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# ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

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Soldiers aren't the only Americans putting their lives on the line to stabilize and rebuild Iraq. This is one in a series of reports by Post-Dispatch reporter Phillip O'Connor and photographer J.B. Forbes telling the stories of American civilians in Iraq.



**J.B. FORBES / POST-DISPATCH**  
**Bob Marchesello, a civilian working for a private company, guards U.S. Army soldiers inspecting an electrical plant in disrepair Thursday near Baghdad, Iraq.**

## Hired guns are vital to forces in Iraq

The United States is spending hundreds of millions of dollars to pay for private security guards in Iraq — who sometimes protect active-duty soldiers as well as civilian construction crews.

**BY PHILLIP O'CONNOR**  
Of the Post-Dispatch

BAGHDAD, Iraq — The four-truck convoy of American engineers sped out of a fortified compound here with ex-Special Forces soldier Bob Marchesello sitting in the passenger seat of the lead vehicle. He sat stone silent, and his eyes scanned the road.

The destination was a decrepit electrical plant less than six miles away. To reach it, they'll have to run "the gantlet," a three-quarter-mile strip of highway where dozens of roadside bomb attacks have occurred. Just the night before, American soldiers

discovered three explosive devices just off the road in this Sunni-Muslim neighborhood, where some of Saddam Hussein's most ardent supporters live.

Convoys like these are just the kind of targets that the insurgents like to hit, late-model SUVs that readily identify their passengers as members of the occupying power. That explains the presence of Marchesello, who is employed by a U.S. company

See Iraq, A15

**Soldier from Missouri is killed in blast in Iraq:** He'd been there just over a week. **A16**

# Blasts in Spain kill 192 on commuter trains

INITIAL SUSPICION FALLS ON BASQUE SEPARATISTS



**DENIS DOYLE / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
**Rescue workers line up bodies Thursday near a bomb-damaged commuter train at the Atocha station in Madrid, Spain. Ten backpack bombs ripped through four commuter trains within 15 minutes in Madrid. The attacks wounded more than 1,400 people.**

But group claims responsibility in al-Qaida's name

**BY MAR ROMAN**  
The Associated Press

MADRID, Spain — Ten bombs hidden in backpacks exploded in quick succession Thursday, blowing apart four commuter trains and killing at least 192 people and wounding more than 1,400.

Spain at first blamed Basque separatists, but a shadowy group claimed responsibility in the name of al-Qaida for the worst terrorist attack on a European target since World War II.

Panicked rush-hour commuters trampled on one another, abandoning their bags and shoes, after three of the bombs went off in one train in the Atocha station in the heart of Madrid. Train cars were turned into twisted wrecks, and platforms were strewn with corpses. Cell phones rang unanswered on the bodies of the dead as frantic relatives tried to call them.

"March 11, 2004, now holds its place in the history of infamy," Prime Minister José María Aznar said.

The bombing came three days ahead of Spain's general election on Sunday. A major campaign issue was how to deal with ETA, the Basque militant group that is seeking greater autonomy.

Campaigning for the election was called off, and three days of mourning were declared.

The bombings occurred exactly 2½ years after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, in the United States. They were the deadliest in Europe since the 1988 bombing of an American-owned Pan Am jetliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, that killed 270 people.

See Bombings, A4

**Bombings bear hallmarks of al-Qaida:** If Basque group ETA is to blame, it means a shift in tactics. **A4**

## Ex-congressional aide is accused of illegal Iraq contacts

**BY CAMERON W. BARR AND DAN EGGEN**  
Washington Post

WASHINGTON — A former congressional press aide was arrested Thursday and accused of maintaining an "intelligence relationship" for several years with U.S.-based spies for Saddam Hussein before the Iraqi leader was ousted.

Among other activities, authorities charged, Susan Lindauer, 40, cooperated with Iraqi intelligence agents in January last year by delivering a letter to the home of a relative, White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card, urging the administration to hold off its invasion of Iraq so weapons inspectors could continue their work.

Lindauer is described by people who know her as an ardent foe of the U.S.-led war against Saddam's regime. Among the members of Congress

See Arrest, A8

## Government orders halt to andro sale, production

The administration is supporting legislation to regulate such supplements as controlled substances.

**BY MARC KAUFMAN**  
Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Food and Drug Administration began a crackdown Thursday on sales of the dietary supplement "andro" — a popular muscle and strength builder used by Mark McGwire and other athletes but now seen as a health risk.

The agency sent warning letters to 23 companies that make or distribute the product — a synthetic relative of the hormone testosterone that has been easily available at health

food stores and on the Internet — and said it will act aggressively against any firm that continues selling it.

"Young people, athletes and other consumers should steer clear of andro because there are serious, substantial concerns about its safety," Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson said in announcing the crackdown. He said the administration of President George W. Bush was throwing its support behind legislation that would regulate 27 other dietary supplements similar to andro as controlled substances, making them much more difficult to obtain and limiting their marketing.

See Andro, A8

## Man repels 3 robbers by firing hidden pistol

Lemay shooting may be first under new gun law

**BY HEATHER RATCLIFFE**  
Of the Post-Dispatch

Robbers pointed a gun at Bryan Rutherford and demanded that he hand over valuables from his pickup Tuesday evening in Lemay.

Rutherford didn't pull out cash or jewelry. He pulled out a .22-caliber pistol hidden in his vehicle and opened fire in what authorities believe is the first instance of self-defense with a concealed firearm since the Missouri Legislature loosened the state's gun laws.

The man holding what turned out to be a BB gun on Rutherford was hit several times in the

torso before he and two accomplices fled. Three suspects were later captured and charged.

Rutherford was uninjured. The precise status of the concealed carry law at the time Rutherford fired is cloudy. But in any event, St. Louis County Prosecuting Attorney Robert McCulloch said Thursday that Rutherford would not be charged.

Concealed gun opponents asked the Missouri Supreme Court on Thursday for a rehearing on their claim that the state failed to provide full funding for sheriffs' new duties to process applications and issue permits.

On the same day, St. Louis County police said they would continue to refuse applications for concealed firearms permits, saying the county expects to challenge the new law as an illegal unfunded mandate.

See Shoot, A9

**INSIDE**  
Classifieds **F1**  
Corrections **A2**  
Editorial **B8**  
Lotteries **A2**  
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Obituaries **B7**  
Television **E8**

**California court orders halt to same-sex weddings**

In Massachusetts, lawmakers advanced an amendment that would ban gay marriages. **A2**

**Bush defies critics, keeps Sept. 11 at center of campaign**

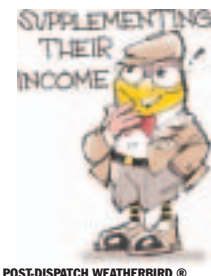
The president and his aides have said his response to the attacks is an example of his leadership. **A5**

**Several firms with contracts in Iraq have political ties**

Pentagon says it selects businesses for the reconstruction effort based on merit and price. **A6**

**Missouri House approves limits on civil lawsuits**

Gov. Holden says measure goes too far beyond protecting doctors from soaring insurance rates. **METRO**



**TODAY**  
Clear skies, cool.  
High 47.  
**SATURDAY**  
Rain late.  
Low 32. High 53.

WEATHER | B10

