**September 11 2001 attacks**

**From The Black Vault Encyclopedia Project**

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A huge plume of smoke and fire can be seen emerging from the North Tower. Following the attack on the North Tower, many broadcasters were showing live coverage when a second plane, United Airlines Flight 175 (pictured above), crashed into the South Tower.

The **September 11, 2001 attacks** (also referred to as **9/11** or **September 11**) were a series of coordinated terrorist attacks upon the [United States of America](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States&action=edit&redlink=1) carried out on the morning of Tuesday, [September 11](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=September_11&action=edit&redlink=1), [2001](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2001&action=edit&redlink=1), in which a total of nineteen [hijackers](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Aircraft_hijacking&action=edit&redlink=1) simultaneously took control of four U.S. domestic [commercial airliners](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Boeing_Commercial_Airplanes&action=edit&redlink=1). The hijackers crashed two planes into the [World Trade Center](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/World_Trade_Center) in [Manhattan](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Manhattan&action=edit&redlink=1), [New York City](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=New_York_City&action=edit&redlink=1) — one into each of the two tallest [towers](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Skyscraper&action=edit&redlink=1), about 18 minutes apart. Within two hours, both towers collapsed. The hijackers crashed the third aircraft into the [U.S. Department of Defense](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/United_States_Department_of_Defense) headquarters, [the Pentagon](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/The_Pentagon), in [Arlington County, Virginia](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Arlington_County,_Virginia&action=edit&redlink=1). The fourth plane crashed into a rural field in [Somerset County](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Somerset_County,_Pennsylvania&action=edit&redlink=1), [Pennsylvania](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Pennsylvania&action=edit&redlink=1), following apparent passenger resistance. The official count records 2,986 deaths in the attacks, including [the 19 hijackers](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Organizers_of_the_September_11,_2001_attacks).

The 19 conspiring hijackers who carried out the attack were affiliated with [al-Qaeda](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Al-Qaeda&action=edit&redlink=1), an [Islamic](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Islam&action=edit&redlink=1) [terrorist group](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=List_of_terrorist_organisations&action=edit&redlink=1) led by [Osama bin Laden](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Osama_bin_Laden&action=edit&redlink=1), a former [Saudi](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Saudi_Arabia&action=edit&redlink=1) [national](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Nationalism&action=edit&redlink=1) whose [citizenship](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Citizenship&action=edit&redlink=1) was revoked in 1994.

Fifteen of the hijackers were from [Saudi Arabia](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Saudi_Arabia&action=edit&redlink=1), two were from the [United Arab Emirates](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_Arab_Emirates&action=edit&redlink=1), and one each came from [Egypt](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Egypt&action=edit&redlink=1) and [Lebanon](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Lebanon&action=edit&redlink=1). American investigators concluded that it was [Khalid Shaikh Mohammed](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Khalid_Shaikh_Mohammed&action=edit&redlink=1) who led the planning of the attacks. He was captured in 2003. The [9/11 Commission](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/National_Commission_on_Terrorist_Attacks_Upon_the_United_States) states in its final [report](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=9/11_Commission_Report&action=edit&redlink=1) that the attackers were [terrorists](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Terrorism&action=edit&redlink=1). Bin Laden initially denied responsibility, but later claimed direct responsibility for orchestrating the attacks.

The September 11th attacks are among the most significant events to have occurred so far in the [21st century](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=21st_century&action=edit&redlink=1) in terms of the profound political, psychological, and economic effects that followed in the United States and many other parts of the [world](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Geopolitics&action=edit&redlink=1). The attacks, and the subsequent U.S. led wars in [Afghanistan](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=U.S._invasion_of_Afghanistan&action=edit&redlink=1) and [Iraq](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Iraq_war&action=edit&redlink=1) have made United States [homeland security](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Homeland_security&action=edit&redlink=1) concerns much more prominent than they were in the previous decade.

**The attacks**

*Main article:* [*September 11, 2001 attacks timeline for the day of the attacks*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/September_11,_2001_attacks_timeline_for_the_day_of_the_attacks)*.*



A sequential look at United Flight 175 crashing into the south tower of the World Trade Center.

The attacks started with the [hijacking](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Aircraft_hijacking&action=edit&redlink=1) of four commercial [airliners](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Jet_aircraft&action=edit&redlink=1). With jet fuel capacities of nearly 24,000 U.S. [gallons](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Gallon&action=edit&redlink=1) (91,000 liters) per aircraft, the aircraft were used as flying [incendiary bombs](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Incendiary_bomb&action=edit&redlink=1). [American Airlines Flight 11](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/American_Airlines_Flight_11) crashed into the north side of the north tower of the [World Trade Center](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/World_Trade_Center) (WTC) at 8:46:40 AM [local time](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=EDT&action=edit&redlink=1) (12:46:40 [UTC](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=UTC&action=edit&redlink=1)). At 9:03:11 AM local time (13:03:11 UTC), [United Airlines Flight 175](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/United_Airlines_Flight_175) crashed into the south tower, an event covered live by television broadcasters that had their cameras trained on the North Tower. [American Airlines Flight 77](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/American_Airlines_Flight_77) crashed into [the Pentagon](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/The_Pentagon) at 9:37:46 AM local time (13:37:46 UTC). The fourth hijacked plane, [United Airlines Flight 93](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/United_Airlines_Flight_93), crashed in a field near [Shanksville](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Shanksville,_Pennsylvania) and [Stonycreek Township](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Stonycreek_Township,_Somerset_County,_Pennsylvania&action=edit&redlink=1) in [Somerset County](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Somerset_County,_Pennsylvania&action=edit&redlink=1), [Pennsylvania](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Pennsylvania&action=edit&redlink=1), at 10:03:11 AM local time (14:03:11 UTC), with parts and debris found up to eight miles away. The crash in Pennsylvania is believed to have resulted from the hijackers either deliberately crashing the aircraft or losing control of it as they fought with the passengers. No one survived in any of the hijacked aircraft.[[1]](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/September_11,_2001_attacks#_note-0#_note-0)

