



# **ATTACK** **ON AMERICA** **GROUND ZERO**

**A Reporter's Notebook**

By William Crawford

## Foreword

When I interviewed a former Jordanian terrorist in 1996, the message that came through in a hauntingly clear fashion was that of the intense hatred that segments of the Muslim community have for Christians - which are automatically associated with the entire Caucasian population of the Western world - and in particular the United States. It's a hatred that is much more severe than anything we in this part of the world can understand. It has become a religious decree for a growing element of Muslim fanaticism. Certainly that is not to suggest that the entire Muslim community is charged with the goal of destroying America, but it can be said that before September 11th, most Americans were oblivious to the intensity of the hatred felt towards them by cultures around the world.

I was as shocked as anyone to see the attacks happen - but had in fact been warned five years ago that it was only a matter of time before the terrorist element of the Muslim community would one day wreak havoc on the Western World. At the time it was a warning that I could do nothing about and gave little or no merit. For many authorities and journalists however, "the writing", so to speak, was on the wall. They knew, in general terms, that it was indeed just a matter of time before terrorists such as bin Laden built up the nerve and resources to launch an attack.

Up until that warm Tuesday morning when the free world changed forever - Americans were, true to form, comfortable in their complacency regarding the threat of terrorism on US soil. Authorities knew some form of an attack was coming - but the location and the date of such an act remained a mystery - until it actually happened. As you will read in this book, the attack was more fueled by fanaticism than by intricate planning. Many, including myself, believe that the terrorists are given too much credit for the level of skill required to pull off such an attack. It was not rocket science to organize such an assault, just total hatred mixed with religious zeal.

The sheer scope of the attack has numbed our individual emotions as we try to comprehend what really happened. It is almost impossible to imagine the terror of being on one of those planes as it approached its target. It is equally hard to contemplate how horrible it must have been to have been stuck on those floors of the World Trade Tower that were burning out of control. Only one's worst nightmare could recreate the emotional state of mind of those that chose to die by leaping from the 80th floor of a skyscraper rather than be consumed by flames.

Could you imagine what it was like for the individuals caught on the roof and upper floors of the towers when it began to collapse?

What about the emotions of the rescue workers who rushed into the inferno to help and then were trapped in the stairwells when the buildings suddenly fell ?

What about the families of those that died ?

In my research for this book, I came across a story about a family of four on their way to Australia for a two month vacation. Mom and Dad and their daughters, aged nine and three were passengers on one of the flights that crashed into the World Trade Center. An entire family destroyed. A pretty little three year old girl trapped on a plane stolen by men consumed by unbelievable evil. She didn't understand. Neither do we.

We do not hate the Muslim community and those that choose it as their religion. But many of us have a new, very deep hatred of the likes of bin Laden and his wicked followers.

Those that flew those jets into their targets may have thought that they were dying as heroes and would be celebrated martyrs. In their home towns there were those that rejoiced at their efforts and as shown on national T.V., children celebrated in the streets when news of the attack came.

But the little three year old girl who died on that aircraft would not have been able to understand why those people so far away hated her and would actually dance upon hearing news of her death.

We can only hope that there is a very terrible place in hell reserved for these men and others of their kind that could plot and carry out such an attack. Somehow it seems like we were shortchanged in not being able to extract some kind of retribution on these absolute and total cowards. They were nothing but crazed fanatics who killed women and children.

How twisted has our world become when one's religion becomes a catalyst for assaults on the innocent, motivated by the political agenda of a few wretched men.

The world is in need right now of strength and resolve. As the days come when the final toll of this attack can be calculated, we, as members of the human race must learn to live side by side in peace and harmony regardless of religion, skin color or language. We are brothers and sisters in a race called humanity. The evil amongst us must be weeded out and vigorously destroyed.

The events on September 11th have been etched into our memories forever. No one will ever forget the image of flight 175 slamming into the side of the south tower and exploding into a massive fireball. The rest of the day became an inconceivable series of confusion and shocked emotion.

This book is the story of that day. How it happened and why it happened. It is the stories of those who survived it; those who escaped the buildings alive, the rescuers, and the families of those that didn't come home that night. This is the documentation of one of history's greatest crimes. It is the culmination of research that began five years ago, and it is research that came to a sudden and jolting end. It is the story of the people who, through no choice of their own, were forced into this day of infamy. I can only hope that it does their memory justice. May peace find us all.



**To Those that Felt The Pain of that Day.**

# Chapter One

## A Day of Terror



Tuesday September 11th, 2001 began like any other early fall day. It was what promised to be the beginning of a lovely late summer day. In New York's Financial district traders were busy, as were all New Yorkers in the area. The street vendors were out in force, hundreds of side walk shops were open for business and the streets were, as usual, full of taxi cabs, delivery trucks, buses and pedestrians. The morning sun was warm and only a few took time to stop and notice how blue the sky was beyond the silhouette of New York's skyline reference point - the two World Trade towers. However this day that had started out as ordinary, with coffee and business and office gossip would suddenly disappear to be replaced by a day that would be forever remembered, a day filled with horrific and exceedingly systematic destruction, a day that would change the world as we know it. .

The morning grid lock in New York had reached its climax - and most of the fifty thousand plus people that were employed in the World Trade Towers had arrived at work - some already several hours into their work day. Another 140,000 people would visit the towers before the day was over - many on business and thousands of others as part of their vacation. So large is the population of the towers that each has its own zip code.

The World Trade Center stood as a symbol of the economic strength of the United States. Real estate lease rates were among some of the highest in the city as top financial companies vied for the highly sought after addresses that lent prestige to their firms' brand positions. Billions of dollars traded hands each week - all at the command of the financiers that called the World Trade Center home. Companies such as Empire Health and Bank of America occupied hundred of thousands of square feet of office space. Morgan Stanley alone occupied 5 floors of the South Tower. The towers, built in 1970, housed more than 400 of America's top companies.

Not only did the sheer size of the massive towers represent a physical landmark - with the North tower reaching 110 stories into the sky, and the South tower reaching 106 stories - the importance of the facility also made it a very large target for those that saw America's wealth as an evil and essential tool of the hated Americans.

Just another morning at the office - just another morning when a deadly trigger had already been pulled, tens of thousands of miles away, by individuals driven with such hatred for the western world that their sense of humanity had been blinded to anything but terror. The bullets they chose streaked towards the glistening glass towers at over five hundred miles an hour. Their cargo included terrified passengers - but more important to the perpetrators was the thousands of gallons of jet fuel that would turn the aircraft into flying missiles packing the power to create a devastating inferno of destruction.

It is impossible to know whether the evil planners of this attack knew that the ignited fuel would eventually burn hot enough to see the steel girders and cement supports of the World Trade Center collapse. More likely, they expected that the towers would, from the force of the impact at very least, create a horrific fire in the towers that would injure and kill thousands, sending a message to America, that their cocoon of security far across the seas from terror was no longer safe.



It would be the flight control tower in Boston that first detected something was wrong. Flight 11, an American Airlines Boeing 767 with 92 people on board had departed from Boston's Logan Airport as scheduled. It flew west, as planned, toward its scheduled destination of Los Angeles and then, somewhere over upstate New York, it changed course unexpectedly and veered sharply towards New York City. Controllers suspect a hijacking. With the crowded morning skies such an action was cause for significant alert, as one aircraft could easily find itself in the path of another aircraft. Adding further to the confusion was the pilot's refusal to answer panicked radio transmissions from frantic air traffic controllers. Immediately an alert was sent out to all towers along the Eastern seaboard reporting the erratic action of flight 11.

Aboard the hijacked jet, the perpetrators seemingly had taken full control of the aircraft. As investigators would learn in the days to come, the hijackers had become fully skilled pilots capable of commandeering a Boeing 767.

The first plane came from the south, swooping down low in the crystal blue skies over the glistening Hudson River. The aircraft slowed to about 313 knots from a top speed of about 500 knots as it neared the southern tip of Manhattan. "It's as if it were seeking a target," said Walter Cross, president of Flight Explorer, a U.S. Internet site that tracks aircraft movements.

Clyde Ebanks, vice-president of an insurance company, was at a meeting on the 103rd floor of the south tower when his boss yelled, "Look at that!"

At 8:45, The jet, now a guided missile pointed at the symbol of the United State's financial might, hit the World Trade Center's north tower somewhere around the 90th floor.

Within minutes, United Airlines flight 175 enroute from Boston to Los Angeles duplicated the course of American Airlines flight 11. It too began heading towards America's largest city. Evident that there was a loss of control aboard both

flights by the trained commercial pilots both were subsequently assumed to have been hijacked. Immediately, plans designed for response in the case of such an event, were set in place - but the extreme and unique nature of the situation cost precious seconds in reaction time. Who could have predicted that the hijackings, which at the time hadn't actually been confirmed, would be planned to aim their commandeered aircraft at New York City's tallest land mark? Flight 175 was on a collision course with at least two other airliners after it veered off course and descended toward Manhattan." According to government sources, the pilot - likely the hijacker controlling the plane appeared to abruptly maneuver the flight to avoid a collision. Another aircraft was forced to literally perform a dive, after the on-board warning system indicated an imminent collision with an object in its immediate air space." As it continued its new course toward New York, United 175 turned to the left and began a descent towards Manhattan.. Controllers reported to investigators that the plane had turned directly into the path of the Delta plane "and was descending on top of the aircraft". The Delta plane began a series of maneuvers to avoid the collision, but the other aircraft also turned, and their radar targets merged on the screen as air traffic controllers watched and waited, certain of a mid air collision. But it did not happen." Thousands of feet above the crowded countryside, flight 175 leveled off avoiding the Delta aircraft. Immediately it began its descent again. The hijacked plane's covert pilot demonstrated great skill in his ability to maneuver the giant aircraft and, as investigators would later discover, was schooled in the US at a respected flight training institute." Shortly after that, the hijacked plane was once again on a collision course - this time with a US Airways flight. The Airways flight collision-avoidance system warned of the approaching plane and advised the pilot to descend, which he did, averting a collision. Controllers scrambled to direct other planes out of the way of both United 175 and American Airlines Flight 11, as they headed toward the twin towers.

"I was watching TV, and there was this sonic boom and the TV went out. And I thought maybe the Concord was back

in service because I've heard about those sonic booms and I got up to my window and I looked up and the side of the World Trade Center exploded." said one witness. Paper could be seen flying from the windows and giant gaping holes appeared in the side of the building. As one witness told associated press, "It looked like a ticker tape parade because there were parts of the building floating down with the dust,"

Within seconds of the first collision, people in the south tower scrambled to windows to see what had happened. Richard Cruz was on the 92nd floor of the south tower when the plane hit. He rushed to the window and as he looked out, he saw one side of the building opposite him engulfed in flames and people jumping to certain death. "I saw the horror. That's when it hit me and I thought to myself "I have to get out of here." said Cruz.

"I just heard the building rock, it knocked me on the floor," adds Peter Dicerbo, who was working on the 47th floor for the First Union National Bank when it hit. "It sounded like a big roar, then the building started swaying, that's what really scared me."

At 9:03, A second jet swooping from the south over the Hudson River struck the trade center's south tower, about twothirds of the way up. Television cameras captured the impact, as United Airlines Flight 175, a Boeing 767 carrying 65 people, with deliberate purpose and intent flew directly into the tower, slicing through it like a knife through butter. An enormous ball of orange flame and dense black smoke exploded from the north side of the tower. Debris began falling as people hung from windows waving and screaming. Cameras captured bodies plummeting to the ground below, people who were either pushed or jumping to avoid the searing heat.

As America reeled from the horror of the unbelievable event yet another passenger jet; American Airlines Flight 77, a Boeing 757 carrying 64 people, crashed on a helicopter landing pad beside the Pentagon, which serves as the headquarters

of the massive U.S. military, near Washington, D.C. This jet had departed from Dulles International Airport outside Washington at twenty past eight. enroute to Los Angeles. The aircraft is traveling so low that it clips light posts on the roads around the Pentagon and eyewitnesses reported that it tried to power up just before impact - likely due to the pilot realizing that they were only going to strike the outside of the building rather than near the center.

“The whole building shook,” said Terry Yongers, an air force civilian who was in the building at the time of the strike. “There was a lot of screaming and pandemonium,” he said.

The impact of the crash caused one side of the five-sided structure to collapse.

By 9:50, the U.S. Capitol, home to the Senate and House of Representatives, is evacuated along with the White House as Washington is thrown into a state of total panic.

Immediately authorities bring troops into the capital and the situation room as officials scramble to deal with the attack.

An entire infantry regiment is put on full alert. All over the city panic breaks out as rumors quickly spread that another hijacked jet is heading for the city. Washington police herd stunned pedestrians away from the White House. Drivers looking to the sky become threats themselves as they run red lights and speed across intersections, sending pedestrians and other motorists scattering.

“We are all sitting ducks here. We can’t get out of the city. If they want to bomb the city, we are all just waiting,” one federal employee complains.

Republican Senator Chuck Hagel is quoted as saying, “This is the second Pearl Harbor. I don’t think that I overstate it,”

Shortly before 10:00 am, a man calls an emergency

dispatcher in Pennsylvania and says he is a passenger locked in a bathroom aboard United Airlines Flight 93, which had left the Newark Airport in New Jersey headed for San Francisco.. “We are being hijacked, we are being hijacked,” he says before the line goes dead. ” Moments later in New York, the trade center’s south tower collapses. Eye witnesses report hearing a sucking sound and then an incredible surge of air as the floors pancake downwards. A vast cloud of smoke and debris falls onto the streets below. Thousands of pieces of office paper drift over Brooklyn, more than 3 miles away. A man on a pay telephone near the trade center is mobbed by people who want to use the phone to call relatives but find they can’t use their cell phones.

“Everyone was screaming, crying, running, cops, people, firefighters, everyone,” New York City fire marshal Mike Smith says. “It’s like a war zone.” At nearby St. Vincent hospital,

Doctor Stephen Stern reports that “hundreds of people are burned from head to toe.”

Businessmen Gabriel Ioan, shaking in shock outside nearby City Hall, says: “I just saw the building I work in come down.”

As rumors spread, and the world reels from the attack, only minutes after the collapse of the North Tower, at 10:11 am, United Airlines Flight 93, which has 45 people aboard, crashes in rural Somerset County, about 120 kilometers southeast of Pittsburgh Pennsylvania.

Michael R. Merringer, out on a mountain bike ride with his wife, says he hears the plane’s engines throttle up twice before the crash. “I looked up and I saw the smoke coming up,” he says.

Witnesses report that the aircraft makes a series of erratic turns taking it west of Cleveland. The flight then mysteriously corrects its course and the plane heads southeast towards Washington. Then just as suddenly it went down. Authorities

later believe that passengers aboard the plane rushed the hijackers and forced the plane to crash before it could reach its target.” It’s a little more than 90 minutes after the first hijacked jet liner crashed into the trade center’s north tower that it collapses. The top of the building explodes with smoke and dust as the giant communications antenna at the summit topples like a rocket in reverse and the building falls in upon itself. The falling debris blocks out the brilliant sun

“There are no words to describe this,” says CBS announcer Dan Rather, who paused for several moments to gather his emotions.”

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Deep in the Sudanian Desert, Wadjdi Aman lives, the five year old son of a nomadic camel herder. He is the 9th of 12 children and is a star pupil with his studies. Even at such an early age, he is expected to memorize the teachings of Allah, and punishment is swift and severe if he fails to meet his elders’ expectations. He doesn’t disappoint his father - a stern man with a fanatically devout devotion to his Muslim religion.

As Wadjdi grows to become a young man, he is taught many skills unrelated to reading and writing. By age 12, he is fully versed in building car bombs, and by age 16 is an expert in aggravating crowds to riot. He is a rising star in the Muslim Brethrenhood, and has been taught since his earliest memories that Christians are the specific enemy of the Muslim nation and that the Jihad, the Holy War, is about the final battle that will end Christianity once and for all.

What is so puzzling about the life of this man the western world refers to as a terrorist is that he, outside of his knowledge of the tactics of waging war against the Christian believers, is a normal man. He finishes college, becomes a chartered accountant and finds work with a French firm. He has friends, loves his family and dreams of his future.

That future changes though when he is goaded into sharing a glass of wine with his French comrades during a celebration of Bastille day. The Muslim religion specifically and explicitly forbids any consumption of alcohol and the guilt from his sin is more than he can bear. In a futile attempt to find solace, he confides in a friend who proceeds to quickly tell the others in the Mosque of Wadjdi's terrible sin. He is stoned by the followers in his temple, and is forbidden to pray for 30 days - a severe penalty for any devout Muslim follower.

At the end of 30 days, in an act of rebellion, he takes another drink, and is again cast out from his religious shrine. The next year is a downward spiral of decay and drunkenness which climaxes with him being homeless after losing his job for lack of attendance.

It was close to this time that a former Christian student at the University he once attended saw him sleeping at the bottom of a set of stairs in the city's downtown center. A brief discussion ensues, and the Christian takes in the young man who is so lost in his life. The act is ironic, as only a few years earlier Wadjdi had viciously assaulted his fellow Christian student after the young man had offered him a New Testament Bible to read.

“ Why do you help me when I treated you so bad ?“ A despondent Wadjdi asks.

“ I always admired your dedication and passion Wadjdi“ the man responds, “ yet it hurts me so to see you so far from yourself “

Days pass and the two men begin to build a sincere friendship. Wadjdi finds his hatred for the Christian way of life fading, and he begins to find solace in a world of compassion rather than hatred. After much discussion and coercing, he agrees to attend a church service where he sits at the back of the chapel and listens to testimony after testimony of Christians who pray for forgiveness for those that spite them. One man asks for prayer and forgiveness for his employer who

has not paid him in weeks for work rendered - as Christians have no rights in the Sudan - and hence any employer is not obligated to pay a Christian for work rendered. Another prays for forgiveness for his neighbor who shouts obscenities at his family.

At the end of the service, Wadjdi can hold his tongue no more and stands up to speak. " How can you pray for forgiveness to a people that want you dead " his voice is shrill and demanding " Listen to me and I can show you how to fight back "

His offer falls on deaf ears.

" My son, it is not our way to fight our fellow man. We seek forgiveness in those that cannot accept us for who we are - but we wish no harm to those that are different from us "

It is at this moment that Wadjdi finds himself immediately dealing with a troublesome question that strikes at the very essence of everything he has ever been taught about his spiritual belief - his years of hatred have weighed heavy on his heart, and like a breath of fresh air, he feels the compassion of his Christian friend leading him in a different direction.

Through many days of deliberation, Wadjdi finds a new path and declares Jesus as his savior.

In the Muslim faith, there is little considered more evil than one who gives up his Muslim beliefs to become a Christian.

His family reacts harshly, and after being duped into visiting his father on the word of his brother, he is tied down to a ceremonial table. Here a painful ritual service is performed where a razor sharp blade is used to cut his flesh with the intent of letting the Christian demon escape. After three days of this torture, he frees himself and attempts to escape into the desert. His plight only lasts a few days where he is captured by authorities and sentenced to death for his disgraceful proclamation of Christianity.



He is in a small cell with two other Christians also sentenced to death. All three men can simply denounce their Christian belief and their sentences will be overturned but they make a pact to stand by one another through the most horrific of conditions.

On the first Friday, as commanded by the Muslim religion, the first and oldest Christian is dragged to the prison's court yard while the other two men are made to watch as he is brutally executed, being flogged, stoned and then hung. For the next seven days the two remaining men sit in their own filth, surviving on a diet of gruel, contemplating their own fate.

But again their pact remains, and shortly before his execution, the second Christian proclaims that Wadjdi must not forsake his faith - and that their deaths would be for nothing if he was to recant his belief in order to save himself. On the next Friday, Wadjdi again watches as his cell mate is executed before his eyes.

The minutes, the hours, the days slip by and soon it is the day before his scheduled execution. His heart races, his mind a confused jumble and his fear threatens to overcome his new but intense faith in Christ. Through the night he cannot sleep, and knows that in the morning he will die if he does not turn on his belief. He finds strength in his new relationship with God and he promises himself he will die with dignity, all the while praying for strength from his belief in Christ.

But with the first rays of morning, explosions can be heard in the distance. The city is under siege by Anwar Kadafi and his Libyan army. The door of his cell is swung open and the prisoners are told they are needed for the defense of the city. Seizing the moment he flees the prison and stows away aboard an Italian freighter in which he travels to Britain and is given religious refugee status with the Canadian Consulate.

