

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

Late Edition
New York: Today, sunny, a few afternoon clouds. High 77. Tonight, slightly more humid. Low 65. Tomorrow, sun then clouds. High 81. Yesterday, high 81, low 63. Weather map, Page C19.

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It beyond the greater New York metropolitan area.

75 CENTS

U.S. ATTACKED

HIJACKED JETS DESTROY TWIN TOWERS AND HIT PENTAGON IN DAY OF TERROR

A CREEPING HORROR

Buildings Burn and Fall as Onlookers Search for Elusive Safety

By N. R. KLEINFELD

It kept getting worse.

The horror arrived in episodic bursts of chilling disbelief, signified first by trembling floors, sharp eruptions, cracked windows. There was the actual unfathomable realization of a gaping, flaming hole in first one of the tall towers, and then the same thing all over again in its twin. There was the merciless sight of bodies helplessly tumbling out, some of them in flames.

Finally, the mighty towers themselves were reduced to nothing. Dense plumes of smoke raced through the downtown avenues, coursing between the buildings, shaped like tornadoes on their sides.

Every sound was cause for alarm. A plane appeared overhead. Was another one coming? No, it was a fighter jet. But was it friend or enemy? People scrambled for their lives, but they didn't know where to go. Should they go north, south, east, west? Stay outside, go indoors? People hid beneath cars and each other. Some contemplated jumping into the river.

For those trying to flee the very epicenter of the collapsing World Trade Center towers, the most horrid thought of all finally dawned on them: nowhere was safe.

For several panic-stricken hours yesterday morning, people in Lower Manhattan witnessed the indescribable, the incomprehensible, the unthinkable. "I don't know what the gates of hell look like, but it's got to be like this," said John Maloney, a security director for an Internet firm in the trade center. "I'm a combat veteran, Vietnam, and I never saw anything like this."

The first warnings were small ones. Blocks away, Jim Farmer, a film composer, was having breakfast at a small restaurant on West Broadway. He heard the sound of a jet. An odd sound — too loud, it seemed, to be

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President Vows to Exact Punishment for 'Evil'

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The attacks seemed carefully coordinated. The hijacked planes were all en route to California, and therefore gorged with fuel, and their departures were spaced within an hour and 40 minutes. The first, American Airlines Flight 11, a Boeing 767 out of Boston for Los Angeles, crashed into the north tower at 8:48 a.m. Eighteen minutes later, United Airlines Flight 175, also headed from Boston to Los Angeles, plowed into the south tower.

Then an American Airlines Boeing 757, Flight 77, left Washington's Dulles International Airport bound for Los Angeles, but instead hit the western part of the Pentagon, the military headquarters where 24,000 people work, at 9:40 a.m. Finally, United Airlines Flight 93, a Boeing 737 flying from Newark to San Francisco, crashed near Pittsburgh, raising the possibility that its hijackers had failed in whatever their mission was.

There were indications that the hijackers on at least two of the planes were armed with knives. Attorney General John Ashcroft told reporters in the evening that the suspects on Flight 11 were armed that way. And Barbara Olson, a television commentator who was traveling on American Flight 77, managed to reach her husband, Solicitor General Theodore Olson, by cell phone and to tell him that the hijackers were armed with knives and a box cutter.

In all, 266 people perished in the four planes and several score more were known dead elsewhere. Numerous firefighters, police officers and other rescue workers who responded to the initial disaster in Lower Manhattan were killed or injured when the buildings collapsed. Hundreds were treated for cuts, broken bones, burns and smoke inhalation.

But the real carnage was concealed for now by the twisted, smoking, ash-choked carcasses of the twin towers, in which thousands of people used to work on a weekday. The collapse of the towers caused another World Trade Center building to fall 7 hours later, and several

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Kelly Goodner for The New York Times
SECOND PLANE United Airlines Flight 175 nearing the trade center's south tower.