The fatalities were in the thousands: 265 on the four planes; 2,595, including 343 [New York City firefighters](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=New_York_City_Fire_Department&action=edit&redlink=1), 23 [NYPD](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=New_York_City_Police_Department&action=edit&redlink=1) police officers, and 37 [Port Authority](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Port_Authority_of_New_York_and_New_Jersey&action=edit&redlink=1) police officers in the towers and on the ground; and 125 [civilians](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Civilian&action=edit&redlink=1) and military personnel at the Pentagon. At least 2,986 people were killed in total. In addition to the 110-floor Twin Towers of the World Trade Center itself, five other buildings at the WTC site, including [WTC building 7](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=7_World_Trade_Center&action=edit&redlink=1), and four [subway](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=New_York_City_Subway&action=edit&redlink=1) stations were destroyed or badly damaged. In total, on [Manhattan Island](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Manhattan_Island&action=edit&redlink=1), 25 buildings were damaged. Communications equipment such as broadcast [radio](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Radio&action=edit&redlink=1), [television](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Television&action=edit&redlink=1) and [two-way radio](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Two-way_radio&action=edit&redlink=1) antenna towers were damaged beyond repair. In [Arlington County](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Arlington_County,_Virginia&action=edit&redlink=1), a portion of the Pentagon was severely damaged by fire and one section of the building collapsed.

Some passengers and crew members were able to make phone calls from the doomed flights. They reported that multiple [hijackers](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Organizers_of_the_September_11,_2001_attacks) were aboard each plane. A total of 19 were later identified by the FBI, four on United 93 and five each on the other three flights.

For a short period, the precise identity of the 19 hijackers was uncertain. For example, the [BBC](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=BBC&action=edit&redlink=1) reported 14 days after the attack that 4 of the 19 were alive based upon the initial identification supplied by the FBI.

The hijackers reportedly took control of the aircraft by using [box-cutter knives](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Utility_knife&action=edit&redlink=1) to kill flight attendants and at least one pilot or passenger. The [9/11 Commission](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/National_Commission_on_Terrorist_Attacks_Upon_the_United_States) could only establish that two of the hijackers had recently purchased [Leatherman](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Leatherman&action=edit&redlink=1) multi-function hand tools, but some form of noxious chemical spray, such as [tear gas](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Tear_gas&action=edit&redlink=1) or [pepper spray](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Pepper_spray&action=edit&redlink=1), was reported to have been used on American 11 and United 175 to keep passengers out of the first-class cabin. [Bomb threats](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Bomb_threats&action=edit&redlink=1) were made on three of the aircraft, but not on American 77.

*Further information:* [*Communication during the September 11, 2001 attacks*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Communication_during_the_September_11,_2001_attacks)

**The fourth aircraft**

It has been speculated that the hijackers of the fourth hijacked aircraft, [United Airlines Flight 93](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/United_Airlines_Flight_93), intended to crash into the [U.S. Capitol](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Capitol&action=edit&redlink=1) or the [White House](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=White_House&action=edit&redlink=1) in [Washington, D.C.](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Washington,_D.C.&action=edit&redlink=1) [Black box](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Black_box&action=edit&redlink=1) recordings reportedly revealed that passengers, led by [Todd Beamer](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Todd_Beamer&action=edit&redlink=1), [Jeremy Glick](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Jeremy_Glick_(September_11_attack_victim)&action=edit&redlink=1) and [Mark Bingham](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Mark_Bingham&action=edit&redlink=1), attempted to seize control of the plane from the hijackers, who then rocked the plane in a failed attempt to subdue the passengers. According to [9-1-1](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=9-1-1&action=edit&redlink=1) tapes, one of the passengers, Todd Beamer, had asked for the operator to pray with him before the passengers attempted to retake the aircraft. After praying, he simply said, "[Let's roll](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Let%27s_roll&action=edit&redlink=1)." (The 9/11 Commission stated that Beamer actually said "Roll it," most likely referring to a drinks cart being used as a battering ram.) The term, "Let's roll" would later become the war cry for those fighting Al Qaeda in [Afghanistan](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Afghanistan&action=edit&redlink=1). Soon afterward, the aircraft crashed in a field near [Shanksville](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Shanksville,_Pennsylvania) in [Stonycreek Township](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Stonycreek_Township,_Somerset_County,_Pennsylvania&action=edit&redlink=1), [Somerset County, Pennsylvania](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Somerset_County,_Pennsylvania&action=edit&redlink=1), at 10:03:11 AM local time (14:03:11 UTC). There is a dispute about the exact timing of the crash, founded on the seismic evidence which indicates that the impact actually occurred at 10:06. The 9/11 Panel reports that captured [al-Qaeda](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Al-Qaeda&action=edit&redlink=1) mastermind [Khalid Shaikh Mohammed](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Khalid_Shaikh_Mohammed&action=edit&redlink=1) said that Flight 93's target was the U.S. Capitol, which was given the code name, "The Faculty of Law."

**9/11**

The attacks are often referred to simply as **September 11th**, **9/11**, or **9-11**. The latter two are from the U.S. style for writing short dates, in which the month precedes the day. Both are pronounced "nine-eleven." With the [11 March 2004](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=11_March_2004&action=edit&redlink=1) [Madrid attacks](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Madrid_train_bombings&action=edit&redlink=1) on [March 11](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=March_11&action=edit&redlink=1), [2004](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2004&action=edit&redlink=1), called "M11" or "3/11", and the Jordan Bombings on [November 9](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=November_9&action=edit&redlink=1), [2005](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2005&action=edit&redlink=1) often called "11/9", the convention has been extended, however the [7 July 2005 London bombings](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=7_July_2005_London_bombings&action=edit&redlink=1) occurred on a day when the month and the day were the same, so the speaker can decide if the US or the UK convention (day before the month) is implied.

[9-1-1](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=9-1-1&action=edit&redlink=1) also happens to be the telephone number used in the United States and Canada to dial for emergency assistance (police, ambulance, and fire department).

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| Number of fatalities | | |
| Wrld Trade Center | To Towers | 2,595 |
| F Flight 1 | 92 |
| Flight 175 | 65 |
| Pentagon | Building | 125 |
| Fl Flight 77 | 64 |
| Shanksville | F Flight 93 | 45 |
| **Total** | **2,986** | |

**Fatalities**

At the World Trade Center, faced with a desperate situation of smoke and burning heat from the jet fuel, an estimated 200 people jumped to their deaths from the burning towers (as depicted in the photograph [The Falling Man](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=The_Falling_Man&action=edit&redlink=1)), landing on the streets and rooftops of adjacent buildings hundreds of feet below (a reaction to the attacks similar to the effects of the [Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Triangle_Shirtwaist_Factory_fire&action=edit&redlink=1)). In addition, some of the occupants of each tower above its point of impact made their way upward toward the roof in hope of helicopter rescue. No rescue plan existed for such an eventuality. By some accounts, fleeing occupants instead encountered locked access doors upon reaching the roof. In any case, thick smoke prevented rescue helicopters from landing.