A true miracle has saved him and he now dedicates his life to spreading the word of Christ to his Arabic peoples all over the

North American continent.

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It has been nearly four years since I interviewed Wajdi - the fanatical Muslim terrorist turned Christian. At the time of the interview, he warned of the impending Jihad, or Holy War, for which he had been raised to be a soldier. He talked of how he was taught to hate Christians, and how it was considered a great honor to be a martyr in the war to end Christianity.

He talked of the fanatical element of his race that would gladly die if it meant the end of the western world - and how the West had no idea how deadly serious they were about the battle they believed was to come.

“It is coming,” he told me - “and we must be ready.” I asked him why the attack had not begun already and his answer was simple. “ So far, no one leader has drawn the people of Islam together to wage such a war.” It was only a matter of time before such a man would rise to the role.

On Tuesday afternoon, September 11th, 2001, only hours after the attack, one man, Osama bin Laden was named as the chief suspect believed to be behind the devastating and deadly attack on the USA.

## Chapter Two

# The Terror Unfolds

Maulana Sami-ul-Haq is a longtime supporter and confidant of the accused terrorist Osama bin Laden, the most wanted fugitive on the planet. They might also be frightened of Maulan, since he has endorsed bin Laden's religious ruling that calls on Muslims to kill Americans at every opportunity.

He is obviously amused at the paranoia of the Western World's fears of terrorism and in particular, Osama bin Laden himself. He does admit that many of his followers were ecstatic at the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington this week. "Muslims are suffering from American policies, and that's why they were so happy," he says.

The title Maulana which means "our master" belongs to Sami-ul-Haq who is the chancellor of the most influential Muslim religious seminary in Pakistan. Some have called it a factor for the jihad. Their training is specific, and that is to become holy warriors whose very hatred of America drives the terrorist training camps in Afghanistan. Currently about 3,000 young men and boys are learning a stern and harsh brand of Islamic ideology that is based on a violent hatred of America - an ideology that likely produced the hijackers who destroyed the twin skyscrapers of the World Trade Center with deadly targeting accuracy.

Its network is vast. With a focus on global expansion, it attracts applications from 10,000 boys and young men every year. As well as helping educate the Taliban, the madrassa is training thousands of students from republics such as Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, from the Russian separatist region of Chechnya, and from Pakistan itself.

Its students are desperately poor, often from Afghan

refugee families. By attending the madrassa they get free meals and lodging along with free textbooks. But in exchange they give up almost any thought of secular life. The students learn by memorizing the words of the Prophet Muhammad - but with a fanatical twist painted with hatred. Boys as young as 6 spend the entire day memorizing the Koran, in Arabic, even though most do not understand the Arabic language. In this climate of control, an ideology of anti-Americanism is easy to impose on young impressionable minds.

A tour of the facility reveals their organized activities. One room is a computer lab, filled with computers for the madrassa's monthly magazine. The facility is a mixture of plain classrooms, dormitories, laundry hanging from balcony clotheslines, and fanciful pillars at the entrance to its mosque.

The madrassa claims credit for installing Islamic laws in Pakistan, for promoting an Islamic shariah justice system, and even for triggering the collapse of communism in the former Soviet Union which it says it achieved by defeating its army in Afghanistan.

"A large majority of ex-students led the bloody Afghan Holy War against Russia. The war generals were mostly the students of this institution. Hundreds of them were blessed with martyrdom - ironically the CIA is considered to be the original backers - if not organizers of the movement - a movement now suspected of being partly behind the attack on the World Trade Center.

Sami-ul-Haq is more than happy to explain what he sees as the rational basis for the hatred that fuels the Islamic extremists.

He declares that Jews and Christians are fighting against Muslims, but it is the Jews who have the most antagonistic policy toward Muslims. He says that The U.S. election was an example of how the Jews can manipulate everything in the United States. If anyone goes against them, they create a conspiracy to stop it - with haunting overtones of another fanatical faction which came into existence before he was even born - that being the National Socialist Party in pre-World War

II Germany. He laughs about President Bush proclaiming that the terrorist attacks are the beginning of the first war of the 21st century. He insists the war has been raging for many years and it was the US that launched the war against the Muslims.

The war, he makes clear, is a global one. He speaks of a long list of Muslim grievances around the world. He begins with Iraqi and Afghani children dying of hunger because of U.S. led sanctions and Palestinians dying in air strikes by Israeli forces that he says are only puppets of the American government.

In the eyes of his followers, Muslims are the only power opposing the west and they will not accept any world domination attempt by the US.

He also insists that the terrorism attacks had nothing to do with Osama bin Laden, which is of course the official Taliban position. He adds that the United States should investigate properly and find proof of who is guilty before it takes any action. He even suggest that Americans themselves may have been responsible, since the hijackers could not have flown over the Pentagon "unless they had an insider with them."

He does remind the world that Osama bin Laden was once supported by the US when he was fighting against the Russians during the Afghanistan war in the 1980s. "America was very happy with him, he was even considered a hero because he spent millions on the war against the Soviets. But then the Americans took control of Saudi Arabia - its oil - and stationed their military there. It was almost the same as the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Osama bin Laden fought the Soviets and now is fighting the Americans."

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A few minutes after 8, on Tuesday September 11th, American Airlines Flight 11 had backed away from Gate 26 of Terminal B at Boston's Logan Airport and was rolling toward the runway for a six-hour cross country flight to Los Angeles.

Aboard, passengers settled in for their morning flight - completely unaware that they were about to become part of history in America's most horrific day in its long and esteemed history. Seated in Seat 4A, Edmund Glazer, first class, ignored the flight crew's instructions to put away their cell phones and computers, and quickly punched in his wife Candy's number anyway. "Hi, hon. I made it," he said.

In Manhattan, the financial district was already in full swing. 106 floors up in 1 World Trade Center, the northern building of the twin towers, Adam White was already at work. After making the hour-long subway haul from his home in east Brooklyn. In Washington, Sheila Moody had reported for her first day on the job as an accountant at the Pentagon. At Dulles Airport, Flight 757 piloted by Captain Charles Burlingame headed down the runway for the long flight to Los Angeles.

With a sense of sad irony, it is reported that Burlingame once worked on anti-terrorism strategies for the military in the Pentagon.

# Chapter Three

## The Firsts

### Signs of Trouble

“American, this is Boston Center. How do you read?”

There was no response. Once again, “American, this is Boston Center. How do you read?” Still nothing. It would become the first sign that something was going wrong high in the skies above the Eastern United States.

Flight 11, an American Boeing 767 en route from Boston to Los Angeles had only been up in the air for 20 or so minutes when the control tower in Boston gave the jet permission to climb to 31,000 feet. It was at that moment that controllers first started to get concerned over the lack of radio contact with the craft’s pilot. Moments later American Flight 11 veered sharply off its course and began heading straight across the path of scheduled flights already en route in the air above the North Eastern United States.

Controllers from Boston to New York immediately raced to figure out what was happening. Repeated attempts to make radio contact with the jet failed. It was then that a voice in the New York control tower said to the others in the room “I believe I might be working a hijack.”

Their fears were confirmed moments later when the signal from flight 11 suddenly came back on and voices could be hear yelling “Get out of here. Get out of here.”” Controllers then lost track of Flight 11 at about 29,000 feet when whoever was now in control of the aircraft turned off the transponder, which is responsible for sending controllers the plane’s identity, flight number, altitude and speed.

Controllers scrambled to find the missing flight among a mass of traffic on radar screens. Much of the search was on the southerly route the craft was scheduled to fly. ”It was a

control center on Long Island that first caught sight on radar of an aircraft making its descent towards the New York City.

Its identity was still unknown to them even though the commercial towers had been frantically trying to contact flight 11.

By this time they were certain that it had been hijacked but were unaware that it was heading straight for New York City.

On first glance they thought it might be a small twin-engine plane that had taken off earlier from Poughkeepsie, N.Y.. Such craft often fly south under “visual flight rules,” meaning the plane was not under direct air traffic control. It was thought that the radar mark might be an aircraft scrambling to make an emergency landing. Then the radar blip disappeared.

Suddenly on the crowded glowing green screens an unknown craft’s transponder came on and one controller yelled “ We have an intruder “ a term which refers to a plane that had entered restricted airspace without permission. Unlike flight 11, this time the hijackers turned the transponder to a signal that was not designated for any plane on that day. A transponder uses a specific four-digit code and is programmed into air traffic computers. This allows the computer to track and identify the plane as well as display its information on radar screens.” Word then came to the tower in Long Island that another aircraft, this time a United Flight also from Boston had quit responding to radio calls and was setting another flight path. Air traffic radar showed the plane abruptly turning 180 degrees, heading southeast, apparently toward either Washington or New York.

Controllers scrambled to get nearby flights out of the path of the intruder that was no severely off course. “I think we may be dealing with two aircraft here.” announced the crew chief at the center. Then, as the plane began to dive at 6,000 feet per minute. Controllers in New York were still not aware that a commercial flight had crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center.



“Oh, my God! He’s headed for the city,” a controller shouted. “He’s headed for Manhattan!”

On board flight 175, Brian Sweeney was using his cell phone to call his wife back near Boston. “Hi, Jules,” he spoke to the answering machine as his wife Julie wasn’t home. “It’s Brian. We’ve been hijacked, and it doesn’t look too good.

Hopefully, I’ll talk to you again, but if not, have a good life. I know I’ll see you again some day. It was only a few minutes before 9 am, and the North Tower of the World Trade Center was already burning out of control.

In Boston, controllers received word that a plane might have hit the World Trade Center and they instantly knew what had happened to American Airlines Flight 11.

In the control towers, personnel immediately began to recognize the threat that was taking place. Word had come that another aircraft that had departed from Washington had been hijacked and also had made abrupt course changes to their flight path. All three aircraft had been under the control of the Boston control center which is responsible for air traffic in New England as well as New York airspace. While the controllers in Boston were attempting to deal with the abrupt changes in course of three commercial jets, bomb threats were being called in to the center. Further west, the control center in Cleveland also was receiving bomb threats - the tower in Cleveland is responsible for control of flights as they pass into the Midwest.

Word then came into the control center in Long Island that an American Boeing jet had slammed into the side of the World Trade Center’s North Tower. Controllers looked at each other in disbelief. The television in the cafeteria had been tuned into a sports channel, but immediately was turned to CNN.

Their attention though was only on the current flight path of the Intruder over the skies of New York city. They had

only known about what had happened to Flight 11 for a few minutes before it was apparent that the Intruder - now known to be United Flight 175 was also on a collision course with New York City.

“He’s not going to land. He’s going in!”

At the control tower at La Guardia Airport in New York, it wouldn’t be the radar that told them where the plane was going but instead it was the actual sight of flight 175 seen through binoculars colliding into the side of the South Tower.

Inside the dark and windowless control room every eye had been trained on one radar screen. They could do nothing but watch as the tiny blip on their screen headed straight for America’s largest city at a dangerously low altitude. Seconds seemed like hours as their horrified faces glowed an eerie green tinge from the glow of the bank of radar screens tracking the jet. Then the blip disappeared.

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By 9:35 towers across the entire North American continent have been alerted to the multiple hijackings taking place in the Eastern United States. Both towers of the World Trade Center were burning out of control and now flight 77 is feared hijacked after radio transmissions from the cockpit contain screams and then a confused message about a bomb on board. The jet then makes a hairpin turn just South of Cleveland and heads for Washington. There is no response from pilot Captain Jason Dahl when he is asked to verify his position.

Minutes later, over the ground to air radio, controllers hear a man, in thickly accented English saying “This is your captain. There is a bomb on board. We are returning to the airport.”

Shortly after hearing the transmission, the hijackers switched off the transponder on flight 77. The only way the controllers could now track the aircraft was with radar which

could not distinguish between the hijacked flight and all of the other flights in the surrounding air space. The airspace around Dulles, Washington Reagan National Airport and most of Washington is designated “class B” airspace, meaning no one is allowed to fly in the area without a working transponder and permission from the control tower. .

Inside the Washington Dulles International Airport, a controller spotted an unidentified aircraft flying full throttle towards Washington. Although they couldn't be certain, the plane was thought to be the hijacked American Flight 77. By now, every tower and controller knew about the attacks on the World Trade Center and now concerns turned to what flight 77 might be attacking.

At first, controllers thought the rocketing aircraft was headed straight for the White House, but then the plane circled a full 270 degrees to the right and aimed itself directly at the southwest side of the Pentagon. The craft then dropped below the radar deck disappearing from the controllers' screens. Seconds later, at 9:45 Am., Flight 77 skidded off a helicopter landing pad and slammed nose first into the side of the Pentagon.

With the World Trade Center burning ferociously and fire burning out of control in wreckage in the side of the Pentagon, controllers at Dulles saw yet another aircraft flying with its transponder off. They had already received information that a Boeing 757 identified as United Flight 93, flying from Newark, N.J., to San Francisco, had turned towards Washington over Pennsylvania. The plane made several erratic turns and maneuvers before crashing, for unknown reasons into an empty field 80 miles southeast of Pittsburgh.

# Chapter Four

## Moments of Terror

What really happened on board flight 11 and flight 175 is a mystery. The innocent witnesses died in the crash - but investigators know a few voices. made their way to the outside world first. Betty Ong, a flight attendant, was able to call her manager in Boston “ The plane has been hijacked “ she whispered “ one person has been stabbed by the hijackers. “ There were five hijackers, she said.

On the ground, air traffic controllers were able to pick up pieces of conversation from flight 11’s cockpit. Among the alarming words heard in the background were “ We have more planes. We have other planes.” The hijackers seemingly unaware that the radio system that allows hands free communication was still on. That was the last that anyone heard from flight 11.

Twenty minutes later it slammed into one of the center’s towers with an incredible impact, severe enough to register on seismic equipment in the region. People on the first floor felt the floor shudder beneath their feet and could see pieces of the building drop past their windows, before they ran for the exits.

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As flight 11 screamed towards Manhattan. construction workers on West Third heard a roar overhead, and saw the jet streak by - flying low and fast. Construction workers watched in astonishment and then horror as the plane approached the North Tower of the World Trade Center. The first warnings were subtle when onlookers were shocked to see a giant aircraft swoop so low over the river. They heard the sound of a jet whine by them and then all the pigeons in the street flew up. People sitting at sidewalk cafes and those that were on the sidewalks saw the silver jet flash overhead.

It was low - too low. The plane didn't try to maneuver until the last second. Witnesses noticed that the jet seemed to approach at an angle, as though the pilot wanted the wings to take out as many floors as possible.

Then in one brief second the world changed. The explosion was deafening and the impact made the building sway. Those on the ground could see the concussion move up the building.

A survivor who was sitting at her desk when flight 11 swooped in and headed directly for the building stood in total disbelief as she watched the shimmering jet coming out of the horizon and showing no signs of turning. At the last minute, the plane tilted. She screamed. Suddenly the building shook as she saw the plane hit some 15 floors above her. As if in slow motion, she saw the underbelly of the aircraft streak past her window followed by the tail.

Those on the ground could only look up in total amazement as a giant fire ball flashed above. The building literally looked as though it was torn in half as a huge pile of debris rocketed out the opposite side of the building. The plane was swallowed up as it entered and then disappeared into the glass and cement. Less than a second later came the explosion as thousands of gallons of jet fuel ignited in a terrifying inferno. The ball of fire that exploded from the impact of the attack shot out more than two city blocks - enough to engulf a hovering helicopter that was nearby. Debris was found as far as 6 blocks away as glass, office equipment, and parts of human bodies rained to the ground. The floors directly hit by the jet were turned into a massive inferno. Given no warning, the people on these floors never had a chance. Flight 11 was carrying 81 passengers, two pilots and nine flight attendants. As jet fuel splashed over the edges of the ripped open tower, a flaming rain began falling more than 70 stories. A building janitor ran out in the terrible moments of terror immediately after the crash to help a man engulfed in flames. He tackled the frantic man and put out the fire that had ignited his

clothes then dragged him inside.

Rabbi Michael Cohen of Manchester, Vt. said "I saw the face of hell today."

The blast knocked windows out of the adjacent tower and knocked people off their feet. One woman, sitting in her office chair was thrown several feet. Anne Prosser had just gotten off the elevator on the 90th floor of her Tower when she heard what seemed like an explosion. The impact threw her to the ground. Others on the floors below the attack felt the impact but had no idea what had happened. They looked on in puzzlement as debris fell past their windows.

At 8:47, A man burst onto the 106 floor and shouted, "Get out! Get out!" Something has struck the other tower. "Everyone get out!" a woman shouted in the hallway, arms flailing.

As workers filed down the stairs the pace slowed and more people entered the stairwell. Everyone stopped when they heard a voice over the building's loudspeaker: THERE'S A FIRE IN TOWER ONE. TOWER TWO IS UNAFFECTED. IF YOU WANT TO LEAVE, YOU CAN LEAVE. IF YOU WANT TO RETURN TO YOUR OFFICE, IT'S OKAY.

Steve Miller had been one of the people that was coming down the stairs when the announcement came on. Shaken by the last few minutes, he ducked into an open office to find a telephone and saw a group of people over by the window, looking out. "Oh, my God!" one shouted. "They're jumping. People are jumping!"

People in the adjacent tower could only watch as people jumped to their death. One witness said it all happened in slow motion. Some people dived out the gaping holes where glass once was in place. A man in a full suit dived from near the impact zone and fell to the ground - a picture that was to haunt the rest of the world and stand out as one of the most horrific images from the accident.

Dozens of people on the ground - if not hundreds were injured in the debris shower that fell from above. Many looked skyward to see the initial seconds of the explosion and then were caught in the plastic, metal, cement and glass hail storm that hit, giving them no where to run.

One witness who was protected by the lobby window to the plaza described watching bodies fall more than seventy stories and then hearing them land. Scattered across the pavement was a head, a whole body, two feet with shoes on them and a twisted torso.

Inside the North Tower, thousands crammed into the stairwells to get out of the building that was now on fire, and shaking violently. Down in the lobby of the Marriott hotel that sits between the towers was Ron Clifford, a businessman in from New Jersey who was attending an appointment that he was already late for. In the haze he saw a woman stumbling towards him, with terrible burns all over her body. Only later would he learn that his sister was aboard flight 175, which was just approaching from the south preparing for the second strike on the Trade Center. In the stair wells, Fire marshals were urging people to walk on the right and keep moving. People were collapsing from the smoke - others fainting as panic began to set in.

Eighteen minutes after the first airliner crash, and as the world was fixed on the images of the burning tower another silver silhouette appeared on the horizon. It was United Airlines Flight 175 that had taken off from Logan International Airport in Boston, with just 56 passengers on board. Victor Saracini was the pilot that brought the craft airborne and on its way to Los Angeles but something had gone wrong.. At 8:47, the plane made a sharp left turn. Minutes before nine am, it made another turn and headed straight for the south tower. Then as the world watched, it slammed into the side of the tower and disappeared. Emergency workers rushing toward the scene dove beneath parked trucks and buses for cover after the second impact, which sent a shower of glass, wreckage and debris into the streets below.

High above, on those floors in the nineties and higher there was no way out, except the for free-falling a thousand feet. Some were trapped in the inferno, others were just above it, the walls and floors crumbled, the heat rising. They had time to contemplate their fate, to call their wives and mothers and best friends, but then what?

From the window of his apartment building on North Moore Street, Chip Brown could see the profile of the plane's wing and orange flames burning along entire floors above and below. Each window seemed to be like the window into a furnace.

A hundred stories below and three blocks away, Scott Pasquini was standing in the doorway of his apartment building along the West Side Highway . The explosion had been what he thought was a car bomb. The doorman turned ghastly pale. Was it a meat truck? He pointed to a big slab out on the street. There, in the middle of the northbound lane, was a twisted torso, without limbs. On the corner, two young women were crying, pointing to something on the sidewalk outside the Marriott hotel. It was part of a human hand. A man from took his jacket off and threw it over the horrific sight.

More people - some on fire leaped from the windows to certain death. Some jumped from as high as the 80th floor.

On the ground, people ran for cover as debris fell from high above. Ambulances screamed down every major thoroughfare in the downtown core, depositing casualties at hospitals and returning to get more. Many of the injured were severely burned, some missing limbs, others simply too traumatized to move.

