

## September 11

The worst international terrorist attack ever—involving four separate but coordinated aircraft hijackings—occurred in the United States on September 11, 2001. The 19 hijackers belonged to the al-Qaida terrorist network. According to investigators and records of cellular phone calls made by passengers aboard the planes, the hijackers used knives and boxcutters to kill or wound passengers and the pilots, and then commandeer the aircraft, which the hijackers used to destroy preselected targets.

- Five terrorists hijacked American Airlines flight 11, which departed Boston for Los Angeles at 7:45 a.m. An hour later it was deliberately piloted into the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City.
- Five terrorists hijacked United Airlines flight 175, which departed Boston for Los Angeles at 7:58 a.m. At 9:05 the plane crashed into the South Tower of the World Trade Center. Both towers collapsed shortly thereafter, killing approximately 3000 persons, including hundreds of firefighters and rescue personnel who were helping to evacuate the buildings.
- Four terrorists hijacked United Airlines flight 93, which departed Newark for San Francisco at 8:01 a.m. At 10:10 the plane crashed in Stony Creek Township, Pennsylvania killing all 45 persons on board. The intended target of this hijacked plane is not known, but it is believed that passengers overpowered the terrorists, thus preventing the aircraft from being used as a missile.
- Five terrorists hijacked American Airlines flight 77, which departed Washington Dulles Airport for Los Angeles at 8:10 a.m. At 9:39 the plane was flown directly into the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, near Washington, D.C. A total of 189 persons were killed, including all who were onboard the plane.

More than 3000 persons were killed in these four attacks. Citizens of 78 countries perished at the World Trade Center site. "Freedom and democracy are under attack," said President Bush the following day. Leaders from around the world called the events of September 11 an attack on civilization itself.



*Rescue helicopter responded to attack near Washington, D.C. on September 11 after hijacked American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon, killing 189 persons, including all aboard the aircraft.*

The coordinated attack was an act of war against the United States. President Bush said in a 20 September 2001 address to a joint session of Congress: "Our war on terror begins with al-Qaida, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated."

Virtually every nation condemned the attack and joined the US-led Coalition to fight terror on several fronts: diplomatic, economic, intelligence, law enforcement, and military. Operation Enduring Freedom, the military component of the Coalition, began on 7 October. The first targets were the al-Qaida training camps and military installations of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Islamic extremists from around the world—including North America, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Central, South, and Southeast Asia—had used Afghanistan as a



*Emergency and law-enforcement personnel investigate the crash site of hijacked United Airlines Flight 93 which crashed in Stony Creek Township, Pennsylvania, killing all 45 persons on board.*

training ground and base of operations for worldwide terrorist activities.

Within months, the Taliban was driven from power, and nearly 1000 al-Qaida operatives were arrested in over 60 countries.

At year's end, the war continued to be waged on all fronts and was certain to last well into the future.

### Review of Terrorism in 2001

Despite the horrific events of September 11, the number of international terrorist attacks in 2001 declined to 346, down from 426 the previous year. One hundred seventy-eight of the attacks were bombings against a multinational oil pipeline in Colombia—constituting 51 percent of the year's total number of attacks. In the year 2000, there were 152 pipeline bombings in Colombia, which accounted for 40 percent of the total.

A total of 3,547 persons were killed in international terrorist attacks in 2001<sup>2</sup>, the highest annual death toll from terrorism ever recorded. Ninety percent of the fatalities occurred in the September 11 attacks. In 2000, 409 persons died in

terrorist attacks. The number of persons wounded in terrorist attacks in 2001 was 1080, up from 796 wounded the previous year. Violence in the Middle East and South Asia also accounted for the increase in casualty totals for 2001.

In addition to the US citizens killed and injured on September 11, eight other US citizens were killed and 15 were wounded in acts of terrorism last year.

- Ronald Sander, one of the five American oil workers kidnapped in Ecuador in October 2000, was killed by his captors—an armed gang led by former members of a Colombian terrorist group.
- On 9 May, two teenagers were stoned to death in Wadi Haritun cave near Teqoa (Israeli settlement) in the West Bank. Yaakov Nathan Mandell was one of the youths killed. A claim of responsibility for this attack was made in the name of "Palestinian Hizballah."

<sup>2</sup> In the absence of a final official total from New York City authorities, we are using 3,000 as the number of persons killed in the World Trade Center attacks.



*The World Trade Center's South Tower begins to collapse. Estimates were that each jet was carrying approximately 60,000 pounds of jet fuel and traveling at 300 miles per hour when they crashed into the Towers.*

- Guillermo Sobero, one of three US citizens in a group of 20 persons kidnapped on 27 May from a resort on Palawan Island in the southern Philippines by the Abu Sayyaf Group, was subsequently murdered by his captors.
- On 29 May in the West Bank, militants fired on a passing vehicle, killing two persons, including US citizen Sara Blaustein. Two other US citizens were injured in the ambush. The Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade claimed responsibility.
- On 9 August in Jerusalem, a suicide bomber walked into a busy downtown restaurant and detonated a 10-pound bomb that he was wearing, killing 15 persons and wounding 130 others. Among the fatalities were US citizens Judith Greenbaum and Malka Roth. Four other US citizens were injured in the explosion. HAMAS claimed responsibility for the attack.
- On 6 October in al-Khobar, Saudi Arabia, a terrorist threw a parcel bomb into a busy shopping area, killing Michael Jerrald Martin, Jr., and wounding five other persons, among them two US citizens.
- On 4 November, Shoshana Ben Yashai was killed in a shooting attack in east Jerusalem near French Hill. The assailant was also killed in the attack, which was claimed by Palestine Islamic Jihad.