As many as 1,366 people were trapped at and above the floors of impact in the North Tower (1 WTC). None of them survived. As many as 600 people were trapped at and above the floors of impact in the South Tower (2 WTC). Only about 18 managed to escape in time from above the impact zone and out of the South Tower before it collapsed.

As the suburbs around New York City learned of the destruction so close to home, many schools closed for the day, evacuated, or were locked-down. Other school districts shielded students from watching television because many of their parents held jobs in the World Trade Center towers. In [New Jersey](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=New_Jersey&action=edit&redlink=1) and [Connecticut](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Connecticut&action=edit&redlink=1), private schools were evacuated. [Scarsdale, New York](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Scarsdale,_New_York&action=edit&redlink=1) schools closed for the day. In [Greenwich, Connecticut](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Greenwich,_Connecticut&action=edit&redlink=1), about 15 miles north of the city, hundreds of students had direct ties to victims of the attacks. [Greenwich](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Greenwich,_Connecticut&action=edit&redlink=1), [Connecticut](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Connecticut&action=edit&redlink=1), and [New Canaan](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=New_Canaan,_Connecticut&action=edit&redlink=1), [Connecticut](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Connecticut&action=edit&redlink=1), two of the wealthiest towns in the world, had more residents killed than any other town in the New York metro area.

According to [Associated Press](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Associated_Press&action=edit&redlink=1), the city identified over 1,600 bodies but was unable to identify the rest of the bodies (about 1,100 people). They report that the city has, "about 10,000 unidentified bone and tissue fragments that cannot be matched to the list of the dead."

**Responsibility**



The World Trade Center on fire. The plume of smoke escaping the towers would, upon the towers' ultimate collapse, go on to cover the entire lower portion of [Manhattan](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Manhattan&action=edit&redlink=1) as well as large sections of [Brooklyn](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Brooklyn&action=edit&redlink=1).

*Main article:* [*Responsibility for the September 11, 2001 attacks*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Responsibility_for_the_September_11,_2001_attacks)

The [United States government](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_government&action=edit&redlink=1) determined (in part based on classified information) that [al-Qaeda](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Al-Qaeda&action=edit&redlink=1) and [Osama bin Laden](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Osama_bin_Laden&action=edit&redlink=1) bear responsibility for the attacks. Bin Laden initially denied, but later admitted, involvement in the incidents. He had earlier declared a [holy war](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Religious_war&action=edit&redlink=1) against the United States and this is seen as a motive for the 9/11 attacks.

On [September 16](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=September_16&action=edit&redlink=1), [2001](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2001&action=edit&redlink=1), bin Laden denied any involvement with the attacks by reading a statement which was broadcast by [Qatar](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Qatar&action=edit&redlink=1)'s [Al Jazeera](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Al_Jazeera&action=edit&redlink=1) satellite channel: "I stress that I have not carried out this act, which appears to have been carried out by individuals with their own motivation." This denial was broadcast on U.S. news networks and worldwide. This was in stark contrast to an earlier Fatwa, signed by bin Laden and others, calling for the killing of American civilians in 1998.

In November, 2001, U.S. forces recovered a videotape from a destroyed house in [Jalalabad](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Jalalabad,_Afghanistan&action=edit&redlink=1), Afghanistan, in which a man who apparently is Osama bin Laden is talking to [Khaled al-Harbi](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Khaled_al-Harbi&action=edit&redlink=1). In the tape, bin Laden admits to planning the attacks. The tape was broadcast on various news networks in December, 2001.

Shortly before the U.S. presidential election in 2004 in a [taped statement](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2004_Osama_bin_Laden_video&action=edit&redlink=1), bin Laden publicly acknowledged al-Qaeda's involvement in the attacks on the U.S, and admitted his direct link to the attacks. He said that the attacks were carried out because, "we are a free people who do not accept injustice, and we want to regain the freedom of our nation."

The [National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=National_Commission_on_Terrorist_Attacks_upon_the_United_States&action=edit&redlink=1) was formed by the United States government and was commonly called the *9-11 Commission.* It released its report on [July 22](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=July_22&action=edit&redlink=1), [2004](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2004&action=edit&redlink=1), concluding that the attacks were conceived and implemented by members of al-Qaeda. The Commission stated that, "9/11 plotters eventually spent somewhere between $400,000 and $500,000 to plan and conduct their attack," but that the specific origin of the funds used to execute the attacks remained unknown. To date, only peripheral figures have been tried or convicted in connection with the attacks.

**Congressional inquiries**

*Further information:* [*9/11 Commission Report*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=9/11_Commission_Report&action=edit&redlink=1)

**Motive**



Clouds of smoke billow out of the Pentagon.

According to official U.S. government sources, the September 11th attacks were consistent with the mission statement of [al-Qaeda](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Al-Qaeda&action=edit&redlink=1). The group's involvement in the bombing of [American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=1998_U.S._embassy_bombings&action=edit&redlink=1) is widely suspected, and al-Qaeda had declared responsibility for the 2000 [USS *Cole* bombing](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=USS_Cole_bombing&action=edit&redlink=1) in Yemen.

The motivation for this campaign was set out in a 1998 [fatwa](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Fatwa&action=edit&redlink=1) issued by [Osama bin Laden](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Osama_bin_Laden&action=edit&redlink=1), [Ayman al-Zawahiri](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Ayman_al-Zawahiri&action=edit&redlink=1), [Abu-Yasir Rifa'i Ahmad Taha](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Abu-Yasir_Rifa%27i_Ahmad_Taha&action=edit&redlink=1), [Shaykh Mir Hamzah](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Shaykh_Mir_Hamzah&action=edit&redlink=1), and Fazlur Rahman (Amir of the Jihad Movement in Bangladesh, [Fazlur Rahman](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Fazlur_Rahman&action=edit&redlink=1)). The fatwa lists three "crimes and sins committed by the Americans":

* U.S. support of Israel.
* U.S. occupation of the Arabian Peninsula.
* U.S. aggression against the Iraqi people.