Within minutes of American Airlines Flight 11 crashing into the north tower of the World Trade Center, horrific images were projected across the globe. For Financial Giant Cantor Fitzgerald's 700 London-based staff. The "holler boxes" that linked the America Square offices with Wall Street no longer broadcast orders but the terrified cries of their colleagues,



screaming for help instead. Cantor Fitzgerald's 1,000 employees worked on 101, 103, 104 and 105 - some 10 stories above the raging inferno.

Hundreds of rescue workers had already responded to the disaster, and were in the stairwells heading up floor by floor. Their objective was to get as high as possible and get as many people as possible out of the buildings. Police scrambled to direct traffic away from the area. Officers close by joined in the rescue effort. No one was sure yet what had really happened, or if the attack was just beginning.

The first tower collapsed at 9:50 a.m. with a strange sucking sound. Robin Bates, a Toronto native working at a nearby ad agency reeled from her 18-floor office window as the building disappeared into rising plumes of thick smoke. "It just started floor by floor sinking, like a banana, peeling right down," she said.

The sheer force of the collapse would blast windows out in the other tower and surrounding buildings. Debris crashed through windows, as people ducked for cover still unable to believe their eyes.

Giant clouds of dust and debris reaching hundreds of feet into the sky billowed as the building crashed to the earth. Instantly, rock hard cement was turned to a fine dust that choked the sunlight from the streets, and the streets shook violently.

"People were literally running for their lives," reported one survivor who was on the street level when the tower collapsed.

Realizing they could not outrun the debris, others huddled for cover behind cars, dumpsters and in doorways of the shops that lined the street. Witnesses at the scene reported hearing at least three explosions - likely natural gas pipes catching fire and bursting.

With the collapse, debris and smoke went spinning

through the streets, knocking down rescue personnel and people who only moments earlier had been worrying about those still caught in the building. The ash fell more than six inches thick as it blanketed cars, the streets and the people that were caught in the cloud of debris. People tried to run for cover as the giant cloud engulfed everything.

For up to a mile surrounding the site of the Trade Center, the thick cloud of smoke choked off all light. Once it began to dissipate - those on the street came out from where they had taken shelter to look downtown only to see an empty space where the 110 story tower had stood.

“Where did it go? Oh, lord, where did it go?” One woman sobbed.

With the devastation, the wounded, the dead making rational thought nearly impossible - rescue workers still rushed into the second tower. Knowing that many of their comrades had been trapped in the first collapse, it became absolutely essential to get as many people out as possible as the chance of the second tower repeating the collapse was entirely possible.

In seconds, heroes became bigger than life - and faced death square in the face as they ran up those stairs - knowing at any minute they could be caught in the rubble and crushing debris. It was what they had been trained for. Of course no one could have predicted such a terrible disaster - but being a fire fighter, a police officer - a paramedic meant doing your job. People counted on you and there was no time to think. Just up the stairs to those that needed help.

Witnesses report that the air had just started to clear from the first tower's destruction when the flames in the second tower's upper floors seemed to flare out and a bright yellow burst flashed as the top floors began to crumble down into the floors below. It was 10:28 a.m. when the tower collapsed.

Again a massive cloud of debris engulfed everything and everyone within six blocks of the Trade Towers.

Dust settled like snow on the streets as paper from the ripped open office towers rained down like a ticker tape parade from one's worst nightmare. Police scrambled to evacuate buildings surrounding the towers while other officers did their best to clear the streets of people caught in the aftermath.

From the dense clouds of dust emerged firefighters, police officers and those lucky enough to escape the collapse.

Rescue workers raided hardware stores for masks, shovels and buckets and headed towards the rubble still hidden in a massive dust storm, to try and help.

Construction workers from nearby building sites distributed boxes of dust masks among the crews. Ambulances and police cars covered with ash screamed down Madison Avenue, carrying dozens of wounded to emergency triage centers.

On the surrounding streets, people frantically searched for one another through the choking smoke. It was like nighttime and the screams, the crying, the yells for help were drowned out by the sirens.

People stood, numbed by what seemed to be a mirage. There was nothing left. Three hours earlier the Trade Center stood in all its glory - a symbol of America's wealth and now all that remained was a skeleton of steel that stood amidst the rubble.

# Chapter Five

## On Board

“Oh my God, we’re going down,” screamed a female flight attendant into a cell phone aboard American Airlines Flight 11. The call came as the aircraft swooped in over Manhattan just moments before the hijacked aircraft slammed into the South Tower of the World Trade Center.

It had been only 20 minutes since air traffic controllers realized they were dealing with a hijacking. Over the cockpit radio, Captain Ogonowski tried to signal air controllers by “keying” the microphone in what might have been Morse code.

Pushing its button intermittently to signal that something was wrong and at one point, holding the speak button down long enough for those on the ground to hear the voice of the hijacker warn “Don’t do anything foolish; you won’t be hurt “

On board American Airlines Flight 77 from Dulles International Airport in Washington - the jet that would crash into the Pentagon was Barbara Olson, the wife of Solicitor General Theodore Olson who called her husband as the hijacking was happening. “We’re being hijacked,” she said. In a second frantic call, Olson told her husband that two hijackers, armed with knives and a box cutter had forced the 58 passengers, a pilot and four flight attendants to the back of the plane.

“Hi, Jules,” Brian Sweeney was saying into his cell phone. “It’s Brian. We’ve been hijacked, and it doesn’t look too good.” His wife, Julie, was not at their home in Barnstable, Mass., so he was talking into the answering machine. His voice sounded calm, but his message was fatalistic for a big guy, 6-foot-2 and 225 pounds, who had flown F-14s for the Navy.

“Hopefully, I’ll talk to you again, but if not, have a good life. I know I’ll see you again some day.” The time was 8:58.

Sweeney was aboard United Flight 175, which had left Boston at 8:15 for Los Angeles and had crossed over Massachusetts and the northwest tip of Connecticut and lower New York State into New Jersey before the five terrorists took it on a different path, pounding toward Manhattan at low altitude.

There were in fact dozens of calls that came from the four hijacked aircraft that have played key rolls in putting together what really happened on board. One can only imagine the events that transpired on the commandeered air craft that sunny Tuesday morning. What started as a standard morning flight for both crew and passengers, became a terrifying ordeal that ultimately ended in tragedy. In a little more than two hours, four aircraft were destroyed by hijackers as well as several hundred passengers, flight attendants and pilots, unwilling participants in the hijackers' suicide mission.

We know the most about flight 93, a United Airlines Boeing 767 headed from Newark, New Jersey to San Francisco. Several calls from air phones and cellular phones have been pieced together to paint a picture of what happened on board, including the likelihood that a group of passengers charged the hijackers and prevented the jet from reaching its intended destination - which investigators likely believe to be the White House.

The calls that came from on board the aircraft provide horrifying clues to what actually happened. In all four cases, authorities know the hijackers were sitting towards the front of the aircraft, making it easier to get to the cockpit of the aircraft once they went into action.

Mark Bingham, a 31-year-old California public relations official traveling on the flight 93 called his mother from the plane's airphone the morning of the hijacking. "There was a lot of commotion in the background when he called," recalled Ms. Hoglan. "Lots of voices, but I couldn't make them out individually."

Flight attendant Madeline "Amy" Sweeney onboard Flight 11 - the first to crash into the World Trade Center - was

reported to have called her manager from the plane to report that the plane had been hijacked by a Middle Eastern-looking man in business class. She had reported that the hijackers had killed a businessman, stabbed another person and a third flight attendant as they forced their way into the cabin. The plane then changed direction and was making a rapid descent. When she was asked what do you see, She told them, "I see the ocean and I see buildings." The extent of the severity of the physical assaults on board remains only speculation.

The calls paint a terrifying picture of the terrorists stabbing passengers and flights attendants in order to gain control of the planes. Passengers and crew were then herded into the back as the terrorists are believed to have taken over the controls.

The hijackings all appeared to follow roughly the same pattern, according to the witnesses onboard the hijacked aircraft who got their messages out using cellular phone. It's believed that the hijackers took control of the plane by telling those on board that they had a bomb. Judging by the accounts of assaults with knives and what is believed to be box cutters, the hijackers either attacked the flight crew after they made attempts to try and stop them, or they did so to prevent future intervention. On flight 93, a man called his father twice. The first call, the man told him that the plane had been hijacked and that the flight attendant had been stabbed. In the second call, the man said good bye, and that the flight was going down.

Cell phones again conveyed the dreadful situation and the sense of impending doom aboard the 767. If anything could have been prevented, pilots Vic Saracini and Michael Horrocks and passengers such as Sweeney and two tough professional hockey scouts, Ace Bailey and Mark Bavis, would have been the ones to do it. Saracini was another former Navy pilot, and Horrocks had been a star quarterback at West Chester University before learning how to fly in the Marines.

Another man on Flight 93 is believed to have made a

911 call from the flight shortly before the second crash. He told the operator that the plane had been hijacked and that "The plane was going down," The man then said he saw white smoke in the cabin and then the line went dead. Glenn Cramer, a dispatcher in Westmoreland County, Pa., said the distress call was made at 9:58 a.m. Mr. Cramer said the man stressed that the call was not a hoax.

On board United Flight 173, it's believed many of the passengers already knew about what had happened at the World Trade Center. Passenger Jeremy Glick called his wife Liz and in-laws in New York on a cell phone to say the plane had been hijacked by what he described as three "Iranian looking" men, one with a red box strapped to his waist. Glick tells his wife that they have taken control of the plane and to call the authorities. He also asks if it's true, as he's heard from another passenger, that two other planes have crashed into the World Trade Center.

With numerous accounts now of passengers getting messages out from aboard Flight 173, Investigators have been able to piece together what they believed happened on the air craft - and what subsequently caused the craft to crash in a deserted country side location rather than striking at a major target such as the White House or the Capitol building.

On the ground, air traffic controllers reported hearing someone shout, "Get out of here," through an open microphone.

At the time, the plane was flying at about 35,000 feet when the microphone goes off and comes back on. Scuffling is heard. Somebody again yells, "Get out of here." Then silence as the mike went off. Sources then say that a voice in broken English and an Arabic accent says that an announcement is made that "There is a bomb on board." the voice continued " This is the captain speaking. Remain in your seat.

Stay quiet. We are meeting with their demands. We are returning to the airport." The microphone goes off. It's entirely possible that the passengers never heard the false warning.

The hijacker accidentally starts speaking into a cockpit microphone that air-traffic controllers could hear, not the on board public-address sys Elizabeth Wainio, 27, was speaking to her stepmother in Maryland. Wainio told her that another passenger had loaned her a cell phone and told her to call her family.

“I have to go,” Wainio interrupted, “They’re about to storm the cockpit” referring to her fellow passengers.

A flight attendant called her husband and told him three other attendants had been stabbed by the hijackers, according to an airline employee who asked not to be named.

Jeremy Glick told his wife that the group of men were going to do something about the situation.

“What do you have to go after them?” she asked him.”

“I have the butter knife they gave me at breakfast,” the 220-pound Glick replied with grim humor. Glick was supposed to have been on Flight 93 a day earlier, but missed the Monday flight after getting stuck in traffic on his way to Newark Airport. It was his first business trip in months.

A phone call from Todd Beamer, a passenger on Flight 173 also corroborates the belief that passengers stormed the hijackers. Beamer attempted to use the airphone to call his wife but was unable to get authorization. His call is automatically routed to the customer-service center in Oakbrook, Ill. Operator Lisa Jefferson gets on the line at 9:45 a.m., she immediately begins asking Beamer. “What is your flight number? What is the situation? Where are the crew members?”

Beamer tells Jefferson that the flight has been hijacked and that one passenger had been stabbed to death. The United pilots, Jason Dahl and Leroy Homer, had also been injured, Beamer told Jefferson, though he did not say how seriously. The operator was also told that the remaining crew had been broken up into two groups; some were herded together in the first-class compartment, but most were told to sit



on the floor in a galley at the rear of the foot cabin. Jefferson stayed on the line for more than 15 minutes before the line finally went dead. During this time he told her that he and a group of men had taken a vote about trying to overpower the hijackers. Beamer said that they were going to jump on the man guarding them though he had a red box that he claimed was a bomb attached to his waist. At one point,

Beamer says, "Oh my God, I think we're going down." Then moments later says "No, we're just turning." At this point, investigators suspect one of the hijackers was flying erratically. The plane plunges from its assigned altitude and the transponder is turned off.

Beamer then asked Jefferson to call his wife and tell her that he loved her and their two sons. He then asked the operator to say the Lord's Prayer with him. Moments later she heard the phone drop, and then Beamer asked his fellow passengers "ARE YOU guys ready?" Then she heard "Let's roll." Jefferson, heard screams and a scuffle before the line went dead.

Officials believe the hijackers specifically picked flights that had traditionally low passenger bookings. For example, flight 93 had only 37 passengers on board when the Boeing 757 seating capacity was 182. The intention was to help ensure that the on board passenger numbers would be low enough to prevent the likelihood of the passengers trying to overthrow the hijackers. As fate would have it, flight 93 had several large men on board.

One of the men authorities believe was involved with the charge of the terrorists was Mark Bingham, 31, who stood 6-foot-5 rugby player who weighed 230 pounds. Those that knew Bingham had no doubts that he was involved with the group that reportedly voted to attack the hijackers. Bingham had a record of bravery that included wrestling a gun away from a mugger and punching a would-be carjacker.

Beamer stood 6-foot-1 and weighed 200 pounds.

Jeremy Glick, 31, another passenger involved in the apparent revolt, was a college rugby player and judo champion” Lou Nacke, 42, was a 5-foot-9, 200-pound executive who had a “Superman” tattoo on his left shoulder. Nacke is also believed to have been involved in the plan, according to Robert Weisberg, Nacke’s father-in-law. There was also a trained pilot among the passengers, Donald F. Greene, 52, who was an executive vice president for an aviation instrumentation company.

How the men overpowered the hijackers is only speculation. Lisa Jefferson, the operator for GTE reported hearing a struggle in the background. Air traffic controllers also reported hearing the same struggle which was eventually confirmed by the aircraft’s “ Black Box “ cockpit recorder.

The men would have had to overpower the guard that stood over them, and then run down a narrow aisle about 100 feet to the cockpit. It’s assumed that the men only thought there were three hijackers from their telephone conversations - even though the FBI concluded that there were four hijackers aboard flight 93. It was suspected that two of the hijackers were in the cockpit, and another was guarding the men which makes it possible that a hijacker was “ waiting in the woods “ in the case of a revolt by any of the passengers.

FBI and Flight Investigators have also concluded from voice recordings in the cockpit that the men did indeed make it to the hijackers flying the aircraft. Voices and scuffling sounds can be heard shortly before the plane crashed into an empty field in Pennsylvania. Eye witnesses on the ground reported seeing the craft make a series of dramatic maneuvers before diving heavily nose first into the ground and exploding.

## Chapter Six

### Attack on the Pentagon

In less than two hours four planes had been hijacked. The first two, flight 11 and flight 175 had crashed with full loads of fuel into the World Trade Center. Authorities now scrambled to deal with the two remaining hijacked jets whose intended targets were yet unknown.

American Flight 77 left Dulles airport shortly before 8:30 Tuesday morning. The jet had reached its cruising altitude of 35,000 feet when it became apparent that the craft was under siege. It was 9:25 when Barbara Olson, a well known American television commentator called her husband, U.S. Solicitor General Theodore Olson on her cell phone. She told him that the aircraft had been hijacked, and that he should call the authorities. The call was then unexpectedly cut off. Minutes later, another call made it through from Barbara. She told him that the passengers in her plane had been herded into the back of the jet by hijackers armed with small knives. It was then that her husband told her about the attacks on the World Trade tower. Amidst the panic, Olsen asked how she and the passengers could stop something similar from happening?

Her last words to her husband were that of a question. "What do I tell the pilot to do?" This lead investigators to later believe that at least one of the pilots was still alive on the jet where it was believed on other hijacked aircraft the pilots may have been killed.

As had been reported in the control tower in Manhattan, controllers in the Dulles airport suddenly saw an unidentified aircraft entering restricted airspace over the capital. It was flying full throttle - perhaps more than 500 miles an hour and was losing altitude fast.

The craft flew over the Pentagon towards the U.S. Capitol and then banked sharply in a tight circle back towards the

Pentagon from the west. Witnesses on the ground were frozen in their steps as the Boeing jet blasted over the morning traffic congestion that jammed the streets. The craft was low enough that those on the ground could see clearly the markings identifying it as an American airlines aircraft. Firefighters at the Pentagon fire station fell to the ground as the jet rocketed by them only 25 feet above their heads with no landing gear down. Seconds later, the fully fueled plane slammed into the side of the Pentagon creating a huge explosion climaxing with an immense fireball that could be seen for miles. Immediate chaos broke out as witnesses panicked.

Word of the World Trade attack had already reached them via car radios or from friends and family calling them on cell phones. Now the attack was on Washington and the Pentagon had been the target.

The firefighters that had hit the ground after the jet flew overhead now scrambled to find refuge from the intense flames. Searing shreds of shrapnel sliced through the air as the explosive heat could be felt hundreds of yards away. Within minutes fire-trucks and rescue workers raced to the scene of the crash. The main truck at the Pentagon station was destroyed, and the first to arrive came from the Fort Myer station.

Huge clouds of black smoke choked off the sun. The grounds around the west side of the Pentagon were on fire and burning pieces of wreckage laced the area. Thousands of gallons of jet fuel burned out of control in a blaze that appeared to consume everything. Voices rose in the air, screaming for help, and people used office chairs to smash windows in order to escape

The order came to evacuate the entire building where more than 20,000 people worked. Building security officers ran down the long polished halls shouting the evacuation order. While others ran from the West wing, rescue workers and military personnel ran towards the wreckage. As they drew closer, the air became hot, and the smoke threatened to

overpower them. As rescuers approached they were forced to push through hundreds of people escaping in the opposite direction.

For those that were inside the West wing of the Pentagon when flight 77 hit, there was no warning - just a massive whining sound, a sucking sound followed by the massive explosion of jet fuel and then a deathly silence as the aftershock of the crash subsided. In the distance people began to scream for help and others were crying, moaning and dazed. Slowly, survivors made their way away from the crash site and towards safety. Those that could worked selflessly to pull others out of the mountain of twisted debris that had once been office furniture, ceiling tiles, wires, cords and walls.

A hijacked jetliner had torn a gigantic black hole in the building's southwest side. Smoke and flames billowed from the building as hundreds of firefighters now fought the massive blaze.

Rumors then streaked through the crowds that another jet - possibly more than one was heading for the Pentagon.

Employees streamed from the building and began to run from the area. Police, FBI and Military personnel screamed orders to get as far away from the building as possible. Flight 93 was still in the air and was thought to be heading for the capital.

Across the city major buildings, including the White House, were quickly evacuated. Secret service men burst into Vice President Cheney's office where he sat with advisors and literally lifted him from his chair to rush him to safety.

On the front lawn, emergency hospitals were set up and those with severe wounds and burns were stabilized before being forwarded to emergency wards. No one was sure how many had been hurt or killed. Officials braced for the worst as survivors stumbled from the wreckage. No one on board flight 77 would be found.

Smoke filled the hallways of the building that housed much of the United States military capacity. The entire center was put on “threat condition delta,” the highest security condition meaning further attacks were expected. As sirens filled the air, and the thick smoke filled the skies, it had become clear that Washington, like New York was a target for the Hijackers.

Above the city F-16’s now patrolled the skies along with military helicopters. The subways and transit systems had been shut down and traffic came to a standstill as hundreds of thousands tried to escape the downtown area. Police officers now carried automatic rifles and machine guns and a large contingency of security personnel kept watch at the front of the White House.

## Chapter Seven

### The hijackers

It wasn't all that long ago that we believed foreigners coming to America hoped to succeed in the land of opportunity rather than planning to destroy it. As investigators unraveled the pasts of the 19 suspected hijackers, it became clear they were smart, technically proficient, and ambitious, each in their own way. They were comfortable with the Internet and the modern modes of business travel. Theirs was a quiet, subtle presence in America. They didn't necessarily blend in, but in the same sense did little to stand out. They kept out of trouble, lived in normal neighborhoods, and in one case, even hosting a block party for local kids complete with pizza and McDonald Happy Meals.

