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TERROR

Thousands feared dead as hijacked jets topple World Trade Center towers



■ CATASTROPHE: Other planes strike Pentagon, crash near Pittsburgh; government suspects Osama bin Laden.

By SERGE SCHMEMANN
The New York Times

NEW YORK — Hijackers rammed jetliners into each of New York's World Trade Center towers Tuesday morning, toppling them in a hellish storm of ash, glass, smoke and leaping victims, while a third jetliner crashed into the Pentagon in Virginia.

There was no official count, but President Bush said thousands of people perished, and in the immediate aftermath the calamity was being ranked as the worst and most audacious terror attack in American history.

The attacks seemed carefully coordinated. The hijacked planes were all en route to California and therefore gorged with fuel, and their departures were spaced within an hour and 40 minutes.

The first, American Airlines Flight 11, a Boeing 767 out of Boston bound for Los Angeles, crashed into the north tower at 4:48 a.m. ADT. Eighteen minutes later, United Airlines Flight 175, also headed from Boston to Los Angeles, plowed into the South Tower.

Then an American Airlines Boeing 757 left Washington's Dulles International Airport bound for Los Angeles but instead hit the western part of the Pentagon, the military headquarters where 24,000 people work, at 5:40 a.m. ADT.

Finally, United Airlines Flight 93, a Boeing 757 flying from Newark to San Francisco, crashed near Pittsburgh, raising the possibility that its hijackers had failed in whatever their mission was.

Within an hour of the initial attack on the World Trade Center, the fires in the building had grown so hot that first the North Tower and then the South Tower collapsed in an explosion of thick, gray dust, molten metal and hundreds of tons of shattered glass. Office supplies were sent flying three miles from the collapsing building.

In all, 266 people died in the four planes, but establishing a comprehensive death toll could take weeks. Numerous firefighters, police officers and other rescue workers who responded to the initial disaster in lower Manhattan were killed or injured when the buildings collapsed. Hundreds

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Anchorage looks for answers after East Coast devastation

■ GRAPPLING: City has scares after attacks on the other side of the continent.

Daily News staff

Anchorage awoke Tuesday morning to the jarring news: terrorist attacks in New York and near Washington, D.C., with horrific reports of immense casualties and smoky devastation.

Before the sun rose above the Chugach Mountains, the aftershocks from events on the other side of the continent began to rattle the lives of Alaskans on a scale not seen since the 1964 Good Friday earthquake — with evacuations, closures, traffic delays and extra police on the street.

Airports were closed statewide and flights grounded, isolating scores of

communities and stranding travelers all over, from hunters in the Bush to the season's last tourists.

The Alaska Command jumped to high alert and sharply restricted access to military bases statewide, while fighter jets scrambled to investigate a suspicious airliner headed toward the city.

The city activated its emergency command center and filled the streets with a double-shift of police and loaded fire stations with extra personnel. Customs officials were at heightened alert at Alaska's four highway crossings into Canada.

False alarms were inevitable. About 9:15 a.m., a school bus was evacuated and examined by police after someone

Above, a fire ball erupts from the upper floors of the south tower of the World Trade Center after a second plane hit the complex on Tuesday.

KRISTEN BROCHMANN
The New York Times

At right, an emergency worker helps a woman after she was injured in the terrorist attack Tuesday on the World Trade Center in New York.

GULNARA SAMIOLAVA
The Associated Press



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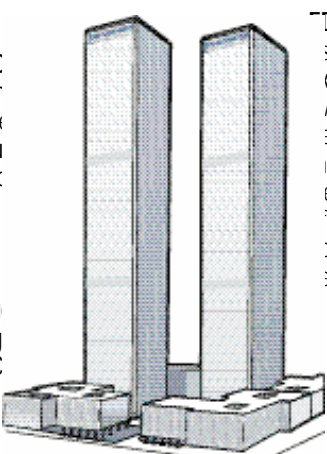
Glance inside

TOWERS

■ WHY THEY CRUMBLE: World Trade Center's towers couldn't withstand the force of the attack and ensuing fire. No building designer could. Pages A-2, 3

SURVIVORS

■ THEIR TALES: "I heard muffled boom and I thought everything was just going to collapse," said Richard C. who was in the World Trade Center. Page A-3



TERRORISTS

■ WEAKNESS EXPLOITED: Terrorists probably used their own pilots, experts said. "No pilot, even with a gun to his head, is going to fly into the world towers," said Gene Poterat, president of the Association of Former Intelligence Officers. Page A-7

PASSENGER

■ FINAL PLEA: A passenger on United Airlines Flight 93 called on his cell-

phone from a locked bathroom: "We are being hijacked; we are being hijacked!" Page A-8

WASHINGTON

■ ATTACK HOBBLER PENTAGON: After a plane struck the Pentagon, Washington turned into a massive sea of chaos, smoke and terror. Page A-8

DOOGAN

■ WE'RE ALL SOLDIERS: In the war against terrorism, every place is a battlefield and every person is a soldier. Alaska, Page B-1

OUR STUDENTS

■ WITNESS TO HISTORY: Textbooks were closed in East High School teach-

er Jackie Hoover's U.S. government class as a chapter of history unraveled before students' eyes. Alaska, B-1

HELP

■ WHERE TO TURN: Check our listing of how you can help, local church services and other information. Alaska, B-3

SPORTS

■ GAMES CANCELLED: Competitions in Alaska and throughout the country were postponed. Sports, C-1

BUSINESS

■ SLOPE DRILLING CURBED: On the North Slope, operators restricted access to the oil fields and curbed drilling activities. Business, E-1

OUR VIEW

■ A GAPING HOLE: There is today a gaping hole in the Manhattan skyline — and a gaping hole in the American heart. The nation has been stunned, and the giant is awakening again. Opinion, B-6

HAMILTON

■ NO SAFE HARBOR: The coordinated hijacking of commercial airplanes to be the weapons in this act of war brings the threat of terrorism into virtually every American's life. Opinion, B-6

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