The fatwa states that the United States:

* Plunders the resources of the [Arabian Peninsula](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Arabian_Peninsula&action=edit&redlink=1).
* Dictates policy to the rulers of those countries.
* Supports abusive regimes and monarchies in the Middle East, thereby oppressing their people.
* Has military bases and installations upon the Arabian Peninsula, which violates the Muslim holy land, in order to threaten neighboring Muslim countries.
* Intends thereby to create disunion between Muslim states, thus weakening them as a political force.
* Supports [Israel](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Israel&action=edit&redlink=1), and wishes to divert international attention from (and tacitly maintain) the occupation of [Palestine](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Palestine_(region)&action=edit&redlink=1).

The Gulf War and the ensuing sanctions against and bombing of Iraq by the United States, were cited, in 1998, as further proof of these allegations. To the disapproval of moderate Muslims, the fatwa uses [Islamic](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Islam&action=edit&redlink=1) texts to explain violent action against American military and citizenry until the alleged grievances are reversed: stating "ulema have throughout Islamic history unanimously agreed that the [jihad](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Jihad&action=edit&redlink=1) is an individual duty if the enemy destroys the Muslim countries".



Aerial photo taken April 27, 2004 of the area of the crash of [United Airlines Flight 93](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/United_Airlines_Flight_93) in [Shanksville, PA](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Shanksville,_Pennsylvania) ([USGS](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=USGS&action=edit&redlink=1))

Statements of al-Qaeda recorded after 9/11 are suggested to add weight to this speculation. In a [2004 video](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2004_Osama_bin_Laden_video&action=edit&redlink=1), apparently acknowledging responsibility for the attacks, bin Laden stated that he was motivated by the [1982 Lebanon War](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=1982_Lebanon_War&action=edit&redlink=1), which he held the U.S. partially responsible for. In the video, bin Laden also claims that he wants to, "restore freedom to our nation," to, "punish the aggressor in kind," and to inflict economic damage on America. He declared that a continuing objective of his [holy war](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Holy_war&action=edit&redlink=1) was to, "[bleed] America to the point of bankruptcy." Bin Laden said, "We swore that America wouldn't live in security until we live it truly in Palestine. This showed the reality of America, which puts Israel's interest above its own people's interest. America won't get out of this crisis until it gets out of the Arabian Peninsula, and until it stops its support of Israel."

The [9/11 Commission Report](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=9/11_Commission_Report&action=edit&redlink=1) determined that the animosity towards the United States felt by [Khalid Shaikh Mohammed](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Khalid_Shaikh_Mohammed&action=edit&redlink=1), the so-called, "principal architect" of the 9/11 attacks, stemmed "not from his experiences there as a student, but rather from his violent disagreement with U.S. foreign policy favoring Israel." The same motivation has been imputed to the two pilots who flew into the WTC: [Mohamed Atta](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Mohamed_Atta_al-Sayed&action=edit&redlink=1) was described by one Ralph Bodenstein - who traveled, worked and talked with him - as "most imbued actually about... U.S. protection of these Israeli politics in the region." [Marwan al-Shehhi](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Marwan_al-Shehhi&action=edit&redlink=1) is said to have explained his humorless demeanor with the words: "How can you laugh when people are dying in Palestine?"

By contrast, the Bush administration says that Al-Qaeda was motivated by hatred of the freedom and democracy exemplified by the United States, and independent analysts say that one major Al-Qaeda motive is to encourage Islamic solidarity focused on a common enemy, and thus in the long term help pave the way for an Islamic world order.

**Aftermath**

*Main article:* [*Aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Aftermath_of_the_September_11,_2001_attacks)

**International reaction**



A solitary fire fighter stands amidst the rubble and smoke in New York City. Days after the Sept. 11 attack, fires still burned at the site of the World Trade Center.

The attacks had major [global political ramifications](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/World_political_effects_arising_from_the_September_11,_2001_attacks). They were denounced by mainstream media and governments worldwide,[[1]](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/September_11,_2001_attacks#_note-0#_note-0) with the headline of [Paris](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Paris&action=edit&redlink=1), [France](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=France&action=edit&redlink=1)'s [*Le Monde*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Le_Monde&action=edit&redlink=1) newspaper summing up the international mood of sympathy: "We Are All Americans" (*Nous sommes tous Américains*). Approximately one month after the attacks, the United States led a broad [coalition](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2001_invasion_of_Afghanistan&action=edit&redlink=1) of international forces into [Afghanistan](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Afghanistan&action=edit&redlink=1) in pursuit of al-Qaeda forces in order to topple the Taliban government for harboring what it referred to as a terrorist organization. The [Pakistani](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Pakistan&action=edit&redlink=1) authorities moved decisively to align themselves with the United States in a war against Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. It gave the U.S. a number of military airports and bases for its attack on Afghanistan, and arrested over 600 supposed al-Qaeda members, whom it handed over to the U.S.

Numerous countries, including the [UK](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_Kingdom&action=edit&redlink=1), [India](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=India&action=edit&redlink=1), [France](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=France&action=edit&redlink=1), [Germany](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Germany&action=edit&redlink=1), [Indonesia](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Indonesia&action=edit&redlink=1), [China](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=China&action=edit&redlink=1), [Canada](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Canada&action=edit&redlink=1), [Russia](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Russia&action=edit&redlink=1), [Pakistan](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Pakistan&action=edit&redlink=1), [Jordan](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Jordan&action=edit&redlink=1), [Mauritius](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Mauritius&action=edit&redlink=1), [Uganda](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Uganda&action=edit&redlink=1) and [Zimbabwe](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Zimbabwe&action=edit&redlink=1) introduced "anti-terrorism" legislation and froze the [bank accounts](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Bank_account&action=edit&redlink=1) of businesses and individuals they suspected of having al-Qaeda ties. Law enforcement and intelligence agencies in a number of countries, including Italy, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines arrested people they labeled terrorist suspects for the stated purpose of breaking up militant cells around the world. This process aroused controversy, as critics such as the [Bill of Rights Defense Committee](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Bill_of_Rights_Defense_Committee&action=edit&redlink=1) argued that traditional restrictions on federal surveillance (e.g. [COINTELPRO](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=COINTELPRO&action=edit&redlink=1)'s monitoring of public meetings) were, "dismantled" by the [USA PATRIOT Act](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=USA_PATRIOT_Act&action=edit&redlink=1); [civil liberty](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Civil_liberties&action=edit&redlink=1) organizations such as the [American Civil Liberties Union](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=American_Civil_Liberties_Union&action=edit&redlink=1) and [Liberty](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Liberty_(pressure_group)&action=edit&redlink=1) argued that certain [civil rights](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Civil_rights&action=edit&redlink=1) protections were also being circumvented. The United States set up a detention center at [Guantanamo Bay](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Guantanamo_Bay&action=edit&redlink=1), [Cuba](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Cuba&action=edit&redlink=1), to hold, [illegal enemy combatants](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Unlawful_combatant&action=edit&redlink=1). The legitimacy of these detentions has been questioned by, among others, member states of the [European Union](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=European_Union&action=edit&redlink=1), the [Organization of American States](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Organization_of_American_States&action=edit&redlink=1), and [Amnesty International](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Amnesty_International&action=edit&redlink=1). (*See* [*Camp X-Ray*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Camp_Delta&action=edit&redlink=1) *for further details.*)