One of the suspected heads of the hijackers, Mohamed Atta, was stopped by police in April for driving without a license and was issued a ticket. Atta failed to show up for his court hearing, but police, back-logged in paper work never followed up on a bench warrant for his arrest. Other than that, the only "dirt" investigators were able to find was when he failed to return three rented videos ("Ace Ventura," "Vampires" and "Storm of the Century") and the movie rental company turned to a collection agency.

The hijackers were able to take full advantage of America's freedom for all cultures. They didn't creep into the US in the dark of night stowed aboard some rusty freighter. Instead, they were welcomed in the light of day at airports in the US and Canada. At least some, if not all, arrived legally, with visas even though the FBI would later put two of the men on a government "watch list" of suspected terrorists. They lived and they played rarely doing anything to raise suspicions. In some cases, they even obtained Social Security numbers, driver's licenses and frequent-flier accounts.

Unlike many such crimes, with these hijackers you don't hear anyone saying that we saw it coming or that they seemed

like terrorists. Most who knew them were shocked to learn that the people they once called tenants or neighbors were the suicidal fanatics that crashed Boeing jets into the World Trade Center.

The only behaviors that might have tipped a person off would be the late night meetings, and the lack of home phone numbers or prior addresses. They mostly kept to themselves, and talked little to anyone outside of their ring of friends. At best, a neighbor might get a wave in passing as they saw each other coming and going.

But the devastating attack they pulled off on September 11th required extensive planning. A strategy had to be created which took time and resources. The mission would need funding and the bombers would need training. So why then did the entire US intelligence system fail to prevent - or even suspect an attack of the magnitude carried out against the United States of America.

There were many clues, obvious now in retrospect - but nothing in black or white. Osama Bin Laden - the head of the terrorist organization widely believed to have been behind the attack actually went as far as warning the US in a speech three weeks prior to the attack. The failure of this country to detect a massive terrorist conspiracy in its midst — at its flight schools, at the rental car counters, at local crop dusters companies, at public computer terminals and through the boarding of commercial jets bound for the West Coast — may never be explained. There will be those that point their fingers, and other explanations will surface but in truth, the Hijackers planned and executed the largest attack on America, and in fact the entire world right under the noses of the US intelligence community. It turned out to be easy - and was aided in the cultural fragmentation of a land where so many are transient and never stay long enough to even know their neighbors.

But as the details of the conspiracy emerge and the investigation unfolds, it is clear that the hijackers went to great pains to conceal their plans and their identities. They always



used rental mail boxes for their home addresses, and moved every two or three months. The men changed the spelling of their names as they moved from place to place, increasing the difficulty of nailing down the true identities of the conspirators. They existed between the lines of a huge nation, without even so much as a snag.

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They were young, in most cases under than 30, the youngest just 20. Some kept to themselves, some were married with small children who played with American kids in their neighborhoods. They preferred motels and apartments and rented homes in beach front communities near the now infamous flight schools in Florida.

For most Americans, the attacks on the twin towers and the Pentagon came literally out of the blue. The enemy was invisible and inscrutable. No one claimed responsibility. No one suspected that it was those quiet middle eastern men living next door.

Among the 19 hijackers identified by authorities was Mohammed Atta, a globe-trotter, who was born in Egypt, received a degree at the Technical University in Hamburg, Germany, and most recently lived in suburban Fort Lauderdale, Fla., in the community of Coral Springs. Atta is thought to have piloted American Airlines Flight 11, the first to slam into the World Trade Center.

Investigators found a suicide letter written by Atta, in his luggage at Boston's Logan Airport. The letter said he planned to kill himself so he could go to heaven as a martyr. Authorities also found a Saudi passport, an international driver's license, Islamic prayer schedule and instructional videos for flying Boeing airliners.

It's believed that the letter was dated in 1996, adding to the idea that the attack was years in the planning. In 1996 Atta was in Hamburg, a major European center of operations

for followers of Osama bin Laden.

In Hamburg he is believed to have met with Marwan Al-Shehhi. The chief prosecutor in Hamburg reported that Atta and Al-Shehhi had organized a terrorist cell in the city with the aim of launching spectacular attacks on the United States. The two men were together constantly, that is until the day they got on different flights at Boston's Logan Airport.

Authorities noted that surrounding neighbors in Hamburg reported the men having numerous late night meetings - a trend that would continue when they arrived in America.

Once in America, One neighbor reported that as many as a dozen cars would be parked outside, some on her own lawn. It rattled her to see car headlights flashing through her windows at two in the morning.

The late night meetings was apparently when the terrorists did their plotting face to face. Some of the people associated with the group may still be at large. Authorities are looking for Amer Kamfar, who lived in Vero Beach with his wife and four children. He has an FAA license including extensive qualifications as a pilot, flight engineer and mechanic.

How well the hijackers fit in might be what scares Americans and in essence, the entire free world the most. The US Constitution prevents any type of racial or religious segregation - which in essence means that hands are essentially tied when it comes to men like the suspected hijackers entering the country. Not only do US laws prevent them from being discriminated against because of their ethnic origin - they are also innocent until proven guilty.

When most people picture a terrorist, they imagine a sadistic, blood thirsty madman like the hijacker in the movie Air Force One played by Gary Oldman. It's a natural stereotype as the Western World has trouble believing that anyone but a lunatic would fly an airliner into an office building crowded with innocent people?

But in reality, many of today's prototypical terrorists are seldom out of their minds. Psychological profiles of captured terrorists have shown they often do not fit the stereotype of renegade loners or embittered outcasts such as the type of teenage perpetrators that have launched attacks on their fellow school mates. Instead they are in many cases rational, logical, deliberate and deeply devoted to their cause. They are what one might consider closet fanatics. On the outside, they play the role of the friendly immigrant - while in the case of the World Trade Center and related attacks - at night planned their deadly assault on the western world.

"The notion that they are insane in a clinical sense is misplaced," says a terrorism expert at the University of Kansas. Philip Schrodt adds "They are not hearing voices in their heads. They are just utterly convinced that what they are doing is right, and they will do anything to achieve their objective." What made them different from ordinary people is their view of the world.

Whether the terrorists be radical from India, Christian militants from the United States or Islamic fundamentalists from the Middle East, in almost all cases, a terrorist is defined by their beliefs that they believed they were part of a titanic struggle between good and evil. As for the mindset of those who carried out Tuesday's attacks, experts believe that the hijackers died with a feeling of exhilaration that they were part of an enormous struggle on the side of the forces of good. For the terrorists, the struggle is seen as so important they could easily rationalize killing thousands - if not millions of people.

Terrorism experts say the approval of the community is an important reason why terrorists do what they do. The encouragement of radical Islamic clerics is also key, experts say. For example, In some Islamic schools in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, young people are taught that if they sacrifice themselves in the struggle against Israel, they will reap rich rewards in the afterlife, including the services of 72 beautiful

virgins. Like soldiers who sacrifice themselves in battle to protect the lives of others, many of today's terrorists may give up their lives because they know their peer group will respect them for it.

“In the West, we might say that these people are mentally ill, but in parts of the Middle East, what they do is sometimes culturally accepted, even encouraged,” adds David Schenker, who works at the Washington Institute for Near East policy. “The Koran forbids suicide, so radical clerics describe suicide attacks as acts of “self martyrdom.” In the case of the Islamic Terrorism Groups, their motivation for suicide bombing missions is closely linked with jihad and the concept of martyrdom.” Martyrdom is clearly outlined in the Quran. Those who die struggling in the way of God are promised immediate passage to paradise.

Experts who study terrorists point out the difference between the those of the 70's and today's modern groups and individuals. More than half all attacks stem from religious motivations. Today's radical fundamentalists are no longer as much politically motivated as they are of the belief that they are part of a Holy cause that commands them to perform the destruction of the enemy's society as well as the elimination of large sections of the population. This extreme belief makes them different from previous terrorists who had specific demands, such as the release of imprisoned leaders or comrades. . The aim of the new terrorist is to strike out against a targeted enemy, most often the United States. Most apparent is the dramatic shift is the willingness of terrorists to inflict tremendous mass casualties without regard for retaliation.

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So how was it that the most spectacular crime in American history was carried out by a band of seemingly religious fanatics - all without the firing of a single bullet. To understand their motive, one has to dig into their past and reveal the roots from which they came.

Investigators are certain that the prime suspect in the attack is Osama bin Laden, a radical Saudi multimillionaire who heads a worldwide network of terrorists. The attack is only another in a long line of assaults on US interests carried out over the past five years.

Osama bin Laden has been on a self proclaimed prophecy to cleanse the Muslim world of external influences and in particular the influence of the United States. His highly publicized mission is to return the middle east to an idealized state that he believes existed a thousand years ago. He and his followers are enraged by American support of Israel and the presence of the American military —which he calls infidels —on his home soil of Saudi Arabia. He believes the land to be sacred, and it is subsequently being desecrated by what he believes is the occupation of the Holy Land. In 1996 he declared war on the United States, and soon after he issued what is called a fatwa in which he assures his followers that they will ascend to heaven for killing the enemies of Islam.

Osama bin Laden's network of terrorists have attacked American military barracks, warships and embassies during the past five years. Ironically, September 11th's attack wasn't bin Laden's first attempt at destroying the World Trade Center.

In 1993, the same structure was attacked in February by Islamic militants, killing six. Sheik Omar Abd al-Rahman, a blind cleric who many Islamic militants worship as their spiritual leader, is serving a life sentence in the U.S. for his part in the bombing. A car bomb was detonated in the lower parkade of the facility with what authorities believe was an attempt to bring the towers down by destroying their foundation. Authorities have also linked the Sheik to bin Laden's terrorist organization. His imprisonment continues to anger Muslim radicals, who in fact recently offered to swap him for a group of Western aid workers being held in Afghanistan on charges of preaching Christianity in defiance of Kabul's strictly Islamic regime. Investigators can only assume that bin Laden's fascination and obsession with the Towers is that he sees them as symbols of America's wealth. Over the past decade, the bin

Laden network has dreamed up increasingly elaborate operations.

To his fanatical followers, bin Laden has taken on a god like status although he may not be the puppet master of terrorism that he is made out to be. More likely he is the most well-known and visible face of a global Islamic-inspired terrorist movement whose misguided followers believe violence is justified to counter what they consider to be the world's anti-Islamic forces, namely the United States, Israel and their allies.

That certainly is not to say that bin Laden was not behind the attacks. But if he was it would be likely that he may have had help through a coordinated effort between several terrorist networks and states.

Investigators know that Bin Laden would generally have had the resources and the support to carry the attack out - but whether he would have had the capacity to pull off such a daring attack on his own accord is unlikely. Secret service agencies from around the world know he has not only the support but the protection of the government in Afghanistan as well as other nations such as Iraq.

The FBI considers bin Laden one of the most dangerous individuals on the planet. His self professed jihad refers to a Muslim term that stems from the fight against evil , a duty that can be fulfilled with the heart, tongue, hand, and sword.

Modern Islam focuses on the first three, emphasizing the inner, spiritual jihad. But extremists such as bin Laden have reportedly twisted the interpretation of Islamic law to literally to mean that they must use violence to make all nations surrender to Muslim rule. Those who die doing so will become martyrs awarded a special place in heaven.

But the notion of a Muslim waging jihad on the United States is an extreme, even distorted understanding of Islam, according to Muslim scholars and academics who study Islam.

Many in the Muslim community were quick to condemn the actions of the terrorists saying that the hijackers misrepresent the religion. In the more conservative form of the Islam belief as found in the Quran, Allah has sent the prophet Muhammad to be an emissary to all human beings, bringing them a message of mercy and a message of peace. Muslim scholars point out that suicide bombing is also considered a sin with no real Islamic basis for it.

The foundation for the motivation behind the suicide bombers seems to be rooted in passages of the Quran that scholars say are misinterpreted. The key concepts are jihad, which has often been translated as "holy war," and martyrdom, particularly the belief that martyrs immediately enter heaven rather than waiting for the final judgment day. The meaning of the Arabic word jihad is to struggle or to strive.

The nature of the attack is what leads investigators to believe it is related to the jihad. Suicide attacks are rare outside the Middle East where the Muslim faith in a contorted form grants martyrdom to those that perform the attacks. Such an act requires an immense degree of devotion, such as that displayed by Islamic Jihad and other religiously-inspired groups that believe in such martyrdom.

Those who die in suicide attacks in the Middle East are praised as martyrs by Islamic groups. "These suicide bombers are the salt of the earth, the engines of history. They are the most honorable among us," A Palestinian newspaper reported a day before the U.S. attacks. In the case of the strikes on the US on September 11th, the timing of the attack at the height of tensions between Israel and Arabs also lends credence to the theory the attack was an act of jihad.

With the basis of martyrdom founded on the Koran and Islamic faith - Islamic scholars point out that the term jihad simply means to expend your effort. For example, if you are making an effort to earn your living, this is called jihad. If you are working towards learning, this is also called jihad. Ironically, if you are teaching others the way to truth and good

things, this is also called jihad. A person's internal struggle to do what is right and to control a person's basic desires such as sex, is known as jihad akbar, or the greater jihad. Scholars explain it as the struggle a person wages for their own soul against the owner's baser instincts. It is to try and cultivate the seed of moral authority so you can be a cleansed moral force in society

There is also a form of the jihad that involves a defense of Islam in which case there may be times where the believer will be called upon to defend their faith and community in which case it can take on the meaning of an armed violent struggle.

Essentially it is the belief that violence is justifiable if it is used to overcome a greater evil - as long as it is used proportionately.

Muslim Scholars say the various terrorist groups that are based on the Islamic faith distort the religion to their own desires and use in an aggressive manner rather than in a defensive manner. As they are quick to point out, indiscriminate killing of innocents would never be legitimate in the Quran.

For example, rules of engagement include prohibitions against harming monks; violating women; killing the sick, weak or lame and even cutting down trees." But to many in the radical Muslim community, bin Laden had provided a strong uniform leadership which has strengthened their belief that they are fighting a religious holy war. Bin Laden provides training and finances with his family fortune - but the multiple groups believed to be involved in the attack on September 11th do not necessarily operate strictly under his command.

Osama bin Laden has evaded Western Authorities by keeping on the move and hiding in Afghan mountains. The United States failure to capture the fanatical Saudi - even with a five million dollar bounty on his head - has only served to make him bigger than life. To his followers, they believe that they are doing the work of Allah, and it is their duty to protect Islam from the wicked west. Christians and Jews - descendants from Christ - are clearly the stated enemy. These groups



view the entire Western World as a war zone - but do not in many cases think of themselves as terrorists. In fact, in a recent poll conducted in Palestine shortly after the World Trade Center Collapse, 88% of Palestinians said they felt that suicide bombers were a legitimate and honorable way to fight the enemies of Islam.

The Americans surrounding the hijackers, living next door to them, and giving them lessons at flight schools didn't think they were terrorists. As it turns out the hijackers didn't think so either.

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The ability to fit into their surroundings has become a key element of planning for bin Laden's followers. For example, Saeed Hotari was known to neighbors and friends as a shy, devout young man. He attended mosque, studied the Koran and worked hard at his job as an electrician. Nothing he did would have indicated to his neighbors his ultimate fanatical mission.

As law enforcement officials search the country for those responsible for the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, the notion of terrorists living among Americans - - is raising new questions about how many other terrorists might be in the United States, perhaps living as the 19 men who led September 11th's attack did.

Larry Johnson, a former State Department terrorism specialist told interviewers that "Apparently the chances of living next to terrorists are a lot greater than winning the Powerball lottery. The reality is there may be many networks."

"We need to recognize that the motivation here is religious separatism," Johnson said. Terrorist cells "have found a way to maintain their own culture and co-exist here with the added twist that they need to purge and cleanse themselves of evil, and we are that evil."

Interestingly, the families of the hijackers did not have to participate in the jihad - or Holy War on the United States.

In Vero Beach, son of a man named Abdulaziz Alomari was best friends with the boy that lived next door. Alomari would later board American Airlines Flight 11 with Atta.

Neighbors said that the adult Alomaris didn't participate in community activities. They spent time with other Muslim families, behavior that neighbors assumed was normal. They lived in a nice home that rented for \$1,400 a month.

Alomari gave his notice to his landlord in August saying that his family would be moving back to Saudi Arabia. Just before Labor Day, the Alomaris threw a party for all the neighborhood children at which they served pizza and McDonald's Happy Meals. Alomari's wife told the neighbors that it is customary to throw a party before moving because it leaves nice memories for all the children.

Investigators have quickly been piecing together the pasts of the 19 suspected hijackers. Using passenger manifests, the FBI was able to put together a list of the suspected hijackers relatively quickly - although there has been speculation about the accuracy of that list. Authorities have been able to uncover the most about Mohammed Atta - who is what the FBI call the ring leader of the group as well as the oldest of the 19 men.

It's believed that Atta along with several of the other terrorists received training at bin Laden's base of operations in Afghanistan. Others, were likely members of Egyptian Islamic Jihad, a fanatical Muslim group that's part of the bin Laden network. The FBI also believes that one of the hijackers, Khalid al-Midhar, is a Yemeni member of the Islamic Army of Yemen, another radical bin Laden affiliate.

As to how the men with names such Alhamzi, Al Suqami, Alghamdi, Alshehri, Alhaznawi, Alnami, Alomari became part of bin Laden's network of terror is a complex task

of investigation.

For one suspected terrorist named Saeed Hotari, his hatred of Jews and Christians came from his upbringing as a refugee. He saw his family's home on the West Bank decimated by years of Israeli occupation. As with many young Palestinians, he was brought up to despise the Jews of Israel.

His father later told reporters that he was proud of his son's sacrifice and that he had become a hero - and went as far as asking what more could a father ask from a son ?

When FBI investigators began to unravel the trail of evidence left behind by the terrorists, much of it pointed to the probability that when the ring leader Atta arrived in America - he was already on bin Laden's mission of terror. Once Atta and Al-Shehhi arrived on US soil, the pair diligently pursued flight lessons. They went to Huffman Aviation, in Venice, Fla., where they paid \$38,000 for lessons.

The men racked up what authorities discovered was 260 hours of pilot training but still lacked the experience that would be required to pilot something as technologically advanced as a commercial jetliner. They turned to SimCenter Inc - a facility that offers full virtual reality training using Boeing 727 full-motion flight simulator. They took two separate training sessions on the simulator.

On the other side of the country, the other hijackers kept an equally low profile. Nawaq Alhamzi and Khalid Al-Midhar, lived in a quiet residential neighborhood just east of San Diego, renting rooms from Abdussattar Shaikh, a retired English professor at San Diego State University. The FBI identified Alhamzi and Al-Midhar as two of the five hijackers who crashed American Flight 77 into the Pentagon on Tuesday.

Another identified hijacker named Hani Hanjour is believed to have been the pilot on the plane that hit the Pentagon. Hanjour is thought to have lived in Arizona since 1996.

He enlisted for a course in pilot training at the CRM Airline Training Center in Scottsdale in 1996 and in December 1997.

The common scenario of flight training traced back to 1996 has lead investigators to conclude the plan to use aircraft in a terrorist attack was at least five years old - a parallel age to bin Laden's declaration of war on the United States.

Investigators believe the actual execution of September 11th's attack began on August 25, when the hijackers bought flight tickers via the internet - likely Travelocity.com

Two of the attackers paid \$4500 each for one-way first-class tickets on United Airlines Flight 175. By sitting in first class, they would be close to the cockpit when it came time to commandeer the aircraft.

It is believed that the hijackers picked a Tuesday because of the traditionally low traffic for cross country travel.

Fewer passengers would mean easier crowd control - and also lessen the chances of a revolt among passengers in an attempt to overthrow the terrorists - which is exactly what is believed to have happened on flight 175.

It would have been easy for the terrorists to check for less crowded flights by simply using the resources available on the internet including the American and United Websites.

The saving grace of course is that there could have been many hundreds more people killed if the flights had been fully loaded.

Marwan Al-Shehhi and another man checked into the Panther Motel in Deerfield Beach, Fla., on August 26th. As was common for the terrorists, they paid with cash and in this case in advance at the hotel. The two men spent the majority of their time around the swimming pool and would have a third man visit them on a daily basis. The hotel owner noted that the men had left behind books on martial arts as well as

There was a box-cutter knife. There were also FAA air traffic maps. The most telling clue was the flight training textbooks which included information on flying Boeing passenger jets.