A Somber Bush Says Terrorism Cannot Prevail

By ELISABETH BUMILLER with DAVID E. SANGER

Awaiting the Aftershocks

Washington and Nation Plunge Into Fight With Enemy Hard to Identify and Punish

By R. W. APPLE Jr.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11 — To a sense of equilibrium, with war-

Hijacked Jets Destroy Twin Towers and Hit Pentagon

By SERGE SCHMEMMANN

Hijackers rammed jetliners into each of New York's World Trade Center towers yesterday, toppling both in a hellish storm of ash, glass, smoke and leaping victims, while a third jetliner crashed into the Pentagon in Virginia. There was no official count, but President Bush said thousands had perished, and in the immediate aftermath the calamity was already being ranked the worst and most audacious terror attack in American history.

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But the real carnage was concealed for now by the twisted, smoking, ash-choked carcasses of the twin towers, in which thousands of people used to work on a weekday. The collapse of the towers caused another World Trade Center building to fall 10 hours later, and several other buildings in the area were damaged or aflame.

"I have a sense it's a horrendous number of lives lost," said Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani. "Right now we have to focus on saving as many lives as possible."

The mayor warned that "the numbers are going to be very, very high."

He added that the medical examiner's office will be ready "to deal with thousands and thousands of bodies if they have to."

For hours after the attacks, rescuers were stymied by other buildings that threatened to topple. But by 11 p.m., rescuers had been able to begin serious efforts to locate and remove survivors. Mr. Giuliani said two Port Authority police officers had been pulled from the ruins, and he said hope existed that more people could be saved.

Earlier, police officer volunteers using dogs had found four bodies in the smoldering, stories-high pile of rubble where the towers had once stood and had taken them to a makeshift morgue in the lobby of an office building at Vesey and West Streets.

Within an hour of the attacks, the United States was on a war footing. The military was put on the highest state of alert, National Guard units were called out in Washington and New York and two aircraft carriers were dispatched to New York harbor. President Bush remained aloft in Air Force One, following a secretive route and making only brief stopovers at Air Force bases in Louisiana and Nebraska before finally setting down in Washington at 7 p.m. His wife and daughters were evacuated to a secure, unidentified location.

The White House, the Pentagon and the Capitol were evacuated, except for the Situation Room in the White House where Vice President Cheney remained in charge, giving the eerie impression of a national capital virtually stripped of its key institutions.

Nobody immediately claimed responsibility for the attacks. But the scale and sophistication of the operation, the extraordinary planning required for concerted hijackings by terrorists who had to be familiar with modern jetliners, and the history of major attacks on American targets in recent years led many officials and experts to point to Osama bin Laden, the Islamic militant believed to operate out of Afghanistan. Afghanistan's hard-line Taliban rulers rejected such suggestions, but officials took that as a defensive measure.



Naka Nathaniel/The New York Times

Time-lapse images showing the hijacked airliner colliding with the south tower of the World Trade Center shortly after 9 A.M. on Tuesday.

By ELISABETH BUMILLER
with DAVID E. SANGER

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11 — President Bush vowed tonight to retaliate against those responsible for today's attacks on New York and Washington, declaring that he would "make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them."

"These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat, but they have failed," the president said in his first speech to the nation from the Oval Office. "Our country is strong. Terrorist acts can shake the foundation of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America."

His speech came after a day of trauma that seems destined to define his presidency. Seeking to at once calm the nation and declare his determination to exact retribution, he told a country numbed by repeated scenes of carnage that "these acts shattered steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve."

Mr. Bush spoke only hours after returning from a zigzag course across the country, as his Secret Service and military security teams moved him from Florida, where he woke up this morning expecting to press for his education bill, to command posts in Louisiana and Nebraska before it was determined the attacks had probably ended and he could safely return to the capital.

It was a sign of the catastrophic

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John Lown/The New York Times



Paul Sestini/The New York Times

AMERICAN TARGETS A ball of fire exploded outward after the second of two jetliners slammed into the World Trade Center; less than two hours later, both of the 110-story towers were gone. Hijackers crashed a third airliner into the Pentagon, setting off a huge explosion and fire.



Bruce Fretts/The New York Times

By R. W. APPLE Jr.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11 — Today's devastating and astonishingly well-coordinated attacks on the World Trade Center towers in New York and on the Pentagon outside of Washington plunged the nation into a wartime struggle against an enemy that will be hard to identify with certainty and hard to punish with precision.