**Public response in the United States**

Following the incidents of September 11, 2001, George W. Bush spoke before both houses of Congress, regarding the events of that day, the intervening nine days of rescue and recovery efforts, and his intent in response to those events. In the speech, he characterized the speech itself as being akin to the President's customary State of the Union address.

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The [*Honolulu Advertiser*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Honolulu_Advertiser&action=edit&redlink=1) was mindful of the [attack on Pearl Harbor](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Attack_on_Pearl_Harbor&action=edit&redlink=1) on [December 7](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=December_7&action=edit&redlink=1), [1941](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=1941&action=edit&redlink=1) in its headline.

The attacks also had immediate and overwhelming effects upon the United States population. People began rallying around the popularized phrase, "United We Stand," in hopes of being resilient and keeping the American spirit alive in the face of a devastating attack. Gratitude toward uniformed public-safety workers, and especially toward firefighters, was widely expressed in light of both the drama of the risks taken on the scene and the high death toll among the workers. Many people paid tribute to the police officers and fire fighters by wearing NYPD and FDNY hats. The number of casualties among the emergency service personnel was unprecedented.

Many police officers and rescue workers elsewhere in the country took leaves of absence to travel to New York City to assist in the grim process of recovering bodies from the twisted remnants of the Twin Towers. The highly visible role played by [Rudy Giuliani](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Rudy_Giuliani&action=edit&redlink=1), then [Mayor](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Mayor&action=edit&redlink=1) of [New York City](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=New_York_City&action=edit&redlink=1), won him high praise nationally. He was named [Person of the Year](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Person_of_the_Year&action=edit&redlink=1) by [*Time*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=TIME&action=edit&redlink=1) magazine for 2001, and at times had a higher profile in the U.S. than President [George W. Bush](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/George_W._Bush). At the [Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Westminster_Kennel_Club_Dog_Show&action=edit&redlink=1) that took place in February 2002, a touching tribute was paid to the search and rescue dogs who not only assisted in locating survivors and bodies from the rubble, but were also inside the World Trade Center buildings before they collapsed.

New York City bore the brunt of the attacks. Blood donations saw a surge in the weeks after 9/11. According to a report by the [Journal of the American Medical Association](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Journal_of_the_American_Medical_Association&action=edit&redlink=1), "...the number of blood donations in the weeks after the September 11, 2001, attacks was markedly greater than in the corresponding weeks of 2000 (2.5 times greater in the first week after the attacks; 1.3–1.4 times greater in the second to fourth weeks after the attack)."

There were some incidents of harassment and hate crimes against Middle Easterners and other, "Middle Eastern-looking" people, particularly [Sikhs](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Sikhs&action=edit&redlink=1), due to the fact that Sikh males usually wear [turbans](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Turbans&action=edit&redlink=1), stereotypically associated with Muslims in the United States. A total of nine people were murdered within the United States as part of retaliation. [Balbir Singh Sodhi](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Balbir_Singh_Sodhi&action=edit&redlink=1), one of the first victims of this [backlash](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Backlash&action=edit&redlink=1), was shot dead on [September 15](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=September_15&action=edit&redlink=1). He, like others, was a [Sikh](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Sikh&action=edit&redlink=1) who was mistaken for a Muslim.

**Reaction From Morning Shows**

An unlikely source of news and comfort for New Yorkers and others across the country was [Howard Stern](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Howard_Stern&action=edit&redlink=1), who kept listeners constantly updated on what was happening at the Trade Center and across New York City. Several listeners and frequent guest [Crazy Cabbie](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Crazy_Cabbie&action=edit&redlink=1) called in to report what they were witnessing from various parts of the city. The Stern Show kept broadcasting well beyond its normal hours until mid-afternoon, to provide a voice of reason in the aftermath.

The [Opie and Anthony](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Opie_and_Anthony&action=edit&redlink=1) show also reacted in an unexpected way, contrary to their normal program filled with debauchery and humor. The show served as a public platform for upset and worried listeners to voice their opinions. The shows often ran over their time slots on [WNEW-FM](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=WNEW-FM&action=edit&redlink=1) in [New York City](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=New_York_City&action=edit&redlink=1).

The Johnjay and Rich Show in [Tucson, AZ](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Tucson,_AZ&action=edit&redlink=1) organized listeners to join at Tucson Electric Park, a baseball park in Tucson. Thousands of people showed up dressed in red, white, or blue to fill in that part of the flag on the grass. A picture can be found at <http://www.chiroaz.com/humanflag.jpg>

**Economic aftermath**



View of the WTC and the [Statue of Liberty](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Statue_of_Liberty&action=edit&redlink=1).