It is not known if the 19 hijackers even knew each other - or for that matter - the extent of the targets contained in the master attack. This, in a military operation would be standard operating procedure and would prevent, in the case of one of the micro-cells being captured, the chance of them revealing the entire plan under interrogation. It is assumed that each aircraft was hijacked by a separate cell of terrorists - and that they would be versed on their own mission - but would have little knowledge of what the other hijacker's main targets were.

It is known though that they had knowledge of the fact that other hijacked planes were part of the operation - a point that was confirmed when one of the terrorists was heard over the cockpits radio saying " We have other planes ."

As with the entire operation, authorities have been able to gather only bits and pieces of the days leading up to the attack. They know that the Friday before the attack, Atta, Al-Shehhi and a third man spent hours drinking at a sports bar in Hollywood, Florida. The men drank at least five highballs each, and at one point broke into a heated argument. The bar manager reported that the men obviously seemed upset, and Atta seemed nervous. In particular Al-Shehhi seemed definitely irritated. The bartender at that point became concerned that the men were arguing over paying the \$48 tab. The manager asked if there was a problem. Al-Shehhi immediately responded that he was an airline pilot and money wasn't an issue.

It's believed that the terrorists put a primary emphasis on Flight 11 out of Boston - and the first to hit the World Trade Center. It also believed that most if not all of the hijackers had some level of flight training - which would ensure the attack could be carried even in the case of the initial attempt to take over the aircraft resulting in casualties for the attackers.

Many questions have been asked about how the terrorists were able to get any weapons aboard the flights. It seems apparent the terrorists went out of their way to bypass security at Logan Airport. Officials have concluded that Atta and his accomplice Al-Shehhi rented a car on Monday in Boston which they then drove to the small town of Portland, Maine.

Here they stayed over night at a local hotel and then boarded a short commuter flight back to Boston where Atta transferred to board Flight 11 and Al-Shehhi boarded United Flight 175.

The move allowed Atta and Al-Shehhi to go through security in a small airport, rather than the much tighter - and possibly suspicious Logan airport in Boston. He boarded the commuter flight before 6 am Monday morning - a time at which security would be the most lax.

Witnesses aboard the commuter flight reported that the two men looked like typical businessmen. They were clean cut, dressed casually in slacks, dress shoes and golf shirts and were neatly presented. Airport surveillance tapes show Atta with a clean look, shaven and with closely cropped hair. The men carried on shoulder bags and did nothing to stand out.

When Atta and Alomari boarded Flight 11 in Boston they sat in the eighth row, across the aisle from David Angell, producer of the TV show "Frasier." Elsewhere on the plane were three more hijackers - 5 to be exact on flight 11.

Each hijacker held a copy of a 4 four page letter handwritten in Arabic. The letter explained in clear terms that they were to bring their knives, their will, and their IDs which investigators suspect were printed in a small printing shop in downtown Toronto. The letter assured them that they were about to live the happy life in the infinite paradise. The letter reiterated the statement and told the hijackers to purify their hearts and clean it from all earthly matters. In a haunting twist - the letter warns of possible attacks by the " enemy " and that they should

expect resistance.

The letter warns that the hijackers should ensure that they were not followed on to the plane, and at all costs, they should carry out their mission. It then told the hijackers to strike like heroes who do not want to come back to Earth.

They were also told to say Allahu akbar, (God is great) - as it would create terror in the hearts of the infidel.

What actually happened once the aircraft took off is very much a mystery. Calls made from the four hijacked aircraft have been able to paint a sketchy picture of the events and actions that took place on board. With the fiery crashes, all evidence of any real use has been obliterated - except for the black boxes that record all communications aboard the aircraft. It's believed that the hijackers stabbed members of the crew with their box knives or plastic knives smuggled aboard in toiletry kits that passed easily through airport baggage scanners. The box cutters use standard razor blades, and when disassembled would have likely passed through even a visual inspection by airport security. But the key weapons didn't need to be smuggled aboard - as they were in fact the planes themselves that terrorists turned into guided missiles.

The hijackers would have been able to gain access to the cockpit through the main door. Federal regulation dictates that those doors are supposed to be locked, but are only made of thin particle board and entry for a determined person would be relatively easy.

The cockpit of a Boeing aircraft is a mass of gages, buttons, knobs and lights - and the precision of the attack indicated to flight experts that the terrorists had at the very least, an adequate knowledge of the aircraft and its controls.

A spokesperson for the Airline Pilots Association suggested that the hijackers needed far more than rudimentary flying skills to be able to steer the huge jets with such precision.

Experts say that a pilot with limited skills would have to be extremely lucky just to be able to control such huge, powerful aircraft - let alone find and strike his target as the hijackers were able to do..

In addition, the hijackers knew enough about the controls to disable the aircraft's transponders, which signal air traffic controllers as to it's location and altitude. Experts also suggest that the pilots would have been facing not only an intimidating experience behind the throttle of a Boeing jet, but also would have had to actually fly the jets on course to the attack targets.

In the vivid video showing the second aircraft hitting the other World Trade Tower, the pilot makes a concerted effort to bank the plane just before impact. The result is that the wings - which carry the majority of the craft's fuel - were able to take out more than ten floors rather than just two or three in the case of a straight on point of entry. In short, the pilot was determined to inflict as much damage as possible and had the skill to do it.

When investigators spoke with the operators of the Flight Simulator Center in Florida, instructors reported that Atta and Al-Shehhi had spent much of each three hour session practicing turns.

The first jet to hit the World Trade Center was Flight 11, an American Airlines Boeing 767-200 jet, serial number 22332 which weighed 351 thousand pounds. The craft was fully fueled for its trans-continental flight and at the point of impact, was likely still carrying more than 20 thousand gallons of jet fuel which in ideal conditions can burn at 3,500 degrees. Jet fuel is considerably more stable than standard gasoline, but its molecular structure produces 125,000 BTUs of energy per gallon. It was this massive amount of fuel that experts believe was responsible for the collapse of the World Trade Towers and not the actual impact of the initial attack.

Architects and engineers have suggested that the fuel,



burning at full fury would have begun to melt the steel support beams of the floors around the impact area. With the girders weakening, the bearing weight from the upper 20 or so floors became unstable. It took about three quarters of an hour for the burning fuel to burn hot enough to essentially melt the floors at impact but once the sections gave way, the volume of the floors above the fire became a massive weight which subsequently caused a chain reaction of floors collapsing upon each other one by one.

Flight 11 was the first to hit the North tower and approximately 18 minutes later, flight 175 came from the other direction and collided with the South tower. While the world scrambled to shake off the shock of the attacks broadcast around the world, flight 77 enroute from Dulles International Airport to Los Angeles crashed into the side of the Pentagon approximately 60 minutes after the flight 11 struck the North Tower in New York. The fourth and final hijacked aircraft crashed into an open field 10 minutes past 10 in the morning.

Four aircraft hijacked and now destroyed in less than two hours. The world waited to know how it happened.

# Chapter Eight

## Survival

In the moments that followed the first attack of flight 11 into the upper portion of the North World Trade Tower - the entire facility was thrown into a state of confusion for both building security and the occupants of both towers. In the time frame between the first attack at 8:45 and the second collapse of the North tower roughly an hour later, thousands were able to escape certain death when the towers actually collapsed.

Once flight 11 struck the tower in the first assault, a massive fire broke out from the thousands of gallons of jet fuel that the craft was carrying for its transcontinental flight.

Upon impact, the aircraft exploded in a fiery ball that mushroomed out from the sides of the building and the now gaping hole that attack had created. Above the attack, people were trapped from the fire burring below them. Many made their way to the roof in hopes that some form of an air rescue could take place via helicopter. Those close to the impact zone faced the intense inferno that experts estimate was burning at nearly 3000 degrees. Rather than face being burned alive, many chose to jump out of the buildings shattered windows.

As one eye witness told reporters "We heard a big bang. Everybody started running out and we saw the plane on the other side of the building and there was smoke everywhere and people were jumping out of windows, Everybody was wondering where to go, everything was blocked off by security, they told us to get out but there was nowhere to go.

The same scene of panic and desperation took place after the second aircraft, flight 175 hit shortly after 9 am as desperate victims of the attack jumped from as high as the 85 floor. One man, using garments tried to make a makeshift parachute, which slowed him momentarily before the fabric

disintegrated and he fell to his death.

Brian Clark worked in the South Tower and was in the building on the 84th floor when flight 11 slammed into the side of the building. Clark, a father of four made a harrowing escape down more than 84 flights of stairs to safety. Clark had been at his desk for more than an hour when the first plane, American Airlines Flight 11, slammed into the neighboring North Tower

Fellow coworkers elected to start down the stairs. But many did not, thinking it was an isolated incident that bore no threat to the South Tower. Clark remembered the first plane hitting and said it was more of a wonderment initially. He then called his wife to tell her that a plane hit the World Trade Center but she shouldn't worry because he was in the other tower. Shortly after that, security announced over the public address system that the South Tower was secure and for workers to return to their desks.

"We watched Tower One burning for 15 minutes. My colleagues saw people jumping out windows but I couldn't watch. One woman began crying and screamed, 'Brian, people are dying.' She went into the ladies room to compose herself.

That was 10 minutes before the plane hit us. I didn't see her again. She'd probably gone back to her desk."

There were at least 60 of Clark's co-workers on the 84th floor when United Airlines Flight 175 slammed into their building some five floors below their office. Clark was huddled with a half-dozen people. The tower swayed violently, worse than any earthquake could muster. To Clark, it felt like the building swayed several yards. The movement caused ceilings to collapse and fluorescent tubes shattered along with speakers falling out of their harnesses. Doorways popped out of their frames, drywall disintegrated and floors buckled.

When the building was attacked, there was no doubt for Clark and his fellow employees - it was terrorism. They didn't know

what happened after the first hit - but they knew then.

From there, Clark and the rest of the people on the floor headed down the hallway into the center stairway . They had only gone a few floors when they stumbled across a heavysset woman struggling to come up the stairs with a frail looking man coming up the stairs with a more frail man. They told the pair that they were heading down, but were told that they had just come from below and it was nothing but floors full of flames. Stress and fear created an immediate disagreement in the group between the group going down and the couple going up.

The disagreement quickly escalated into a heated argument amidst the debris and dust created from the attack. The smell of the fire started to waft up the stairs and Clark argued that they needed to get below the flames. The woman that was on her way up refused to go back down and argued that they continue up the stairwells away from the fire. They were on the 81st floor, just 40 feet from the burning wreckage of United Flight 175.

Clark's attention was then caught by a voice behind the wall of the stairwell and a rhythmic banging. He could here " Help me, help me. I can't breathe. I can't get out." As Clark searched to discover where the voice was coming from, the others elected to return to the floors that contained their offices - above the fire where they hoped helicopters would be able to rescue them and at the very least, would give the building's sprinklers a chance to put out the fire.

As the others were climbing to what Clark believed would be their deaths, he discovered a hole in the wall big enough that he could squeeze through enough to see where the voice was coming from. Through the opening he slipped through to find a Fuji Bank employee buried under debris and office furniture. He asked his name and he told him it was Stanley. Clark wrestled with the pile of rubble on top of the man until he was finally able to free him. The air was thickening

with smoke and fumes from the blaze below them and time was becoming an important factor. Finally he was able to free the man and the pair made their way back to the stairwell to continue the journey - down. There was no one else in the stairwell.

By now, the smoke was choking in the stairwells that were almost completely dark. The pair stumbled over piles of drywall, shrapnel and other debris. With only an impending sense of the importance of getting down, the pair continued their descent, covering their mouths and trying to get past the smoke. It took to the 70th floor before the air began to clear and breathing became easier. When they got to the 70th floor, they came across a fellow employee of Clark's named Jose Marrero. He had a walkie-talkie and was heading up the stairs. The pair told Marrero not to go up, but he kept walking upwards saying he had to help the others.

When they arrived at the 44th floor, they found a security guard working at tending to a man with severe head injuries.

The man asked them to send medical help back up when they got below. On about the 31st floor, Clark was amazed to still find phones working and he stopped to call his wife and tell her that he was okay Clark then called 911 to tell them about the injured man back on the 44th floor. Clark waited on hold for almost five minutes as a sense of security set in that they had made it to safety. " We actually felt quite safe, with no concept that the building would collapse." Clark told an interviewer.

The pair then continued making their descent and quickly covered the last 30 floors, finally emerging inside the concourse at street level. " Suddenly, we were looking at the plaza and it looked like a moonscape. "

The once manicured plaza used to have a fountain and flowers and people - but debris was everywhere. Parts of the plane still smoldered in the dust. A policeman then emerged and told them to head for Liberty Street via a commercial

retail complex. When they got to the main street, another police officer told them to make a run for it because a lot of debris was still falling from above.

The pair quickly headed south down the street for a few blocks where they stopped and turned to look at the World Trade Center just in time to see the building plummet. They stared on in disbelief as the building fell floor by floor in what seemed to be slow motion. The plume of dust then rose and engulfed everyone and everything. The men ran to the ferry where once again they were engulfed by a big cloud of black dust the result of the North tower falling down. Fifty-nine of his 275 colleagues are listed as missing - including the group that headed back up the stairs. Brian reported that Stan thanked him profusely for saving his life but believes that Stan also saved his life by removing him from the group that decided to go back up the stairs.

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Joseph Lacomare was working on a software programming contract for almost 5 months at the New York Port Authority located in the World Trade Center. He had arrived at work shortly after eight and was sitting at his desk on the 70th floor. Working on his computer a half-hour later, he felt a massive collision and a fraction of a second later heard a deafening explosion . It was American Airlines Flight 11 slamming into the floors above him. At first he thought it was a bomb.

Within seconds, heavy concrete and debris shot past his window. In his office, ceiling tiles began to drop along with light fixtures.

An immediate panic swept across the office floor. No one said anything audible, there was just a great deal of screaming and terrified faces. With the ceilings collapsing, and the drywall crumbling, for a moment Lacomare thought the building was going to split in half. People began heading for the stairwells and began their descent. Some 30 floors below near the 40th floor, streams of firefighters were heading

up - sweat pouring off their faces from the 40 pounds plus of equipment they carried. On some levels, firefighters stopped to gasp for breath before pushing on. People were crying and some were hysterical. As they descended, they came across wounded being carried down. Many were terribly burned with the skin literally falling from them.

Moments later, the building shook again as flight 175 hit the South tower going 500 knots. The impact rocked the stairwell and cracks formed in the walls. By this time, water was pouring down the stairs from fire extinguishers and burst pipes. Pockets of choking smoke clogged landings and the sense of urgency intensified.. ”

Shortly after 9:30, Joseph Lacomare finally reached the lobby but couldn't get through the revolving doors that were crushed along with the adjoining doors in the impact.

Quickly he raced for another exit where he was finally able to get outside. There, he stopped in horror as he saw pools of blood and human body parts as well as the bodies of the people that had jumped to escape the fire. The terror became very, very real.

Moments later, he looked up and saw Tower two coming down. People started screaming as the massive structure pancaked on top of itself. After staring in disbelief, he began to run - trying desperately to fight off his burning lungs and his asthma which threatened to slow his escape. Hundreds of people ran from the destruction. People were covered with ash, some burned, others limping - all trying to get away from the devastation. Then, a gift from God. He spotted a woman who was using her inhaler. She stopped with him for a moment to share the medicine his lungs desperately needed. Back at his home, Lacomare's girlfriend - soon to be wife - waited for word from him. The family sat in silence, waiting for the phone to ring. Anything to let them know that he was okay. The call finally came - their prayers answered - he was alive.

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There were hundreds of stories of survival - and far too many of people that didn't make it out. For those lucky enough to escape the attack and subsequent destruction of the towers, the memories and images they hold know will be with them forever.

At St. Vincent's Hospital, a young woman screamed frantically that she needed a plastic surgeon. Her body was more than 70 percent burned. Her clothes, what was left of them had to be cut off . "It's okay," the doctor told her "You made it. You got out. You're going to be all right." The burns were life threatening - just as they were for dozens of others now cramming into the emergency ward.

A fireman came in on a stretcher still wearing the uniform. His heart had stopped from the amount of smoke and debris he had inhaled. Doctors could detect no active heart rate or electrical activity. The ER team decompressed the fireman's lungs and abdomen. Breathe on doctor yelled as he pumped a full needle of atropine into his heart. Then miraculously a heartbeat, a pulse - a miracle.

More than 50 surgeons and doctors waited in scrubs at the hospital for the thousands of expected wounded. By noon there was still nothing. Just fatalities.

Only a block from the collapsing towers, dozens of people huddled in a small cafe using table clothes to cover their mouths. The massive cloud of debris choked the oxygen from the air as they all struggled to breath. Their eyes were burring and the sun seemed to disappear. Some were bloody, in the corner others tended to a man who said he had jumped through a plate glass window.

For many, the survivors are those that have to go on despite the pain of losing a loved one. Candy Glazer watched on television in disbelief as so many others did that warm Tuesday morning - it suddenly occurred to her that one of the



jets that crashed had come from Boston. Her husband had called her that very morning - aboard flight 11 just before take off. "Hi, hon, I made it." It would be the last words she heard from him.

For Melissa Turnage, the news of the attack sent a wave of fear up her spine. Her son, Adam White, worked near the top of the north tower. She often worried about how he would get out of there if something happened - but never in her worst dreams did she contemplate this. She, along with millions of others watched as the North Tower collapsed when the steel girders gave way in 2,000-degree heat. She watched as floor after floor folded down one upon the next.

She desperately wanted to believe that he was okay. For hours she waited for a phone call - a call that would never come.

For what it is worth, the entire world grieves with her. All of us ask " Why did this need to happen? "

## Chapter Nine

### The Rescuers

In the death and destruction brought on by the attacks in what investigators believe to be the efforts of radical Muslim extremists, the heroes of September 11th certainly are the rescue workers that risked so much to save others.

The danger of being employed in a rescue occupation is often taken for granted. House fires, car accidents, medical emergencies are all part of the day to day tasks of being a fire fighter, paramedic or police officer. But on that Tuesday morning when two Boeing aircraft collided with the Twin Towers, it was an emergency call that went above and beyond the call of duty. As rescue workers raced up to the blaze more than 70 stories in the sky, they did so with little regard for themselves - but with the direct objective of getting as many people down as possible.

When the first tower collapsed, thousands were entombed in the wreckage including several hundred rescue workers. This of course raised stakes for those that continued to race up into the second tower - knowing fully that it could also collapse at any time. But the question would have been " If we don't go up - who is going to ? "

In the terrible suffering that has come from the attacks, the men and women of New York's rescuers have had to bare much more than their share. Take for example the men of New York's Hook and Ladder Co. 3.

The crew began Tuesday as a full squad of 29 fire-fighters and officers - and by the end of the day, only 17 remained. Entire detachments of New York firefighters vanished in the rubble of Tuesday's attack. Few fire houses are still in intact with the estimated loss of 200 to 350 men and women.

No one on the scene of the attack will ever forget the stunning image of blurred firefighters racing towards the carnage while everyone else was running for their lives. "All five of the department's elite rescue companies had entirely vanished, as had all the members of 30 other companies as well as some of its highest-ranking officers including the chief of the department, Pete Ganci; the 1st deputy commissioner, Bill Feehan, and Battalion Chief Raymond Downey. Like the civilians they tried to save, the firefighters are presumably buried in the rubble of what was once the most famous office complex in the world.

One of the most missed figures is that of Rev. Mychal Judge, 68, a Roman Catholic chaplain with the fire department. Judge was a bonafied monk that held the rank of deputy fire chief and lived across from the station on West 31st Street.

Father Mychal died giving last rites to a fireman who was struck by someone leaping out of the trade center rather than be burned alive by the raging inferno. Some speculate that another jumper had landed on him, others said it was so. One fire fighter said that he thinks it was a heart attack. Father Mychal's body was brought to the dormitory where dozens of firefighters and Franciscan monks recited the blessing of St. Francis: "May the Lord bless you and keep you and show his face to you, and have mercy on you."

The call came in only minutes after Flight 11 had smashed into the side of the North Tower setting the building on fire. Only days earlier, two of the men from the West 31st Station had been talking about suicide bombers. Being in the Manhattan area, officials had considered it a prime terrorist zone since the '93 bombing of the parkade of the Trade Center.

