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ATTACK ON AMERICA: 09/11/2001

'None of us will ever forget'

FULL COVERAGE



'Sadness and . . . unyielding anger'

The text of the speech President Bush gave last night after a day spent on the move **SEE A3, A4**

U.S. military goes into action

Navy ships on both coasts deployed to set up a defensive screen **SEE A3**

Terrorist attack sophisticated

Osama bin Laden's supporters may be to blame, experts say **SEE A3**



Direct hits, then screaming

The Pentagon burst into flames, and the Trade Center looked 'like a war zone' **SEE A5-A7**

MORE INSIDE

► How to help, tips for coping **B2**

► Photos from the scenes and a timeline of events **A8-9**

► Experts disagree on how easily terrorists can fly planes **A11**

► Seattle reaches out to help **B1**

► Editorial: The United States needs a decisive response — and certainty that it gets to those responsible **B4**

► David Horsey: P-I political cartoonist documents the events **B4**

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For the latest developments and photos, see the P-I's Web site

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A fireball erupts from the World Trade Center after it was struck by a hijacked aircraft yesterday. The Brooklyn Bridge is in the foreground.

► Knife-wielding hijackers carried out deadly plan

► Death toll could easily be in thousands

► At least 300 firefighters may be among dead

► Terrorists 'flew the planes themselves'

P-I NEWS SERVICES

NEW YORK — In the most devastating terrorist onslaught ever waged against the United States, knife-wielding hijackers crashed two airliners into the World Trade Center yesterday, toppling its twin 110-story towers. The deadly calamity was witnessed on televisions across the world as another plane slammed into the Pentagon, and a fourth crashed outside Pittsburgh.

"Today, our nation saw evil," a grim-faced President Bush said last night in a televised address to the nation. He said thousands of lives were "suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror."

With the country on a war footing, the nation's aviation system was shut down, government buildings around the country were closed, along with major skyscrapers and a variety of other sites, ranging from Disney theme parks to the Golden Gate Bridge and U.N. headquarters in New York.

In his first prime-time Oval Office address, Bush asked the nation to find comfort in Scripture as he mourned the deaths and vowed to avenge their killings. He said the United States would find and punish "those behind these evil acts," and any country that harbors them.

Establishing the U.S. death toll could take weeks. The four airliners alone had 266 people aboard and there were no known survivors. Officials put the number of dead and wounded at the Pentagon at about 100 or more, with some news reports suggesting it could rise to 800.

In addition, a union official said he feared 300 New York firefighters had died in rescue efforts at the trade center and dozens of police officers were missing.

"The number of casualties will be more than most of us can bear," a visibly distraught Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said.

An army of 10,000 workers brought in dogs and lights last night as they began heading into ground zero to search for survivors and recover bodies.

All that remained of the twin towers by then was a pile of rubble and twisted steel that stood barely five stories high, leaving a huge gap in the New York City skyline and making the Empire State Building once again the city's tallest structure.

No one took responsibility for the attacks. But federal authorities identified Osama bin Laden, who has been given asylum by Afghanistan's hard-line Taliban rulers, as the prime suspect. The Taliban denied such suggestions.

Investigators descended on Logan International Airport in Boston yesterday, trying to determine how terrorists commandeered two nearly identical jets that took off moments apart and then crashed them into the trade center.

SEE TERRORISTS, A12

THE NEW YORK TIMES