The attacks had a significant economic impact on the United States and world markets. The [New York Stock Exchange](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=New_York_Stock_Exchange&action=edit&redlink=1) (NYSE), the [American Stock Exchange](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=American_Stock_Exchange&action=edit&redlink=1) and [NASDAQ](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=NASDAQ&action=edit&redlink=1) did not open on [September 11](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=September_11&action=edit&redlink=1) and remained closed until [September 17](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=September_17&action=edit&redlink=1). NYSE facilities and remote data processing sites were not damaged by the attack, but member firms, customers and markets were unable to communicate due to major damage to the telephone exchange facility near the World Trade Center. When the stock markets reopened on [September 17](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=September_17&action=edit&redlink=1), [2001](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2001&action=edit&redlink=1), after the longest closure since the [Great Depression](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Great_Depression&action=edit&redlink=1) in 1929, the [Dow Jones Industrial Average](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Dow_Jones_Industrial_Average&action=edit&redlink=1) (“DJIA”) stock market index fell 684 points, or 7.1%, to 8920, its biggest-ever one-day point decline. By the end of the week, the DJIA had fallen 1369.7 points (14.3%), its largest one-week point drop in history. U.S. stocks lost $1.2 trillion in value for the week. [As of 2005](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=As_of_2005&action=edit&redlink=1) Wall and [Broad Streets](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Broad_Street_(Manhattan)&action=edit&redlink=1) near the New York Stock Exchange remain barricaded and guarded to prevent a physical attack upon the building.

The economy of [Lower Manhattan](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Lower_Manhattan&action=edit&redlink=1), which by itself is the third-largest business district in the United States (after [Midtown Manhattan](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Midtown_Manhattan&action=edit&redlink=1) and the [Chicago Loop](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Chicago_Loop&action=edit&redlink=1)) was devastated in the immediate aftermath. Thirty percent (28.7 million sq. ft) of Lower Manhattan office space was either damaged or destroyed. Much of what was destroyed was valuable [Class-A](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Class_A_office_space&action=edit&redlink=1) space. The pre-2001 trend of moving jobs out of Lower Manhattan to Midtown and New Jersey was accelerated. Many questioned whether this loss of jobs and its associated tax base would ever be restored.

The rebuilding has been inhibited by a lack of agreement on priorities. For example, Mayor Bloomberg had made New York's bid for the [2012 Summer Olympics](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2012_Summer_Olympics&action=edit&redlink=1) the core of his capital development plan from 2002 until mid-2005, and Governor Pataki largely delegated his role to the [Lower Manhattan Development Corporation](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Lower_Manhattan_Development_Corporation&action=edit&redlink=1) which has been widely criticized for doing little with the enormous funding directed to the rebuilding efforts.

On the sites of the totally destroyed buildings, one, [7 World Trade Center](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=7_World_Trade_Center&action=edit&redlink=1), has a new office tower. Only [Ameriprise Financial, Inc.](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Ameriprise_Financial,_Inc.&action=edit&redlink=1), a [spinoff](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Spin_off&action=edit&redlink=1) of [American Express](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=American_Express&action=edit&redlink=1) Financial Advisors has been named as a potential [tenant](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Tenant&action=edit&redlink=1) for it. There is no consensus regarding the demand for office space looking forward to 2010, so the market for 7 WTC and other new construction in the [financial district](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=The_Financial_District_(Manhattan)&action=edit&redlink=1) is soft.

North American air space was closed for several days after the attacks and air travel decreased significantly upon its reopening. The attacks led to nearly a 20% cutback in air travel capacity, and severely exacerbated financial problems in the struggling U.S. [airline](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Airline&action=edit&redlink=1) industry.

Many towers in the United States metropolitan areas were evacuated hours after the attacks, including [Los Angeles](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Los_Angeles&action=edit&redlink=1), where traffic was at its lowest volume ever for that city, and the major downtown business district was virtually deserted.

**Rescue, recovery, and compensation**

[Template:Main articles](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Template:Main_articles&action=edit&redlink=1) Rescue and recovery efforts took months to complete. It took several weeks to simply put out the fires burning in the rubble of the buildings, and the clean-up was not completed until May, 2002. Temporary wooden, "viewing platforms" were set up for tourists to view construction crews clearing out the gaping holes where the towers once stood. These platforms were closed on [May 30](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=May_30&action=edit&redlink=1), [2002](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2002&action=edit&redlink=1).

Many relief funds were immediately set up to assist victims of the attacks - the task of providing [financial assistance](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Financial_assistance_following_the_September_11,_2001_attacks) to the [survivors](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Survivors_of_the_September_11,_2001_attacks) and the families of victims. At the deadline for victim's compensation, [September 11](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=September_11&action=edit&redlink=1) [2003](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2003&action=edit&redlink=1), 2,833 applications were received from the families of those killed (from an official death toll of 2,986).

**Potential health effects**



September 11 from space: Manhattan spreads a large smoke plume

Thousands of tons of toxic debris resulting from the collapse of the Twin Towers included [asbestos](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Asbestos&action=edit&redlink=1), [lead](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Lead_(element)&action=edit&redlink=1), and [mercury](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Mercury_(element)&action=edit&redlink=1), as well as unprecedented levels of [dioxin](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Dioxin&action=edit&redlink=1) and [PAHs](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Polycyclic_aromatic_hydrocarbon&action=edit&redlink=1) from the fires which burned for three months. This has led to debilitating illnesses among rescue and recovery workers, as well as some residents, students, and office workers of Lower Manhattan and nearby [Chinatown](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Chinatown,_Manhattan&action=edit&redlink=1).

There is scientific speculation that exposure to various toxic products and the pollutants in the air surrounding the Towers after the WTC collapse may have negative effects on fetal development. Due to this potential harm, a notable children's environmental health center is currently analyzing the children whose mothers were pregnant during the WTC collapse, and were living or working near the World Trade Center towers. The staff of this study assess the children using psychological testing every year and interview the mothers every six months. The purpose of the study is to determine whether there is significant difference in development and health progression of children whose mothers were exposed versus those who were not exposed after the WTC collapse.

**Collapse of the World Trade Center**

*Main article:* [*Collapse of the World Trade Center*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Collapse_of_the_World_Trade_Center)

There has been much speculation on the "performance" of the Twin Towers after the impacts, and the reasons for the collapse are under active debate by [structural engineers](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Structural_engineer&action=edit&redlink=1), [architects](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Architects&action=edit&redlink=1), and the relevant U.S. government agencies. The design of the WTC included many basic innovations distinguishing it from all previous skyscrapers and from many built since. Although the kinetic energy of the jetliner impacts and the resulting fires were unprecedented in the history of building disasters, some engineers strongly believe skyscrapers of more traditional design (such as New York City's [Empire State Building](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Empire_State_Building&action=edit&redlink=1) and Malaysia's [Petronas Towers](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Petronas_Towers&action=edit&redlink=1)) would have fared much better under the circumstances, perhaps standing indefinitely. If they are correct, super tall buildings that share the WTC's major design elements (for example, Chicago's [Sears Tower](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Sears_Tower&action=edit&redlink=1) and [John Hancock Center](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=John_Hancock_Center&action=edit&redlink=1)) could be considered particularly vulnerable.

