates at this point in [See Rates, 5A]