The whole nation — to a degree the whole world — shook as hijacked airliners plunged into buildings that symbolize the financial and military might of the United States. The sense of security and self-confidence that Americans take as their birthright suffered a grievous blow, from which recovery will be slow. The aftershocks will be nearly as bad, as hundreds and possibly thousands of people discover that friends or relatives died awful, fiery deaths.

Scenes of chaos and destruction evocative of the nightmare world of Hieronymus Bosch, with smoke and debris blasting out the sun, were carried by television into homes and workplaces across the nation. Echoing Franklin D. Roosevelt's description of the attack on Pearl Harbor as an event "which will live in infamy," Gov. George E. Pataki of New York, a Republican, spoke of "an incredible outrage" and Senator Charles E. Schumer of New York, a Democrat, spoke of "a dastardly attack."

But mere words were inadequate vessels to contain the sense of shock and horror that people felt.

As Washington struggled to regain

a sense of equilibrium, with warplanes and heavily armed helicopters crossing overhead, past and present national security officials earnestly debated the possibility of a Congressional declaration of war — but against precisely whom, and in what exact circumstances? Warships were maneuvering to protect New York and Washington. The North American Air Defense Command, which had seemed to many a relic of the cold war, adopted a pos-

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MORE ON THE ATTACKS

RESCUERS BECOME VICTIMS Firefighters who rushed to the trade center were killed. PAGE A2

SEARCH FOR SURVIVORS Some people trapped in the rubble for hours were rescued. PAGE A2

OFFICIALS SUSPECT BIN LADEN Eavesdropping intercepts after the attacks were cited. PAGE A11

TERRORISTS EXPLOIT WEAKNESS Investigators had criticized precautions against hijacking. PAGE A17

CASUALTIES IN WASHINGTON An unknown number of people were killed at the Pentagon. PAGE A5

FOR HOME DELIVERY CALL 1-800-NYT465



Senator Orrin Hatch, Republican of Utah, told reporters that the United States had some evidence that people associated with Mr. bin Laden had sent out messages "actually saying over the airwaves, private airwaves at that, that they had hit two targets."

In the evening, explosions were reported in Kabul, the Afghan capital. But officials at the Pentagon denied that the United States had attacked that city.

President Bush, facing his first major crisis in office, vowed that the United States would hunt down and punish those responsible for the "evil, despicable acts of terror" which, he said, took thousands of American lives. He said the United States would make no distinction between those who carried out the hijackings and those who harbored and supported them

"These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat, but they have failed," a somber president told the nation in an address from the Oval Office shortly after 8:30 p.m.

"The search is under way for those who are behind these evil acts," Mr. Bush said. "We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them."

The repercussions of the attack swiftly spread across the nation. Air traffic across the United States was halted at least until today and international flights were diverted to Canada. Borders with Canada and Mexico were closed. Most federal buildings across the country were shut down. Major skyscrapers and a variety of other sites, ranging from Disney theme parks to the Golden Gate Bridge and United Nations headquarters in New York, were evacuated.

But it was in New York that the calamity achieved levels of horror and destruction known only in war.

The largest city in the United States, the financial capital of the world, was virtually closed down. Transportation into Manhattan was halted, as was much of public transport within the city. Parts of Lower Manhattan were left without power, compelling Mayor Giuliani to order Battery Park City to be evacuated. Major stock exchanges closed. Primary elections for mayor and other city offices were cancelled. Thousands of workers, released from their offices in Lower Manhattan but with no way to get home except by foot, set off in vast streams, down the avenues and across the bridges under a beautiful, clear sky, accompanied by the unceasing serenade of sirens.

While doctors and nurses at hospitals across the city tended to hundreds of damaged people, a disquieting sense grew throughout the day at other triage centers and emergency rooms that there would, actually, be less work: the morgues were going to be busiest.

A sense of shock, grief and solidarity spread rapidly through the city. There was the expectation that friends and relatives would be revealed among the victims. Schools prepared to let students stay overnight if they could not get home, or if it emerged that there was no one to go home to.

There was also the fear that it was not over: stores reported a run on basic goods. And there was the urge to help. Thousands of New Yorkers lined up outside hospitals to donate blood.

As in great crises past, people exchanged stories of where they were when they heard the news.