[7 World Trade Center](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=7_World_Trade_Center&action=edit&redlink=1) collapsed in the late afternoon of [September 11](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=September_11&action=edit&redlink=1). For details on its collapse see: [7 World Trade Center](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=7_World_Trade_Center&action=edit&redlink=1).

A federal technical building and fire safety investigation of the collapses of the Twin Towers and 7 WTC has been conducted by the United States [Department of Commerce](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Department_of_Commerce&action=edit&redlink=1)'s [National Institute of Standards and Technology](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=National_Institute_of_Standards_and_Technology&action=edit&redlink=1) ([NIST](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=NIST&action=edit&redlink=1)). The goals of this investigation, completed on [April 6](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=April_6&action=edit&redlink=1), [2005](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2005&action=edit&redlink=1), were to investigate the building construction, the materials used, and the technical conditions that contributed to the outcome of the WTC disaster. The investigation was to serve as the basis for:

* Improvements in the way buildings are designed, constructed, maintained, and used
* Improved tools and guidance for industry and safety officials
* Revisions to building and fire codes, standards, and practices
* Improved public safety



[September 13](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=September_13&action=edit&redlink=1), [2001](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2001&action=edit&redlink=1): A New York City firefighter looks up at what remains of the South Tower.

The report concludes that the fireproofing on the Twin Towers' [steel](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Steel&action=edit&redlink=1) infrastructures was blown off by the initial impact of the planes and that if this had not occurred the WTC would likely have remained standing. The fires weakened the trusses supporting the floors making the floors sag. The sagging floors pulled on the exterior steel columns to the point where exterior columns bowed inward.

With the damage to the core columns the buckling exterior columns could no longer support the buildings so they collapsed. In addition, the report asserts that the Towers' stairwells were not adequately reinforced to provide emergency escape for people above the impact zones. NIST stated that the final report on the collapse of WTC 7 will appear in a separate report.

**Survivors**

*Further information:* [*Survivors of the September 11, 2001 attacks*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Survivors_of_the_September_11,_2001_attacks)

**20th hijacker**

Allegedly 27 members of al-Qaeda attempted to enter the United States to take part in the September 11 attacks. In the end, only 19 allegedly participated. Other would-be hijackers are often referred to as the [20th hijacker](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=20th_hijacker&action=edit&redlink=1).

[Ramzi Binalshibh](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Ramzi_Binalshibh&action=edit&redlink=1) allegedly meant to take part in the attacks, but he was repeatedly denied a [visa](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Visa_(document)&action=edit&redlink=1) for entry into the U.S. [Mohamed al-Kahtani](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Mohamed_al-Kahtani&action=edit&redlink=1), a [Saudi Arabian](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Saudi_Arabia&action=edit&redlink=1) citizen, may also have been planning to join the hijackers but [U.S. Immigration](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Immigration_and_Naturalization_Service&action=edit&redlink=1) authorities at [Orlando International Airport](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Orlando_International_Airport&action=edit&redlink=1) refused his entry into the U.S. in August, 2001. He was later captured in [Afghanistan](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Afghanistan&action=edit&redlink=1) and imprisoned at the U.S. military prison known as [Camp X-Ray](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Camp_X-Ray&action=edit&redlink=1) at [Guantanamo Bay](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Guantanamo_Bay&action=edit&redlink=1), [Cuba](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Cuba&action=edit&redlink=1). [Zacarias Moussaoui](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Zacarias_Moussaoui&action=edit&redlink=1) was reportedly considered as a replacement for [Ziad Jarrah](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Ziad_Jarrah&action=edit&redlink=1), who at one point threatened to withdraw from the scheme because of tensions amongst the plotters. Plans to include Moussaoui were allegedly never completed because the al-Qaeda hierarchy allegedly had doubts about his reliability.

In April 2005, Moussaoui pled guilty to conspiring to hijack planes, and to involvement with al-Qaeda, but he denies foreknowledge of the 9-11 attacks. His plea makes him eligible for the death penalty. At his sentencing trial, FBI agent Greg Jones testified that prior to the attacks, he urged his supervisor, Michael Maltbie, "to prevent Zacarias Moussaoui from flying a plane into the World Trade Center." Maltbie had refused to act on 70 requests from another agent, Harry Samit, to obtain a warrant to search Moussaoui's computer.[[1]](http://select.nytimes.com/gst/tsc.html?URI=http://select.nytimes.com/2006/03/22/opinion/22dowd.html&OQ=_rQ3D1Q26nQ3DTopQ252fOpinionQ252fEditorialsQ2520andQ2520OpQ252dEdQ252fOpQ252dEdQ252fColumnistsQ252fMaureenQ2520Dowd&OP=8ea544dQ2FRQ7BQ20Q3FRQ2AmpQ26Q26Q2ARQ7DAAXRAQ2FRQ7DQ7DRQ26E5e5Q26eRQ7DQ7DMQ26Q7BMQ5DVQ2AQ5Bv)



Buildings surrounding the World Trade Center were heavily damaged by the debris and massive force of the falling twin towers.

Other al-Qaeda members who allegedly may have attempted, but were unable, to take part in the attacks include Saeed al-Ghamdi (not to be confused with the successful hijacker of the same name), Mushabib al-Hamlan, [Zakariyah Essabar](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Zakariyah_Essabar&action=edit&redlink=1), [Ali Abdul Aziz Ali](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Ali_Abdul_Aziz_Ali&action=edit&redlink=1), and [Tawfiq bin Attash](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Tawfiq_bin_Attash&action=edit&redlink=1). According to the [9/11 Commission Report](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=9/11_Commission_Report&action=edit&redlink=1), [Khalid Sheikh Mohammed](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Khalid_Sheikh_Mohammed&action=edit&redlink=1), the attack's mastermind, wanted to remove at least one member — [Khalid al-Mihdhar](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Khalid_al-Mihdhar&action=edit&redlink=1) — from the operation, but he was overruled by [Osama bin Laden](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Osama_bin_Laden&action=edit&redlink=1).