Most of the firefighters in the area had received training in sarin poison gas and the biological agent anthrax.

The trip through the clogged city took longer than usual as traffic had literally come to a stand still. Frantic police officers barked directions at motorists to move aside to let rescue

vehicles pass. Before most fire engines could reach the North Tower, flight 175 slammed into the south tower.

The carnage at the site overwhelmed their senses.

Firefighters grabbed their hoses, air cylinders and axes, and headed straight for the north tower. It looked like the entire top third of the towers was ablaze, and the plaza and sidewalks were littered with debris from the crash - as well as the bodies of those that had already jumped.

One firefighter said he timed how long it took for the person jumping to crash to the pavement. He counted to himself, one one-thousand, two one-thousand. It took almost 20 seconds to impact. "It was unbelievable how long it took. And then I couldn't watch them any more." he told an interviewer.

A command post was quickly set up at the main street level of the towers and orders dished out for where firefighter units should direct their efforts. Many were told to head to the fire on the 70th floor of the North Tower. The elevators had stopped working - some plummeting to the ground from hundreds of feet up when the jet hit. The only way up was through the stairwells.

The stairs were crowded in sections as those coming down gave way to the firefighters heading up. Some offered their bottles of spring water to the firefighters as they passed.

Each man carried up to 50 lbs. of equipment, and the sweat poured off their faces. A sense of calmness remained in the stairwells as people made their way down. Some were badly injured with severe cuts and horrible burns. Up they went, to the fire like they were trained. As they got closer to the fire, the smoke got thicker and the light being provided from the emergency lights began to get choked off.

Then without warning, the building buckled and the upper floors suddenly pancaked down one upon another. The air was sucked out of the sky as one after another, each floor

fell until it reached the bottom. A huge cloud of dust filled with debris rose hundreds of feet into the air and mushroomed out down each street surrounding the area. It had been hit second, but it collapsed first

Firefighters in the North Tower were already battling the horrific fire raging on the 72nd floor. The emergency lights flickered and the building rocked as the impact of the other tower shook the foundation of the building. A wave of panic raced through the stairwells as word of the collapse came. It was 9:59 a.m.

On the ground, debris flew in every direction. Cement and steel crashed to the earth. Body parts, scraps of flesh, even a head crashed down around the fire trucks that were out front of the North tower.

Inside the north tower, the huge crash and rocking from the other tower collapsing made those in the tower think their own building was coming down. Firefighters thought their building was collapsing. Someone told them the south tower had fallen but they assumed that meant the damaged floors had fallen over. No one thought that the entire tower could have collapsed.

Then over their radios, word from fire command came across. " Everyone out " the voice yelled " Collapse imminent." The firefighters looked at each other in disbelief and then dropped their gear. Each man raced to the stairs and began their descent. Down they would run, floor after floor after floor. There was enough warning that many of the firefighters in the North tower made it out. Some that stayed to help those still trapped in the building were never seen again.

Being on the ground offered no real refuge. The south tower's collapse had crushed anything in its path including dozens of rescue vehicles. Entire crews vanished along with their fire trucks and ambulances. Those that made it to the open air on the bottom floor looked to the South Tower - still not realizing that it was gone - only assuming that the smoke

was obscuring it from view.

High above, the fire raged out of control as it consumed floor after floor. Those that had been trapped above the impact of Flight 11 had made their way up to the top of the building hoping to escape the flames and be rescued by helicopters - it was a rescue that would not come.

Panic for those that were trapped above the 70th floor began to set in. They had watched from above as the south tower had imploded on itself. Dozens began to jump, some estimate as many as several hundred leaped to their death before the North Tower finally fell as the South Tower had.

The rescue workers on the ground could only watch in frustration and horror as they saw the helpless souls fall from above. Some were already on fire - others jumping to escape it.

Then people began to scream as someone yelled "It's going!" A huge crack and then an immense explosion happened before each floor began to fall on the one below it.

Those on the ground began running for their lives taking refuge behind anything they could find. They knew that from the time it took the jumpers to hit from the top that they would have about 20 seconds to get clear of the debris falling. It was a race for their lives.

The building fell with a terrible crash and then a cyclone of dust and debris slammed down the corridors of the streets surrounding the World Trade Center. The smoke, the dust, the ash turned day to night as the rescue had come to a tragic end. The World Trade Towers were gone.

Those that survived had no time to stop and mourn those that were missing. Frantically voices could be heard on two way radios calling for the members of their crews only to hear silence in return. Fires still raged and the task was still at hand for those still able to help.

The families of those who responded to the emergency calls from the World Trade Center could only watch in horror on television as they feared the worst for their loved ones.

Calls came in after the collapse to the firehouses around Manhattan. For many it was terrible, awful news. But they could only wait for official word as department protocol prevented fellow firefighters from breaking the news to relatives of another's death.

As the days passed after that most devastating Tuesday, September 11th, the somber task of searching through the rubble became the focus of the rescue effort. Millions of tons of debris lay in a 15 story pile - and within it lay the hopes that some would still be found alive. Dogs were brought in specially trained to sniff out life, and hopes remained high that their brothers in arms, civilians, Americans would survive.

The danger remains. Buildings surrounding the towers have also received severe structural damage and could collapse at any moment. The rubble continues to shift as workers pick through the wreckage making the threat of injury, avalanche or further collapse a distinct possibility. Open chasms gape 40 feet into blackness.

The air remains thick as the dust from the collapse still chokes anyone who breathes it. Much of it is from the crushed cement but as one rescue worker whispered, "God only knows what's in it" It's a topic no one talks about. There is nothing left. No desks, no chairs, no filing cabinets, nothing, Just chunks of cement and steel. But mostly pulverized rubble ground in to a fine dust. Much of it is just the pumice left over when the twin 110-story towers collapsed, burned by the thousands upon thousands gallons of jet fuel that burned so hot.

"People have been incinerated," says one firefighter - his spirit lost over not finding any survivors.

In epitaph, the list reads like a bad dream of heroes

now gone. Completely gone, Rescue One, Rescue Two, Rescue Five. Engine 6, Engine 10, Ladder 10. Ladder 20 ”” Ladder 4 and 54, Engine 15, good men: lost. More than 6300 people remain missing, including 23 New York City police officers and more than 300 firefighters.

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New York wasn't the only scene of a desperate rescue that warm, fall Tuesday morning. Fire fighters raced to the Pentagon minutes after flight 77 skidded off the tarmac of a helicopter landing pad and exploded into the side of the five story building that holds the majority of America's military authority.

Fire fighters reported hearing a deafening crash as they raced down the halls of the building towards the site of the attack. The building had absorbed much of the impact, but now sections of the floor were giving out and the ceiling was collapsing. The images are ones that they will never forget - piles of debris, searing heat, bodies burned beyond recognition.

One firefighter who was first on the scene described the Pentagon as a burning hell. Another talked about the heavy fire, intense heat, jet fuel still burning, multiple-colored flames.

Debris was still falling and charred and burning bodies were everywhere. Equipment firefighters carry to tell them the temperature of the fire went past measurement. Officials estimate some areas were burning at 1,000 degrees or more.

For those rescue workers first to arrive, the scene of devastation was overpowering. The heat made it difficult to get close and the heat seeking devices they use to distinguish people from debris would not work in the raging blaze.

Then they heard a terrible screeching as a huge section of the five story building collapsed. Rescuers ran from it as giant chunks of cement chased them in dramatic pursuit. ”



Inside the Pentagon, the order was given to evacuate as word of another hijacked aircraft was reported to be targeting the building. The attack never came as flight 93 crashed into a field an hour from Pittsburgh.

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In New York, the search for survivors has slowly turned to a recovery search. Each day that passes, the strain grows harder. The work is awful for those still on the scene. The air is filled with the horrible dust that has blanketed everything. The smell of decomposing bodies grows stronger.

Every so often, another body is recovered. A team uncovered a fire truck with the body of a woman in a fetal position hiding underneath it. Parts of bodies are recovered and sent to a facility for DNA identification. The task is endless and awful.

But the search continues. Many have already given up hope of finding anyone still alive. Others still hold out for the miracle they hope is just around the corner. Even though the debris pile is slowly shrinking, the task ahead is daunting.

Exhaustion is in the eyes of every person there. But the memory of those that went missing keeps them going.

## **The Medical Teams**

As the sirens came down the main drag in front of the New York Presbyterian Hospital, trauma teams inside prepared for the worst. The hospital contains one America's most respected burn treatment centers. With the advance calls coming from ambulances en route, they knew that their expertise would be needed. Before 10:00 am, more than a dozen patients with life threatening burns would be brought to the facility for treatment. Another dozen would arrive by day's end.

The rooms and hallways in the burn ward are kept at 85° F in

order to assist burn victims' bodies in producing enough heat to keep their internal organs functioning.

Most of the patients brought in suffered burns to more than 70% of their bodies. Some were caught in the raining jet fuel that splashed from the wreckage. Others had been caught on burning floors before rescue workers or other unsung heroes led them to safety. One patient was severely burned by a ruptured steam pipe which scorched his back.

Many of the patients were missing much of their skin which made the first priority to keep them warm and hydrated.

In the first 24 hours, doctors can do little but attempt to keep blood volumes up and stabilize blood pressure. The pain for the patients is of course severe, and morphine is administered to help ease their pain. Only after a patient is able to maintain a level of normal blood pressure can physicians make any type of effort to help the body heal.

The treatment involves scraping away what remains of the burned skin and then grafting sheets of synthetic skin which helps the body stabilize itself. The risk of infection is great, and only 20 to 30% of patients will survive. The recovery is long and painful involving many surgeries and intense rehabilitation.

At other hospitals in the New York Manhattan area, nurses were scrambling to bring in the wounded. Dozens of bleeding, broken people start to arrive - victims of the attack on the World Trade tower pouring through the hospital doors.

By day's end, more than 2000 people would be treated by city hospitals.

Injuries ranged from eyes filled with shattered glass and debris to those with life threatening burns. Others had broken bones, concussions, smoke inhalation and crushed limbs.

Some had been stabbed by projectiles coming from every direction during the terrible aftermath of the assault.

Soon those that had family members working in the Trade Towers would begin their frantic search for loved ones. Hospital switch boards drowned in the back log of calls as attendants could only struggle to deal with what little information they had.

At Bellevue, 125 people had been admitted, at St. Vincent's more than 300. More than 10 hospitals would struggle to save lives before the day was done. More than 1,000 victims with non-life threatening injuries were taken by ferry to Liberty State Park in New Jersey. The word went out for those with medical training to go to the scene - already being called "ground zero" by rescue workers. A convoy of about 120 doctors and medical professionals streamed toward the disaster scene in pickup trucks and ambulances.

Construction workers who had seen the first jet hit earlier in the day now made makeshift stretchers to help haul out the wounded. Paramedics were warned to expect the worst at the scene.

Supplies were running low as was blood. Emergency calls were sent out to surrounding hospitals for aid. Matters were complicated by having no real idea of how many wounded were coming. Some estimates suggested that more than sixty thousand people may have been in the buildings when they were attacked.

Hospitals in other states, including Pennsylvania and Connecticut, braced for potential patients. A hospital in Connecticut prepared to discharge up to 80% of its 820 patients to make room for disaster victims.

The scenes of destruction have been etched indelibly on our minds, played over and over again by nearly every television network - without end it seemed and we watched, fascinated, over and over- unable to believe our eyes. Not that such violent scenes are new to us. In fact they have become so commonplace, thanks to Hollywood's willingness to satisfy the public's penchant for extreme violence, that we

had become desensitized. Until now that is, for this time it is real. It is not the creation of the movie industry. And we would have decried such a plot in any movie as totally beyond the realms of possibility. We would not have believed that the twin towers of the World Trade Center could both be totally destroyed, within just a few minutes of each other, by 19 fanatics flying hijacked commercial jetliners.

Families have been decimated and the center of America's largest city lies in ruins. But the effects reach far beyond the borders of the assault. We are frightened now in a way we have never before experienced. For several days we were grounded as airline travel came to an abrupt halt. Nowhere in all of North America was any plane allowed off the runway and when they began to fly again the people did not. What if it were to happen again? Those who have found the courage to fly again spend long hours waiting to go through stringent security points and may still find their flight brought to an abrupt halt as fighter jets fly outside at wingtip. There is no sense of security anymore and major airlines are in danger of going bankrupt as they beg the government for assistance. The stock market has become more topsy turvy than ever and empty theatres on Broadway are closing their doors as frightened people feel they can no longer laugh or be entertained and choose to remain at home with family and loved ones.

It is estimated that the cleanup in New York may take up to a year to complete and cost as much as seven billion dollars. The immediate task of identifying the victims looms as the largest forensic effort ever conducted in the US. It will be no easy effort as many who were lost in the terrorist attack have become part of the dust and rubble, their bodies disintegrated and fragmented by the intensity of the heat generated by the caustic burning chemicals and the crushing collapse of the buildings. Thousands of body bags, each containing remnants of human life, are sealed, labeled and entered into a database waiting for forensic experts to begin the search that will lead to identification.

Identifying loved ones allows family to have closure, to

conduct a funeral, to settle an estate, to say goodbye with certainty. In all likelihood many will never be identified but every effort will be made to do so, as the families of victims come forth with descriptions of individual characteristics, such as tattoos, birthmarks and dental records that can assist in recognition. They are also asked to bring items that might contain samples of DNA that can be matched, such as a used toothbrush or hairbrush. Though some 6000 are missing only 276 bodies have been recovered and of these 206 have been identified. The gallery of poignant messages and photos of people with shining eyes and smiling faces that line the fences and walls of Manhattan are a touching, if grim reminder of the extent of the loss and pain this tragedy has incurred.

A team of dedicated scientists including medical examiners, molecular biologists, dental experts and pathologists are working shifts, 24 hours a day and seven days a week in laboratories in New York, Maryland and Utah. to give a name to each victim. Techniques for identification include fingerprints which can be peeled from charred hands, computer generated reconstruction of faces, chemical tests, dental comparisons and DNA testing. New techniques for chemical analysis, whose names mean little to the ordinary person, such as gas chromatography and mass spectrometry can provide additional information. The task is monumental.

Amazingly just from the bones of the arms and legs scientists can determine the weight, sex, age, muscularity, race and perhaps even left or right handedness of someone. Teeth are the most enduring of all human tissues and can survive even intense heat and chemical exposure, thus providing one of the best chances for a person to be identified. One strand of hair can provide information pointing to the sex and race of an individual. Approximately 70 enzymes in blood, bone marrow and body fluids can be analyzed to produce a distinctive biochemical picture of an individual.

# Chapter 10

## Security and the Investigation.

In the moments after flight 175 crashed into the South Tower of the World Trade Center, America suddenly realized it was being attacked. The entire continent of North America literally came to a stop as millions watched their television sets in horror. The hour between 9 and 10 am Eastern Time was filled with a total sense of fear of the unknown. What was still to come? Was the attack over - or was it just the beginning ?

During that hour, the entire US defense system went into full alert. For more than 5 decades, the various agencies had trained for a potential attack - an attack that has been expected from the time of the Soviet Union threat during the cold war. The assault came, but not from without. It came from within, and no one seemed quite sure how to handle it.

Acts of terrorism are something most North Americans have only watched with passing interest on television as they happen in places like Israel, Europe or Britain. No one could quite believe that the attacks had now come to their own backyards.

As aircraft control towers scrambled to land all airborne aircraft, for fear of further attacks, everyone scrambled for cover. Rumors raced through the work place - many exaggerated and most nothing much more than speculation.

That speculation though became part of the investigation that has followed. In an unprecedented show of solidarity the United States and literally the entire global community has acted to wage war against terrorists. US investigators have raced to put together not only what happened but how it happened without the intelligence community becoming aware of it.

Since the 1980s, the anti-terrorism efforts of federal law enforcement agencies have focused almost entirely on domestic issues and U.S. citizens. America has more than its share of radicals such as home-grown terrorist Timothy J. McVeigh who was convicted of the Oklahoma Bombing attack.

Much of the intelligence community in the US has been monitoring small extremist groups of Americans that might be prone to violence. Meanwhile, the CIA, and the NSA ( National Security Agency ) have focused on preventing terrorism abroad against US interests - such as last year's attack on the USS Cole.

In the US, few agencies were on the lookout for foreign terrorist cells active in bedroom communities around the country.

Until the attack, they were considered " sleeper " cells - which meant they were to lay dormant until receiving orders that would put them into action. Two of the 19 hijackers were on the FBI's watch list for suspected terrorist connections.

The subsequent investigation of the attack has become a world wide dragnet as the majority of nations not only sympathize with the United States - but also realize the threat of terrorism is a very real concern for their own countries. Authorities in Germany investigating a terrorist cell in Hamburg - a city where the suspected hijacker pilot of Flight 11 once operated - issued international arrest warrants for 26 year old Said Bahaji and 29 year old Ramzi Binalshibh. Authorities uncovered evidence that the two men had advance knowledge of the attacks New York and Washington. Officials say the two are accused of providing assistance to those who carried out the attacks and German authorities said they believe both men might have fled the country." The German warrants are worth noting because they involve a terrorist cell that authorities say included three of the hijackers who died in the United States carrying out the attacks.

In England, Scotland Yard arrested four people - one

of whom took flying lessons at the same Arizona school, and at the same time as Hani Hanjour who was onboard the flight that crashed into the Pentagon. Authorities say the four people arrested had direct connections to the suicide pilots.

In France, eight people are being detained suspected of belonging to extremist groups thought to be planning attacks on U.S. interests in France - likely the U.S. Embassy in Paris. French Police said the arrests came after an Algerian man, identified as Djamel Begal, confessed to planning an attack on the embassy while being held in the United Arab Emirates. During interrogation, he gave the names and addresses of extremists residing in Paris

In Canada, the RCMP detained a man who was onboard a jet enroute from Germany to Chicago. Nageeb Abdul Jabar Mohamed Al-Hadi. was aboard a Lufthansa plane that was diverted to Canada after the attacks. Al-Hadi is accused of traveling with false passports and two airline uniforms -some of which had papers written in Arabic sewn in the clothing.

Police in Brussels have arrested two men believed to have been planning an attack on American interests in Europe. The two have been charged with possession of weapons of war and were members of a known radical group.

Authorities believe that the actual planned attack on the United States was intended to be bigger than it turned out to be. Subsequent investigations since September 11th have turned up evidence that suggests that more planes were scheduled to be hijacked. Justice Department officials discovered box-cutting tools were on planes that were grounded after the initial attacks. The tools were found on flights that didn't take off from Boston and Atlanta after all air traffic was halted. Investigators say that the weapons may have been propositioned by accomplices for use by others making it look like what one Airline official called " an inside job" .

Two men also in federal custody were found with box



cutters when they were detained in a routine search aboard an Amtrak train on its way to San Antonio. The men - Ayub Ali Khan and Mohammed Jaweed Azmath - had been on a flight from Newark, New Jersey to San Antonio when it was diverted to St. Louis, Missouri.

Through the on-going investigation, authorities have found overwhelming evidence that suggests the attack was the work of Muslim extremists - but in the first few days following the attack were careful not to rule out other possible suspects.

During the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, officials were quick to point their investigation towards bin Laden - only to discover those responsible were American militia types angry over the Waco siege. There is no shortage of radical groups around the world who would be willing to wage war on America, from the Japanese Red Army to Colombia's FARC rebels to the Palestinian guerrillas at war with Israel. None of these organizations however have the sophistication, resources and disregard for human life necessary to pull off the type of hijacking-suicide mission.

The exception is those groups and governments involved in the jihad, the global holy war whose followers believe it is their duty to wage a battle against the wicked west.

Authorities originally noted that typically, bin Laden's network rarely used suicide bombings in their attacks - that is until the rubber boat attack on the American warship in Yemen.

The complexity of the attack has made some investigators suspect that military planners were at the very least, partially responsible for the attacks. The high-level of planning and coordination to simultaneously hijack four jet liners - and quite possibly several others that failed raises the possibility that foreign military powers were involved.

It's certainly not the first time that foreign terrorists have attempted to wage war on American soil. Most experts believe that terrorist cells have been in the United States for

many years as indicated by the group responsible for the 1993 World Trade Center bombing that killed six people. This attack has also been linked to the Islamic jihad and was carried out by Muslim extremists.