"There is a controlled professionalism, but also a sense of shock," said Mark G. Ackerman, an official at the St. Vincent Medical Center. "Obviously New York and all of us have experienced a trauma that is unparalleled."

"I invite New Yorkers to join in prayer," said Cardinal Edward M. Egan as he emerged from the emergency room of St. Vincent's in blue hospital garb. "This is a tragedy that this great city can handle. I am amazed at the goodness of our police and our firefighters and our hospital people."

All communications creaked under the load of the sudden emergency. Mobile phones became all but useless, intercity lines were clogged and major Internet servers reported overloads.

The area around the World Trade Center resembled a desert after a terrible sandstorm. Parts of buildings, crushed vehicles and the shoes, purses, umbrellas and baby carriages of those who fled lay covered with thick, gray ash, through which weeping people wandered in search of safety, each with a story of pure horror.

Imez Graham, 40, and Dee Howard, 37, both of whom worked on the 61st floor of the north tower, were walking up Chambers Street, covered in soot to their gracefully woven dreadlocks caked in soot, barefoot. They had spent an hour walking down the stairs after the first explosion. They were taken to an ambulance, when the building collapsed. They jumped out and began to walk home. "They need me; I've got to get home," Ms. Howard said. Where was that? "As far away from here as possible."

In Chinatown, a woman offered them a pair of dainty Chinese sandals. Nearby, construction workers offered to hose the soot off passing people.

The twin pillars of the World Trade Center were among the best known landmarks in New York, 110-floor unadorned blocks that dominated any approach to Manhattan. It is probable that renown, and the thousands of people who normally work there each weekday, that led Islamic militants to target the towers for destruction already in 1993, then by parking vans loaded with explosives in the basement.

There is no way to know how many people were at work shortly before 9 a.m. when the first jetliners sliced into the north tower, also known as 1 World Trade Center. CNN and other television networks were quick to focus their cameras on the disaster, enabling untold numbers of viewers to witness the second jetliner as it banked into the south tower 18 minutes later, blowing a cloud of flame and debris out the other side.

Even more viewers were tuned in by 9:50 a.m. when the south tower suddenly vanished in swirling billows of ash, collapsing in on itself. Then at 10:29 a.m. the north tower followed. A choking grey cloud billowed out, blocking out the bright sunshine and chasing thousands of panicked workers through the canyons of Lower Manhattan. Plumes continued to rise high over the city late into the night.

"The screaming was just horrendous," recalled Carol Webster, an official of the Nyack College Alliance Seminary who had just emerged from the PATH trains when the carnage began. "Every time there would be another explosion, people would start screaming and thronging again."

The scenes of horror were indelible; people who left from the broken towers, people who fought for pay phones, people white with soot and red with blood. "We saw people jumping from the tower as the fire was going on," said Steve Baker, 27. "The sky went black, all this stuff came onto us, we ran."

The timing was murderous for the armada of rescue vehicles that gathered after the planes crashed, and were caught under the collapsing buildings. Many rescue workers were reported killed or injured, and the anticipation that Building 7 would soon follow led to a suspension of operations. The firefighters union said that at least 200 of its members had died.

Mayor Giuliani, along with the police and fire commissioners and the director of emergency management, was forced to abandon a temporary command center at 75 Barclay Street, a block from the World Trade Center, and the mayor emerged with his gray suit covered with ash.

In the evening, officials reported that buildings 5 and 7 of the World Trade Center had also collapsed, and buildings all around the complex had their windows blown out. The Rector Street subway station collapsed, and the walkway at West Street was gone. World leaders hastened to condemn the attacks, including Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat and Libya's Muammar el-Qaddafi.

European leaders began quiet discussions last night about how they might assist the United States in striking back, and Russia's president, Vladimir Putin, joined in expressing support for a retaliatory strike.

But in the West Bank city of Nablus, rejoicing Palestinians, who have been locked in a bitter struggle with Israel for almost a year, went into the streets to chant, "God is great!" and to distribute candies to celebrate the attacks.

Many governments took their own precautions against attack. Israel evacuated many of its embassies abroad, and non-essential staffers at NATO headquarters in Brussels were ordered home...