

September 11, 2009

After watching the video, answer these questions on a piece of notebook paper.

1. What is your initial reaction to some of the images you have seen? What emotion(s) does it invoke in you?
2. Do you remember where you were? I know this is tough...you were barely 4-5 years old then. Do you remember the reactions of people around you? If so, what were they?
3. How did the United States respond to the attacks?
4. How do you think the United States should respond if another attack occurs?

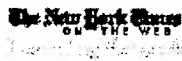
Share your thoughts if you wish.

Read the article, "Hijacked Jets Destroy Twin Towers and Hit Pentagon" from the New York Times on September 12, 2001.

On your piece of notebook paper, answer the following questions.

1. Create a quick timeline of events as they were available on September 12, 2001 from the news article.
2. How did New Yorkers respond to the attacks? How did New York City leaders respond to the attack?
3. How did President Bush and other national leaders respond to the attack?
4. How did people from other countries respond to the attacks?
5. Why are the attacks of September 11, 2001 being compared to the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Oklahoma City and Lockerbie?
6. What witness accounts are offered in the article? How do their voices impact the article?
7. How was the infrastructure of the New York City affected by the attacks?

Let's chat...let's clear up some misconceptions using what we know now.



September 12, 2001



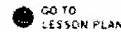
Hijacked Jets Destroy Twin Towers and Hit Pentagon

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By SERGE SCHEMANN



Knowledge Tools

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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.



(NYT)

Firefighters peering at the ash and rubble after the collapse of the World Trade Center towers. Many emergency vehicles were destroyed as well.

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 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 757 flying from Newark to San Francisco, crashed near Pittsburgh, raising the possibility that its hijackers had failed in whatever their mission was.

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.

By 8 p.m., 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.

But the real carnage was concealed for now by the twisted, smoking, ash-choked carcasses of the twin towers, in which tens of 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."

Within an hour, 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. 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.

Attorney General John Ashcroft told reporters in the evening that the suspects on the first flight were armed with knives.

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.

Earlier, landing at Barksdale, Air Force One was accompanied by fighter jets on both wings, and surrounded on the ground by Air Force personnel in full combat gear. Mr. Bush returned to Washington at 7

p.m.

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 without power. 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 al-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.

In Afghanistan, the ruling Taliban argued that Mr. bin Laden could not have been responsible for the attacks. "What happened in the United States was not a job of ordinary people," an official, Abdul Hai Mutmaen, told Reuters. "It could have been the work of governments. Osama bin Laden cannot do this work."

Apart from the major question of who was responsible, a host of other questions were certain to be at the forefront in coming days and weeks. One was the timing — why Sept. 11?

The date seemed to have no obvious meaning. One of the men convicted in the bombing of the United States Embassy in Nairobi in 1998, in which 213 were killed, was originally scheduled for sentencing on Sept. 12. But the sentencing of the man, Mohamed Rasheed Daoud al-'Owhali, had been put off to mid-October.

It was possible that Mr. Al-'Owhali and the others convicted with him were close witnesses to the bombings, since terror suspects typically await sentencing at the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Lower Manhattan. Officials have not confirmed that the convicted Nairobi bombers are there.

Many questions would also be raised about how hijackers managed to seize four jets with all the modern safeguards in place. Initial information was sketchy, although a passenger on the United Airlines jetliner that crashed in Pennsylvania managed to make a cellular phone call from the toilet. "We are being hijacked, we are being hijacked," the man shouted at 9:58 a.m. As he was speaking, the plane crashed about eight miles east of Jennerstown, killing all 45 aboard.

For all the questions, what was clear was that the World Trade Center would take its place among the great calamities of American history, a day of infamy like Pearl Harbor, Oklahoma City, Lockerbie.

The very absence of the towers would become a symbol after their domination of the New York skyline for 25 years. Though initial reviews were mixed when the towers were dedicated in 1976, they came into their own as landmarks with passing years. King Kong climbed one

tower in a remake of the movie classic.

In April, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which ran the World Trade Center through its first 30 years, leased the complex for \$3.2 billion to a group led by Larry A. Silverstein, a developer, and Westfield America Inc.

In recent years, the complex has filled up with tenants and revenues have increased. In addition to the towers the complex included four other buildings, two of which were also gone, for a total of 12 million square feet of rentable office space.

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