In December of 1999, Canadian and US customer officials along with the FBI thwarted a plan to blow up the Seattle Space Needle and the Los Angeles Airport by an individual linked to bin Laden. Border agents arrested Ahmed Ressam in connection with the millennium-eve plot after he tried to smuggle more than 130 pounds of bomb-making material across the U.S.-Canadian border. Ressam, a refugee claimant in Montreal, traveled to one of Mr. bin Laden's camps in Afghanistan and trained for a bombing attack. He returned to Canada in 1999 and built a powerful chemical bomb at a Vancouver motel. Ressam was part of a Montreal-based jihad cell and the conspiracy had its roots in one of bin Laden's directives. Authorities suspect that Ressam planned to link up with a network of others living in the United States to attempt a two-pronged strike. Officials in many senses knew that it was just a matter of time before the persistence of Muslim extremists were able to launch a successful attack.

What does stand out in the September 11th attacks is the advanced organization of the assault. Previous attacks have been usually somewhat unorganized with years of seemingly advanced planning. Careful thought went into just about every detail of the September 11th attack. They chose communities that were used to ethnically diverse persons as well as being transient in nature. They were careful to not leave obvious paper trails and they moved often - in some cases every few months. They rarely socialized with others outside of their own groups and kept very low profiles.

And while some might have lived for years in America - some with families - they never made attempts to put down any type of roots. They shied away from community groups and always rented their residences on a short term basis.

When it came time to leave, "they left nothing behind". The

FBI is responsible for the majority of intelligence operations regarding suspected terrorist cells inside the continental United States. The law enforcement agency could only speculate about the number of cells operating on American soil. Basic laws and constitutional mandates prevent authorities from maintaining any type of racial profiling which makes it extremely easy for actual terrorists to blend in with law abiding Arabic immigrants.

It's thanks to the leadership of people such as Osama bin Laden that the various terrorist cells in the US and in fact around the world have stepped up from the ranks of unorganized fanatics to a sophisticated network of well trained cells ready to act on any order that might come from above. In the case of the assault on the world trade center, the group was able to blend into every day society years in advance of the attack. The recent strike took foresight including having key individuals enroll in flight schools.

The American attacks were similar in nature to the bombing of two American embassies in Africa in 1998. Authorities concluded that the cells there were in place at least three years in advance and as in the US, were careful to fit into the surrounding community and not raise suspicions

In the United States, infiltration of the groups is much more difficult than it is to get an informant into the American based groups associated with Aryan Nation activities or the Ku Klux Klan. The Arabic terrorist cells are a closely knit group with ties dating back their entire lives. Outsiders are usually shunned and because their motivation is religious - it is rare that they can be bribed with money in exchange for information.

Because of the tendency of both the United States and Canada to take a melting pot approach to ethnic diversity, would-be terrorists have been able to establish significant cells in both countries. In Canada, it's estimated that more than 50 radical groups are operating cells within the vast landscape of the Canadian countryside. The US and Canada share the

largest unprotected border of any two countries in the world, and over the past decade, there have been several accounts of terrorists entering the US from Canada. Within Canada there has been a growing criticism of the seemingly lax procedures and tolerance of active terrorist cells. Canada has even been accused of being an incubator of want-to-be terrorists.

For many people around the world, Canada represents a calm peaceful voice well known for our active participation in peace keeping missions. Their laws are tolerant and their basic nature is that of welcoming ethnic diversity. This fertile ground for people of all ethnic backgrounds has been quickly capitalized on by terrorist cells looking to gain a foothold in North America.

Those waging jihad are highly motivated and share in common a fanatical devotion to violent jihad. It's this fanaticism that eliminates borders, as they can come from any number of countries, which makes it extremely difficult for intelligence agencies to identify them. Driven by religious passion, radical Islamic terrorists work in loose cells placed strategically around the world, sustaining themselves with criminal and business enterprises as well as from financing from bin Laden himself as well as states such as Iraq.

America spends nearly 13 billion dollars on counter-terrorism each year - a sum that has doubled since the mid 90's. Yet even with these massive budgets, they have failed to stop the car bomb attack on the World Trade Center, the attack on the US embassies in Africa and if not for the close scrutiny of alert custom officials, the millennium bomb plot may have very well succeeded. That is not to say that the FBI and other related groups are not doing their jobs - but more likely it is an indication of how difficult that job can be.

The FBI admits that they did receive warning of an imminent attack but failed to react adequately. "We've known for some time that some group has been planning this," said retired General Wesley Clark, the former supreme NATO commander. "Obviously, we didn't do enough."

Bob Graham, chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, said the United States had been warned in July about possible attacks and security had been stepped up at “key vulnerable areas.” Graham added that he wasn’t surprised by the attack, but by the scale of it.

Even with warnings in hand - reminiscent of pre WW2 warnings about a planned attack on Pearl Harbor, there has been much criticism as to how authorities reacted to the September 11th attack. Confusion, uncertainty, poor communication and a general lack of preparedness prevented the Pentagon from being evacuated during the nearly 60 minutes between the time flight 11 slammed into the side of the South Tower and the time a third terrorist-driven plane slammed into the Pentagon.

What is concerning critics the most about the way the attack on Washington occurred was that despite the World Trade Center being vividly attacked on National Television, when Military Officials at the Pentagon were notified, the Pentagon wasn’t evacuated. The military air defense command received word from the FAA that a hijacked commercial airliner was heading toward Washington 12 minutes before it plowed nose first into the side of the Pentagon. For an organization that prides itself on defense and preemptive planning, the fact that the Pentagon did not take any kind of precautionary action has become a significant concern in retrospect.

The lack of readiness was hampered by a slowness among senior Pentagon officials to grasp the full extent of the threat. While many in the Pentagon were immediately aware of the attack on the New York towers - many even had their office televisions tuned in time to see the second plane strike - there was little thought given to the possibility that the military center was itself at risk. So unsuspecting were officials of the possibility of an attack that John Jester, chief of the Defense Protective Service, which guards the Pentagon, ordered the building’s threat level up just one notch, from “normal” to “alpha,” which simply called for spot-inspections of

vehicles and increased police patrols. With more than 20,000 employees working in the building, the damage and casualties could have been much, much worse.

Some of the criticism has been harsh. Take for example Representative Dana Rohrabacher, a Republican from California. who blasted the US intelligence community when she called it the biggest intelligence blunder in any of our lifetimes.

He told reporters that “The people that we have given billions of dollars to protect us, have left us at the mercy of this type of major terrorist operation.” Rohrabacher added that the top officials at the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency knew about the terrorist threat but did little to prevent it.

Although the FBI is the lead agency responsible for preventing terrorism, there are another 50 agencies that are expected to share the responsibilities. The result has been a vast network of intelligence offices participating in a great deal of in fighting and who are often at odds with each other. In response, President Bush ordered a complete review of the country’s counter-terrorism with an objective of better co-ordination of their activities.

But terrorism experts haven’t been as quick to lay the blame at the feet of the intelligence community. Jerrold Post, a Washington anti-terrorist expert questioned the idea that it was a massive breakdown in intelligence - and noted that the attack would have been difficult to detect based on the amount of planning that went into the assault.

Rob Owen, who is Vice President of Global Options, company that specializes in counter-terrorism, added that part of the problem has been the U.S. reliance on such technology as spy satellites, rather than old fashioned human spying.

In contrast though, getting an inside contact into the closed circle of an Islamic terrorist groups is almost impossible. Such spies would take years if not decades to infiltrate in a similar

fashion to the way the Soviet government used to put “moles” and “sleepers” in the organization.

Experts agree that the genius in the attack wasn't in the actual orchestration, but capitalizing on the weaknesses in the security system used in most of North America. There was no need to sneak a bomb on board - the plane became the bomb - a brilliant strategy. All a few extremists needed to do was take control of the aircraft under the guise that they wanted demands met and in most cases, the vast majority of crews and passengers would co-operate. They would have expected to be hostages not innocent victims, for nothing in their past experience would have suggested the possibility of a suicide mission. The scenario evident on the first two flights crashing into the World Trade Towers was evidence of a passive on-board approach to the hijacking. It wasn't until the passengers on flight 93 learned through cell phone conversations that the captives became the aggressors and fought to take back control of the flight. And time was a factor. It was not long between take off and final destination. The passengers had little or no time to organize even if they had become aware of the hijackers' intentions.

Experts also suggested that breakdowns in airport security were also at fault in not thwarting the attack. Up until the attack, most airport security was handled privately - in most cases by the airlines. Officials and Politicians have pledged to look into a plan that would see the federal government take over airport security. The criticism is that the people used for airport security are not properly trained, are earning the minimum wage and have little motivation to be as thorough as they might be.. The job has a high turnover and lapses in security have been frequent.

Although few clues have emerged about how the terrorists managed to get weapons through airport security, it appears some at least were carrying knives or standard box type cutters used by grocery clerks and warehouse workers.

Barbara Olson, who was a passenger on Flight 77, told her

husband Ted Olson, the U.S. Solicitor-General, that the hijackers had herded the passengers and the pilot to the back of the plane and were carrying knives and cardboard cutters.

Pilots interviewed after the attack expressed little surprise that the security systems of at least three airports were penetrated. "Airport security has been good enough to deter amateurs, but it would be unlikely to stop a group of well trained, determined terrorists," said pilot Donald W. Steinman.

Questions have also been raised as to how defense agencies reacted to the initial threat of the hijacked aircraft.

For example, after the two jet liners crashed into the World Trade Center, F-16 fighter jets were scrambled immediately in response to the FAA notice which would be standard operating procedure. But rather than take off from Andrews Air Force Base which is only 15 miles from the Pentagon, the jets departed from Virginia's Langley Air Force Base more than 130 miles from the Pentagon. The fighters had only been in the air a few minutes when American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon, killing close to 200 people. It would be another 20 minutes before the F-16's reached Washington airspace.

Air Force planners are shouldering the blame for the lack of a prepared response in light of September's 11th's attack. As one ranking General said, "This was something we had never seen before, something we had never even thought of,"

It is of worth noting even if U.S. military interceptors had arrived over New York or Washington ahead of the hijacked planes - would they have been prepared to shoot down the commercial jets. Air Force pilots and air controllers had never practiced procedures for confronting hijacked commercial airliners on suicide missions over urban centers. Instead, much of their drills had been directed towards exercises had intercepting attacks over the Atlantic and Pacific. Even with prior air space defense, shooting down the aircraft would have



required Presidential approval as such a maneuver is not covered under rules of engagement.

It is known that the President had given orders after the initial rounds of attacks for fighters to intercept and shoot down incoming commercial airliners over Washington.

The assaults revealed a frightening hole in standard North American air defense. Whether it was complacency or the fact that the system was designed during the Cold War to block Soviet bombers from entering American airspace or from hijacked craft that had taken off from other countries - the system obviously wasn't prepared for such an assault.

On the ground, officials had even prepared and run drills in the event of a plane crashing into the building - but everyone assumed that the event would be accidental and involve a small commuter aircraft rather than a large, jet-powered plane like American Airlines Flight 77, a Boeing 757.

The massive size of the Pentagon played a role in the slow response to a potential attack. Most in the building remained unaware of the threat even after the plane hit which was only felt as a rumble on the opposite side of the building. It was the thick black smoke that started billowing from the west side of the Pentagon that was the main wake up call. Most inside the building thought it had been a bomb that had detonated rather than a fully fueled Boeing aircraft.

So why didn't security officials know about the attack in advance ?

It's a question that will likely be asked for many years to come. Many officials and media people have compared the attack to Pearl Harbor when the Japanese also attacked in a surprise move on December 7th, 1941. The main difference though was that In 1941, the US had a handful of agencies and a small budget. This year, the United States intelligence community is the largest in the world with a budget of about \$30 billion.

An important question arises. Was it so secret the intelligence community just didn't know about it - Or did they have information and not believe it?

Many say that the answer doesn't really matter. They should have known.

In analyzing the attack, it is clear that the terrorists took advantage of the complacent nature of the West and the general belief that such an attack couldn't happen here. The government and the intelligence community mistakenly assumed immunity to such a threat. In contrast, Israel, who is much more used to the threat of terrorism on their soil has the toughest security measures in the world for commercial aircraft including armed air marshals, bullet proof craft interiors, steel impenetrable doors for the cockpit area and armed pilots.

That is not to say that officials haven't been concerned over the possibility of a large-scale terrorist attack against the United States. But officials and counter-terrorism experts seemed to direct much of their attention towards the possibility of a digital, nuclear or a biological attack. But no one - not even the imagination of Hollywood predicted the type of attack that actually took place.

In the spring of 2001, CIA Director George J. Tenet told the Senate Intelligence Committee that state-sponsored terrorism was being supplanted by "transnational groups with decentralized leadership". He went on to add that such terrorist operations initiated and executed at lower levels making a specific area of surveillance difficult to pinpoint.

For 50 plus years, the US intelligence community has built to observe and infiltrate fixed targets - mostly the Soviet Union. As one expert put it, "They were very good at finding out whether the Russians were adding fuel to a particular missile base. But now you have a group of terrorists that basically operate without a country. There's no location to focus on." The threat of a rogue state launching a terrorist attack

on the United States has been a growing concern for both the Clinton administration and for the new administration under President Bush. Both focused extraordinary attention and national resources on dealing with threats to American national security and in particular the possibility of a biological attack or a small nuclear device being detonated at a public event or in a crowded business district.

US spending on counter-terrorism programs doubled from under \$6 billion in 1995 to about \$12 billion for the year 2001. In July, the Bush administration planned to add another \$8 billion next year for preliminary work on defenses against a missile attack. In addition, billions of dollars have been spent protecting key installations from terrorist attacks in the wake of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and the Oklahoma City bombing of 1995.

In spite of all the precautions, the massive budgets and the size of the United States intelligence community, the attacks on September 11th discovered and exploited a huge vulnerability in current defense strategies. The attack came in a way that no one in either the Clinton or Bush administrations could have predicted.

Three weeks before the attacks on September 11th, Bin Laden boasted that he was planning to attack American interests in a unprecedented manner. Bin Laden also made a similar statement shortly before the attacks on the US embassies in Africa and the attack on the US Navy ship in Yemen.

So why didn't officials seem to take this threat seriously?

Terrorism experts say the government has been preparing for the wrong kind of attack. Political and media attention has pushed the focus on the acquisition by terrorists of weapons of mass destruction, such as a crude nuclear bomb or a biological weapon. US military has attacked over the past decade numerous installations that were suspected biological weapon facilities. Rogue states like Iraq have been of specific concern after Saddam Hussein used biological weapons

against his own people. This came on top of a traditional focus on conventional terrorist attacks, such as car bombs and airplane hijackings.

Much of the focus was either on the low end of assault such as the car bomb or the more exotic high-end threats like a biological attack. The government's success in protecting key buildings and installations forced terrorists to devise new and even more destructive methods for attacking high-profile targets.

In light of the severity of the attacks on the World Trade Center, a great deal of finger pointing has taken place. Experts though point out that counter-terrorism efforts of successive administrations have foiled numerous plots, including a plan for bin Laden supporters to bomb targets in the United States and the Middle East - much of which was done under tight security in order not to cause panic in every day life.

Many terrorism cells have been crushed across the world. But as one official with the Clinton Administration said, , " If just one conspiracy succeeds, it looks as if America has fallen down on the job."

In May of last year, President Bush, placed Dick Cheney, the vice-president, in charge of counter-terrorism efforts in the U.S. A new national agency was formed called the National Preparedness Office, The department's directive was to co-ordinate federal emergency responses and intelligence-gathering.

In addition, the State Department is aware of the numerous terrorist groups that inhabit every corner of the globe.

It publishes annually a list of states that are suspected of supporting terrorism and includes countries such as Iraq, Iran, Libya and Afghanistan.

Frank Cilluffo, a terrorism expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, noted that suicidal terrorism

against civilian targets is all but unstoppable - regardless of the security measures taken.

The intelligence community's failure to prevent the attack could create pressure to try to cripple terrorist groups before they can act - which could lead to the idea of prevention going beyond regular intelligence collection, to covert action and infiltration, such as the Israeli government practices.

In light of the attacks on the US, there has been concerns over a knee jerk reaction taking place. The main question on many lawmakers' minds is "Will any new policies aimed at preventing such a threat in the future limit the freedom guaranteed to US citizens in the Charter of Rights and the US Constitution ?

The answer will likely determine whether terrorists will manage to do far more damage to the United States - land of the free - than they did on September 11th, 2001.

# Chapter 11

## The Aftermath.

With the initial shock of the terrible events of September 11th, 2001, behind them the world began the task of putting back together some form of normal existence. It is clear for the majority of Americans that the war with the fanatical Muslim community is anything but over. In light of the investigation that has taken place since the assault officials have continued to warn about further attacks that might be carried out

For many Americans, and their allies, the desire to bring the perpetrators of this crime to justice is a burning issue. For some, the threat of war is enough to warrant a motion for finding a peaceful solution to past, present and future threats.

Others demand swift and severe military punishment be dealt out to the ruling Taliban and bin Laden and his followers. History can be a wise teacher at such a juncture in our existence.

The enemy in this case are those that see the Western Free world as the evil force that must be destroyed. Up until the attacks on September 11th, much of America had grown used to the demonstrations seen on the evening news and the almost methodical bombardment of Saddam Hussien in Iraq. We didn't view the Muslim terrorists that waged war in Israel and post Russian provinces as a real threat. It was in fact, for most people in North America, a problem that had stayed contained in the middle east. As the attacks proved though, the radical element in the Middle East gave far more thought to life in America than did Americans to life in the Middle East. Once the smoke cleared and the New York sky line no longer featured the soaring towers of the World Trade Center - Americans realized that they were at war - whether they liked it or not.

During World War Two, as the battle in Europe raged between England and Germany, the War itself was a distant

issue between two other countries for America. It wasn't until the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor that Americans could no longer avoid the war - it had come to them.

In the minds of those that carried out the attacks on the US, the war has only begun. This is an important issue that many who wish to avoid war should keep in mind. If no military response was to take place, and the terrorism network of bin Laden remained intact, these attacks will still continue.

It is natural to want to back away from the battle in hopes that the aggressor will also subside.

But the enemy that attacked the United States believes that this war is about religion - and there can be no peace as long as the American Christian Infidels exist on the planet earth. Essentially this war has become an issue of "us versus them"

As long as the American way of life remains, these terrorists will not rest. As long as America, and in fact the entire free world, allows the terrorists to exist, we will not be safe from further attacks.

In interesting retrospect, history may very well show that despite the success of these short term intermittent attacks by terrorists and bin Laden against the United States, the actual timing of this attack might prove to be the instrument of their demise. Certainly the loss of 6000 plus people and billions in damage is a blow to the United States that cannot be ignored. The sleeping giant has been awakened

Although it certainly would be hard to comprehend greater devastation than that of the September 11th attacks, it could have been worse. What if the terrorists had been able to detonate a nuclear weapon in New York City and in doing so had destroyed much of Manhattan?

Millions would have perished. By striking early, the terrorists have essentially blown their cover. The free world is

now very alert to the threat and is prepared to end the problem once and for all.

Unlike the Vietnam War or the Soviet Afghanistan war of the 80's, the Americans are not looking to find peace for a warring nation or to occupy a land. Their mission is purely military. It has no other objective but search and destroy. There is no peace keeping element to this military action.

Ironically, the vast majority of Americans and Muslims have no real quarrel with each other. Much of what we know is the result of the media and political agendas. It can be safely said that America and its allies are guilty of fueling their economy with self interest in the oil fields of the middle east.

In the same sense, it is likely equally safe to say that those in the Middle East who see every day citizens in the west as the enemy, likely have no idea of what life and liberty is really like in the United States of America.

It is also worth noting that while immigration offices at US embassies are being crushed with requests to live in America, there are those in the very same countries that are plotting to destroy it.

As long as there are those men that seek to impose their will on others, whether it be the likes of Adolf Hitler 60 years ago or Osama bin Laden in the year 2001, there can be no rest for the innocent. War is evil, and those that instigate it are part of the curse that has plagued mankind since our existence began. Those that seek war do not speak for the people.

They are rarely, if ever elected, and usually are serving some form of perverse personal ideology that they are willing to impose on the world at any cost to their country's citizens.

