



Bertuzzi banned for season, playoffs. El

TORONTO STAR

FLURRIES LIKELY. HIGH 0C ★ FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 2004 ★ thestar.com ★ METRO EDITION



Sandro Contenta reports: Al Qaeda claims responsibility as 192 die, 1,400 hurt in Madrid train bombings Spain's prime minister brands:

'MASS MURDER'



PABLO TORRES GUERRERO/EL PAIS/REUTERS

Blast victims sit on the tracks outside Madrid's Atocha train station as they are tended by rescue workers after one of a series of explosions yesterday cut a path of death and destruction.

Rush-hour explosions rock commuter trains

10 bombs explode in 15-minute span Basque separatists first to be blamed

SANDRO CONTENTA
EUROPEAN BUREAU

MADRID—A series of co-ordinated bomb attacks that killed at least 192 people and wounded 1,400 has triggered a massive manhunt for the extremists who covered the heart of Spain's capital in blood.

The 10 almost simultaneous blasts yesterday morning during rush hour tore apart four

packed commuter trains arriving in downtown Madrid at three train stations.

A sombre Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar vowed in a televised address to hunt those who committed the "mass murder." "Terrorists tried to cause as much pain as possible," he said. "March 11 now has its place in the history of infamy."

But as Spanish forensic ex-

perts sift through the wreckage, it's still unclear whether the carnage was the work of the Basque separatist group, ETA, or a group affiliated with Al Qaeda.

Spanish officials were quick to blame ETA, insisting the blast was meant to disrupt national elections Sunday.

► Please see **Bombs, A6**

► **Suspicion falls on Al Qaeda, A3**
► **France raises terror alert, A4**
► **The Star's view: Spain's grim resolve, A22**



1. 7:39 a.m.: Three backpacks loaded with explosives detonate on a commuter train in the Atocha station.

2. 7:44 a.m.: Four backpack bombs explode on commuter train entering Atocha.

3. 7:49 a.m.: Backpack bomb explodes as commuter train enters Santa Eugenia station.

4. 7:54 a.m.: Two bombs explode on train in station.

SOURCES: Interior Ministry, ESRI, AP

'People started to scream and run'

Survivors describe horror of blasts Spaniards search morgues for kin

SANDRO CONTENTA
EUROPEAN BUREAU

MADRID—Late into the night, a solemn stream of people carried the anger and pain of a nation into a makeshift morgue where their loved ones lay shattered.

Some buckled under the weight as they approached, shaking at the hard truth that a son or daughter was among the 192 people ripped apart by 10 co-ordinated bomb blasts that

yesterday struck at the heart of this major European capital.

One elderly woman crumpled to the pavement metres from the door, her body convulsing in violent spasms. As medics worked to stabilize her, a young man slowly stood up with a loud moan, raised his fists in the air and screamed what seemed like the despair of a country.

► Please see **Scene, A7**

Get healthy challenge

Fourteen readers have resolved to get fit over four months. Can they do it? **Health, D1**

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Whistle-blower tells of cover-up

Alleges files cleaned up before audit Advertising rules first broken in 1994

LES WHITTINGTON
OTTAWA BUREAU

OTTAWA—A federal civil servant has publicly revealed how the public works department first broke the rules when it came to government advertising — and then tried to cover it up.

Whistle-blower Allan Cutler broke years of silence yesterday to reveal a stunning tale of uncontrolled government spend-

ing on federal promotions as far back as the early 1990s.

Cutler worked under Chuck Guité, who was the director of advertising and public opinion in the public works department. Guité is a central figure in the government's sponsorship scandal, brought to the public's attention by Auditor-General Sheila Fraser in her report last month.

Cutler yesterday testified before the House of Commons public accounts committee and told how breaking of rules started even earlier.

Cutler said Guité, impatient with questions about contracting rules, told subordinates in a 1994 meeting that "the normal rules and regulations should not apply to advertising."

"He said he would talk to the minister (then Liberal David Dingwall) to have them changed," Cutler said.

He also suggested that officials

in the public works department may have cleaned up the department's files prior to an audit of the advertising and research branch by Ernst & Young in 1996.

In reporting irregularities in the branch's \$90-million-a-year advertising contracting operations, the auditors said written records were often missing.

► Please see **Contracts, A10**

► **RCMP probing defence department billing scam, A12**

Chief offers Malvern help

While residents of the troubled Scarborough neighbourhood of Malvern called for social change to help fight crime, police Chief Julian Fantino told a town hall meeting last night: "We will not allow this community to be tarnished and intimidated by a few cowards." The area was rocked by violence again on Wednesday when two men were shot in an apartment building on Ellesmere Rd. Police, who have been patrolling the area, responded in force but no suspects were found. **Story, B1**