The Terrorists that attacked the World Trade center are certainly not heroes in any language or religion. They are disenchanting cold blooded killers As such they are actually criminals not heroes. There is no place in any heaven for such



men - we can only hope that there is a special place in hell for the likes of Mohamed Atta and Timothy McVeigh. They were cowards who killed innocent people.

There is no need for societies and religions to hate each other. Religion is something that comes after one is born as a human being. Regardless of who you believe your god to be, regardless of the color of your skin, we are equal.

Those that perpetrate evil among us must be stopped.

And when it is over, we as one people must extend our hand to each other and greet each other not as Christian or Muslim, but as fellow men and woman - united in our desire for peace.

Always and forever.

## **President Bush's Speech to the American People September 20th / 2001**

Mr. Speaker, Mr. President Pro Tempore, members of Congress, and fellow Americans: In the normal course of events, presidents come to this chamber to report on the state of the Union. Tonight, no such report is needed. It has already been delivered by the American people.

We have seen it in the courage of passengers who rushed terrorists to save others on the ground. Passengers like an exceptional man named Todd Beamer. And would you please help me welcome his wife Lisa Beamer here tonight? We have seen the state of our Union in the endurance of rescuers working past exhaustion.

We've seen the unfurling of flags, the lighting of candles, the giving of blood, the saying of prayers in English, Hebrew and Arabic.

We have seen the decency of a loving and giving people who have made the grief of strangers their own.

My fellow citizens, for the last nine days, the entire world has seen for itself the state of union, and it is strong.

Tonight, we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger and anger to resolution. Whether we bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done.

I thank the Congress for its leadership at such an important time.

All of America was touched on the evening of the tragedy to see Republicans and Democrats joined together on the steps of this Capitol singing "God Bless America."

And you did more than sing. You acted, by delivering \$40 billion to rebuild our communities and meet the needs of our

military. Speaker Hastert, Minority Leader Gephardt, Majority Leader Daschle and Senator Lott, I thank you for your friendship, for your leadership and for your service to our country.

And on behalf of the American people, I thank the world for its outpouring of support.

America will never forget the sounds of our national anthem playing at Buckingham Palace, on the streets of Paris and at Berlin's Brandenburg Gate.

We will not forget South Korean children gathering to pray outside our embassy in Seoul, or the prayers of sympathy offered at a mosque in Cairo.

We will not forget moments of silence and days of mourning in Australia and Africa and Latin America.

Nor will we forget the citizens of 80 other nations who died with our own. Dozens of Pakistanis, more than 130 Israelis, more than 250 citizens of India, men and women from El Salvador, Iran, Mexico and Japan, and hundreds of British citizens. America has no truer friend than Great Britain.

Once again, we are joined together in a great cause. I'm so honored the British prime minister had crossed an ocean to show his unity with America. Thank you for coming, friend.

On September the 11th, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country. Americans have known wars, but for the past 136 years they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known the casualties of war, but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning.

Americans have known surprise attacks, but never before on thousands of civilians.

All of this was brought upon us in a single day, and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under

attack.

Americans have many questions tonight. Americans are asking, "Who attacked our country?"

The evidence we have gathered all points to a collection of loosely affiliated terrorist organizations known as al Qaeda.

They are some of the murderers indicted for bombing American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya and responsible for bombing the USS Cole.

Al Qaeda is to terror what the Mafia is to crime. But its goal is not making money, its goal is remaking the world and imposing its radical beliefs on people everywhere.

The terrorists practice a fringe form of Islamic extremism that has been rejected by Muslim scholars and the vast majority of Muslim clerics; a fringe movement that perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam.

The terrorists' directive commands them to kill Christians and Jews, to kill all Americans and make no distinctions among military and civilians, including women and children.

This group and its leader, a person named Osama bin Laden, are linked to many other organizations in different countries, including the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan.

There are thousands of these terrorists in more than 60 countries. They are recruited from their own nations and neighborhoods and brought to camps in places like Afghanistan where they are trained in the tactics of terror. They are sent back to their homes or sent to hide in countries around the world to plot evil and destruction.

The leadership of Al Qaeda has great influence in Afghanistan and supports the Taliban regime in controlling most of that country. In Afghanistan we see Al Qaeda's vision for the

world. Afghanistan's people have been brutalized, many are starving and many have fled.

Women are not allowed to attend school. You can be jailed for owning a television. Religion can be practiced only as their leaders dictate. A man can be jailed in Afghanistan if his beard is not long enough.

The United States respects the people of Afghanistan —after all, we are currently its largest source of humanitarian aid—but we condemn the Taliban regime.

It is not only repressing its own people, it is threatening people everywhere by sponsoring and sheltering and supplying terrorists.

By aiding and abetting murder, the Taliban regime is committing murder. And tonight the United States of America makes the following demands on the Taliban.

Deliver to United States authorities all of the leaders of Al Qaeda who hide in your land.

Release all foreign nationals, including American citizens you have unjustly imprisoned. Protect foreign journalists, diplomats and aid workers in your country. Close immediately and permanently every terrorist training camp in Afghanistan. And hand over every terrorist and every person and their support structure to appropriate authorities.

Give the United States full access to terrorist training camps, so we can make sure they are no longer operating.

These demands are not open to negotiation or discussion. The Taliban must act and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists or they will share in their fate.

I also want to speak tonight directly to Muslims throughout the world. We respect your faith. It's practiced freely by many

millions of Americans and by millions more in countries that America counts as friends. Its teachings are good and peaceful, and those who commit evil in the name of Allah blaspheme the name of Allah.

The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself.

The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends. It is not our many Arab friends. Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists and every government that supports them. Our war on terror begins with Al Qaeda, but it does not end there.

It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated.

Americans are asking “Why do they hate us?”

They hate what they see right here in this chamber: a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed.

They hate our freedoms: our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other.

They want to overthrow existing governments in many Muslim countries such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. They want to drive Israel out of the Middle East. They want to drive Christians and Jews out of vast regions of Asia and Africa.

These terrorists kill not merely to end lives, but to disrupt and end a way of life. With every atrocity, they hope that America grows fearful, retreating from the world and forsaking our friends. They stand against us because we stand in their way.

We're not deceived by their pretenses to piety.

We have seen their kind before. They're the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century. By sacrificing human

life to serve their radical visions, by abandoning every value except the will to power, they follow in the path of fascism, Nazism and totalitarianism. And they will follow that path all the way to where it ends in history's unmarked grave of discarded lies.

Americans are asking, "How will we fight and win this war?"

We will direct every resource at our command —every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war —to the destruction and to the defeat of the global terror network.

Now, this war will not be like the war against Iraq a decade ago, with a decisive liberation of territory and a swift conclusion. It will not look like the air war above Kosovo two years ago, where no ground troops were used and not a single American was lost in combat.

Our response involves far more than instant retaliation and isolated strikes. Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign unlike any other we have ever seen. It may include dramatic strikes visible on TV and covert operations secret even in success.

We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place until there is no refuge or no rest.

And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation in every region now has a decision to make: Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists.

From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime. Our nation has been put on notice, we're not immune from attack. We will take defensive measures against terrorism to protect Americans.

Today, dozens of federal departments and agencies, as well as state and local governments, have responsibilities affecting homeland security.

These efforts must be coordinated at the highest level. So tonight, I announce the creation of a Cabinet-level position reporting directly to me, the Office of Homeland Security.

And tonight, I also announce a distinguished American to lead this effort, to strengthen American security: a military veteran, an effective governor, a true patriot, a trusted friend, Pennsylvania's Tom Ridge.

He will lead, oversee and coordinate a comprehensive national strategy to safeguard our country against terrorism and respond to any attacks that may come.

These measures are essential. The only way to defeat terrorism as a threat to our way of life is to stop it, eliminate it and destroy it where it grows.

Many will be involved in this effort, from FBI agents, to intelligence operatives, to the reservists we have called to active duty.

All deserve our thanks, and all have our prayers.

And tonight a few miles from the damaged Pentagon, I have a message for our military: Be ready. I have called the armed forces to alert, and there is a reason.

The hour is coming when America will act, and you will make us proud.

This is not, however, just America's fight. And what is at stake is not just America's freedom.

This is the world's fight. This is civilization's fight. This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom.



We ask every nation to join us.

We will ask and we will need the help of police forces, intelligence service and banking systems around the world. The United States is grateful that many nations and many international organizations have already responded with sympathy and with support —nations from Latin America to Asia to Africa to Europe to the Islamic world.

Perhaps the NATO charter reflects best the attitude of the world: An attack on one is an attack on all. The civilized world is rallying to America's side.

They understand that if this terror goes unpunished, their own cities, their own citizens may be next. Terror unanswered can not only bring down buildings, it can threaten the stability of legitimate governments.

And you know what? We're not going to allow it.

Americans are asking, "What is expected of us?"  
I ask you to live your lives and hug your children.

I know many citizens have fears tonight, and I ask you to be calm and resolute, even in the face of a continuing threat. I ask you to uphold the values of America and remember why so many have come here.

We're in a fight for our principles, and our first responsibility is to live by them. No one should be singled out for unfair treatment or unkind words because of their ethnic background or religious faith.

I ask you to continue to support the victims of this tragedy with your contributions. Those who want to give can go to a central source of information, [Libertyunites.org](http://Libertyunites.org), to find the names of groups providing direct help in New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

The thousands of FBI agents who are now at work in this investigation may need your cooperation, and I ask you to give it. I ask for your patience with the delays and inconveniences that may accompany tighter security and for your patience in what will be a long struggle.

I ask your continued participation and confidence in the American economy. Terrorists attacked a symbol of American prosperity; they did not touch its source.

America is successful because of the hard work and creativity and enterprise of our people. These were the true strengths of our economy before September 11, and they are our strengths today.

And finally, please continue praying for the victims of terror and their families, for those in uniform and for our great country. Prayer has comforted us in sorrow and will help strengthen us for the journey ahead.

Tonight I thank my fellow Americans for what you have already done and for what you will do.

And ladies and gentlemen of the Congress, I thank you, their representatives, for what you have already done and for what we will do together.

Tonight we face new and sudden national challenges. We will come together to improve air safety, to dramatically expand the number of air marshals on domestic flights and take new measures to prevent hijacking.

We will come together to promote stability and keep our airlines flying with direct assistance during this emergency.

We will come together to give law enforcement the additional tools it needs to track down terror here at home.

We will come together to strengthen our intelligence capabilities to know the plans of terrorists before they act and to find

them before they strike.

We will come together to take active steps that strengthen America's economy and put our people back to work.

Tonight, we welcome two leaders who embody the extraordinary spirit of all New Yorkers, Governor George Pataki and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

As a symbol of America's resolve, my administration will work with Congress and these two leaders to show the world that we will rebuild New York City.

After all that has just passed, all the lives taken and all the possibilities and hopes that died with them, it is natural to wonder if America's future is one of fear.

Some speak of an age of terror. I know there are struggles ahead and dangers to face. But this country will define our times, not be defined by them.

As long as the United States of America is determined and strong, this will not be an age of terror. This will be an age of liberty here and across the world.

Great harm has been done to us. We have suffered great loss. And in our grief and anger we have found our mission and our moment.

Freedom and fear are at war. The advance of human freedom, the great achievement of our time and the great hope of every time, now depends on us.

Our nation, this generation, will lift the dark threat of violence from our people and our future. We will rally the world to this cause by our efforts, by our courage. We will not tire, we will not falter and we will not fail.

It is my hope that in the months and years ahead life will return almost to normal. We'll go back to our lives and routines

and that is good.

Even grief recedes with time and grace.

But our resolve must not pass. Each of us will remember what happened that day and to whom it happened. We will remember the moment the news came, where we were and what we were doing.

Some will remember an image of a fire or story or rescue. Some will carry memories of a face and a voice gone forever. And I will carry this. It is the police shield of a man named George Howard who died at the World Trade Center trying to save others.

It was given to me by his mom, Arlene, as a proud memorial to her son. It is my reminder of lives that ended and a task that does not end.

I will not forget the wound to our country and those who inflicted it. I will not yield, I will not rest, I will not relent in waging this struggle for freedom and security for the American people. The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them.

Fellow citizens, we'll meet violence with patient justice, assured of the rightness of our cause and confident of the victories to come.

In all that lies before us, may God grant us wisdom and may he watch over the United States of America.

Thank you.

## **The Letter Found Belonging to the Terrorists.**

The FBI discovered a letter written in Arabic in a suitcase that belonged to Mohamed Atta, one of the hijackers involved in the Sept. 11 suicide attacks. The letter has been translated below.

### **The last night:**

One of the companions of the Prophet said: The Messenger of God had ordered us to recite it Qur'anic verse before the battle, we did, we won the battle and we were not harmed.

1- Pledge allegiance to die, and the renewal of steps to be alert. shaving of extra body hair, wearing fragrance. wash up.

2- To know the plan very well —know all its aspects and notes regarding reaction by or resistance from the enemy.

3- Read Surat al-Tawba, and Surat al-Anfal —understand their meanings and understand what God had prepared for the faithful —He prepared an everlasting paradise for the martyrs.

4- Remind yourself of obedience —In this night you will face decisive moments. These moments require obedience. Calm your soul, make it understand, and convince and push her to do that the mission. God said “Obey God and his Prophet, if you don't, you will fail and lose your winds, be patient, God is with those who are patient.”

5- Stay up at night, persist in your invocations of victory, control and conquest. [your invocation for] Thing to go well and for God to provides a cover for us.

6- Increase your mention of God's name. The best mention is reading the Qur'an. All scholars agreed to this. It is enough for us, that the Qur'an is the word of the Creator of Heaven and Earth, Who we are about to meet.

7- Cleanse your heart of sins, forget and try to forget something called life. The time of play is over, now is the time of the true promise of God. How many years]we have wasted shouldn't we use these hours to present to God, our sacrifices and obedience.

8- let your heart be happy only few easy seconds separate you from the beginning of a happy life, peaceful life, and the everlasting tranquility with Prophets and the faithful and martyrs, they are the kindest We ask God to help us be optimistic, the Prophet, peace be upon him.

9- Then, put that in front of your eyes, if you are facing a challenge —how would you act how to steadfast and remember and learn it wouldn't happen to you. It is a challenge from God [illegible] then it will be clear, God willing, God had said “did you think that you will enter paradise and that God knows those who performed Jihad and knows those who are patient”

10- Remember what God said “You wished death before you see it and?.” “A small band have won over a large band”, “if god make you victorious no one will defeat you, God willing?” .

11- Remind yourself of the invocations for the sake of your brothers and understand what they mean - invocations of morning and night —invocations of country - invocations of the place - invocations about meeting the enemy.

12- Check yourself, the bag, cloth, the knife, your tools, your ID - your passport- all your papers.

13- Check your weapon before leaving and before leaving one of you must sharpen his blade to inflict wound on his prey to slaughter .

14- Wear your cloth appropriately —tied, the way our good ancestors did it, may God bless them, they used to wear their cloth in a tied fashion —before the battle, then tie your shoe

very well, wear socks so you don't lose your shoes. We are ordered to follow these items, God is our Sustainer praise be to Him.

15- Pray the morning prayers with a group of people, understand its worth, then, begin the invocations, don't leave home unless you perform the ablution. Recite God's words " We created you.."

**After that, the second phase:**

If a taxi transported you recite the invocation the car —a lot and the invocations of riding - the invocations of the country - the invocations of the place - and other invocations).

If you reached your destination and you saw. Get off the taxi, recite the invocations of the place, and do that in every place you go to, and smile and be assured, God is with his faithful, and angels will be guarding you without you noticing them.

Then recite the invocation that " God is dearest of all his creation" and recite " Oh God and save you from their evil" and recite 'Oh God construct a dam in front of their hands and behind their hands, and blind them, so they can't see [us]. " And recite " God is our Sustainer, Blessed be He" and recite increase their faith" .

After you recite you will see things get easier without your intervention because God had promised his servants who recite this invocations with the following: 1- Victory with the grace of His blessings 2- They were not harmed.

The believer's shouldn't be scared of it, but those who obey Satan should, God said " Satan scares his followers."

Those who admire the Western civilization, those who drank their love the love of the West destruction, and they were scared of their week tools. Do not fear them and fear if you are believers. The believers are victorious because of God there is no god but God. Be sure that God will stop the conspiracy

of the infidels. God said “ God will weakened their conspiracy.”

Then you have to recite, and the greatest of recitation is, no one should notice that you recite “ There is no god but God” because if you recite it a thousand time no one will be able to differentiate between your silence and your recitation peace be upon him. You can smile while you say it.

It is enough that the concept of Oneness that you uphold as a banner that you fight for —as the Prophet of God, peace be upon him, and his companions had done and will continue until the last day.

Also do not appear to be nervous, be happy with a happy heart, be confident because you are doing a job that religion accepts and loves. And then there will be a day that you will spend with beautiful angels in paradise.

Oh young Man keep a smiling face  
You are on your way to everlasting paradise

Any place you go to, or any thing you do, you have to recite the invocations, pray to God, God is with His faithful servants. He will make them victorious and allow them to accomplish their goals and every thing.

### **The third Phase:**

When you get on the aircraft - when you put your foot in it, and before you enter it —you have to begin reciting the invocations —and think of it your mission as a battle for the sake of God as the prophet had said the battle for the sake of God.

When you put your foot in the aircraft and when you sit on your seat recite the invocations known to you that we have mentioned before. Then keep busy, by mentioning what God had said “ You believers if you meet a few of the enemy steadfast and mention God, so you might succeed.”



And then when aircraft moves towards recite the invocations of travel, you are traveling to God, praise be to Him enjoy these trip.

Then you will find it the aircraft stop and then take off, this is the hour where peace and tranquility meet, pray that God, as mentioned in his book, “God grant us patience and solidify our feet, and grant us victory over the infidels”, they say God forgive us, forgive our sins and solidify our feet and grant us victory over the infidels.”

Pray for yourself and your brothers that God grants victory, ask Him to grant you martyrdom.

Then each one of you should be ready to perform his duty in a way that would pleases God. You should press on your teeth, just like our good ancestors did in their battles.

When engage the enemy hit them like the heroes who do not want to return back to life, and say God is the greatest this saying would scare the infidels. God said “Hit them above the neck.”

You know that paradise is already beautified for you and the beautiful angles are calling you after they put on their most beautiful dresses.

If God grant you the honor of slaughtering the enemy wish its reward the actual slaughter to be granted to your father and your mother, they have rights over you. Do not disagree, obey. If you slaughter, this is a tradition of the Prophet, peace be upon him, but according to the rules.

You have to put the interest of the work of the group ahead of because this work is permitted and the work is a part of the tradition. Do not take revenge for yourself, but dedicate your blow and everything else to God, praise be to Him. Ali Abu Taleb the Prophet’s nephew and the Imam of the Shii’t faith, may God bless his soul, had a fight with one of the infidels. The infidel spit on Ali, may God bless him, but Ali did not wave

his sword towards the infidel. When the battle was over, the companions of the Prophet asked Ali why he did not fight this infidel. Ali answered, “ I was afraid to fight him for the sake of revenge, but as the battle went on and I fought him latter, I did that for the sake of God.”

Then you should apply the concept of taking prisoners of war. You are allowed to take prisoners and to kill them. God said “the prophet is prisoners they want that life and God want the afterlife, God is Wise.”

If every thing went well, each one of you should touch the shoulder of his brother at and you should remind him that this work is for the sake of God, praise be to Him. You should encourage your brothers, assure them, and remind them of the beautiful Qur’anic verses like, “those who fight for the sake of God, those who buy the hereafter using their lives,” and God’s words “do not think that those who were killed for the sake of God are dead?”

And many others - You should raise their level of activism — just like our good ancestors did during their battles to assure their brothers and calm their hearts. Do not forget water to drink, you and your brothers if possible, the true promise is near and the zero hour D day had arrived.

Trust and open your heart and welcome death for the sake of God. Always, remember to pray if possible before reaching the target or say something like “there is no god but God and Mohamed is His Prophet.”

After that, God willing, we will meet in Paradise.

If you see groups of the infidels, remember the parties of the infidels, they were 10,000 infidel fighters, and remember how

God granted victory to his faithful servants.

God said “when the faithful saw the parties they said that what

God had promised us, that increased their faith and their submission to God.”

Pray for our Prophet Mohamed.