**Other planned attacks**

According to [Mohammed Afroze](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Mohammed_Afroze&action=edit&redlink=1), a planned simultaneous attack in [London](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=London&action=edit&redlink=1) on the [Palace of Westminster](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Palace_of_Westminster&action=edit&redlink=1) and [Tower Bridge](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Tower_Bridge&action=edit&redlink=1) was aborted at the last minute when the would-be hijackers, waiting to board the planes they were to hijack, saw the damage in the U.S., panicked, and fled.

[Zacarias Moussaoui](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Zacarias_Moussaoui&action=edit&redlink=1), at his sentencing hearing in March 2006, claimed that, upon the personal directive of [Osama bin Laden](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Osama_bin_Laden&action=edit&redlink=1), he and [Richard Reid](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Richard_Reid_(terrorist)&action=edit&redlink=1) were due to hijack a fifth plane and fly it into the White House[[2]](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/4850988.stm). His own defense lawyers dismissed this as fantasy on the part of Moussaoui, saying that he was not an operative in Al Qaida, but only a "hanger-on".[[3]](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/4859180.stm) In February of 2006, President Bush revealed that an Al Qaeda plan to crash a plane into [Library Tower](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Library_Tower&action=edit&redlink=1) in [Los Angeles](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Los_Angeles&action=edit&redlink=1), also on the same day, had been foiled. [[4]](http://abcnews.go.com/WNT/story?id=1600806&page=1). Similar attacks may also have been planned in [New Delhi](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=New_Delhi&action=edit&redlink=1), [Melbourne](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Melbourne&action=edit&redlink=1), and [Montreal](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Montreal&action=edit&redlink=1).

**The "War on Terrorism"**

*Main article:* [*Global War on Terrorism*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Global_War_on_Terrorism&action=edit&redlink=1)

In the aftermath of the attacks, many U.S. citizens held the view that they had "changed the world forever," that the United States was now vulnerable to terrorist attacks in ways it had not been previously. The Bush administration declared a [war on terrorism](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=War_on_Terrorism&action=edit&redlink=1), with the stated goals of bringing Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda to justice and preventing the emergence of other terrorist networks. These goals would be accomplished by means including economic and military sanctions against states perceived as harboring terrorists and increasing global surveillance and intelligence sharing.

The second-biggest operation outside of the United States was the invasion of [Afghanistan](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Afghanistan&action=edit&redlink=1), by a U.S.-led coalition. The U.S. was not the only nation to increase its military readiness, with other notable examples being the [Philippines](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Philippines&action=edit&redlink=1) and [Indonesia](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Indonesia&action=edit&redlink=1), countries that have their own internal conflicts with [Islamic extremist terrorism](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Islamic_extremist_terrorism&action=edit&redlink=1).

President Bush said "The battle of Iraq is one victory in a war on terror that began on September the 11, 2001..." Also, the U.S. government has continued to maintain that the war on Iraq is critical to the American "War on Terrorism": "In the war on terror, Iraq is now the central front..." President Bush said on [December 14](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=December_14&action=edit&redlink=1), [2005](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2005&action=edit&redlink=1).

Two years after the attacks, the [Program on International Policy Attitudes](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Program_on_International_Policy_Attitudes&action=edit&redlink=1) reported on an [opinion poll](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Opinion_poll&action=edit&redlink=1) it conducted of the American public from January through September 2003. The poll asked, "How likely it is that Saddam Hussein was personally involved in the September 11th Terrorist attacks?" The response was 32% very likely, 37% somewhat likely, 12% not very likely and 3% not at all likely. This unsubstantiated view was promoted by the U.S. government in the lead up to the [2003 invasion of Iraq](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2003_Invasion_of_Iraq&action=edit&redlink=1), when for example, Vice President Dick Cheney suggested that Iraq was involved in the September 11 attack during a, "Meet the Press" interview: Iraq is, "the geographic base of the terrorists who had us under assault now for many years, but most especially on 9-11."

No clear evidence has emerged to support the claim. (Unsubstantiated U.S. government claims to the contrary include: (1) allegations by Czech intelligence of a meeting between 9/11 ringleader [Mohammed Atta](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Mohammed_Atta&action=edit&redlink=1) and an Iraqi intelligence official in [Prague](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Prague&action=edit&redlink=1) on the same day Atta was seen in Florida; and (2) evidence that Ahmed Hikmat Shakir, allegedly a contact of Iraqi intelligence, was present at a meeting in [Malaysia](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Malaysia&action=edit&redlink=1) where future 9/11 hijacker Khalid al Mihdhar is believed by the [CIA](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=CIA&action=edit&redlink=1) to have attended.)

Within the United States, President Bush created the [Department of Homeland Security](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Department_of_Homeland_Security&action=edit&redlink=1), representing the largest restructuring of the U.S. government in contemporary history. Congress passed the [USA PATRIOT Act](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=USA_PATRIOT_Act&action=edit&redlink=1), stating that it would help detect and prosecute terrorism and [other alleged future crimes](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/September_11,_2001_attacks#Alleged_abuses_under_the_USA_PATRIOT_Act#Alleged_abuses_under_the_USA_PATRIOT_Act). Civil liberties groups have criticized the PATRIOT Act, saying that it allows law enforcement to invade the privacy of citizens and eliminates Judicial oversight over law-enforcement and domestic intelligence gathering. The Bush Administration also invoked 9/11 as the reason to initiate a secret [National Security Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/National_Security_Agency) operation, "to eavesdrop on telephone and e-mail communications between the United States and people overseas without a warrant."

**Conspiracy theories**

*Main article:* [*9/11 conspiracy theories*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/9/11_conspiracy_theories)

Since the attacks, various [conspiracy theories](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Conspiracy_theories) have emerged. These include speculation that individuals in the [government of the United States](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Federal_government_of_the_United_States) knew of the impending attacks and failed to act on that knowledge. Those questioning the mainstream account of 9/11 have speculated that the [collapse of the World Trade Center](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Collapse_of_the_World_Trade_Center) was caused by explosives, that a commercial airliner did not really crash into [the Pentagon](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/The_Pentagon), and that [United Airlines Flight 93](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/United_Airlines_Flight_93) was shot down.

**Memorials**

*Main article:* [*September 11, 2001 attack memorials and services*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/September_11,_2001_attack_memorials_and_services)



Manhattan from [Jersey City](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Jersey_City,_New_Jersey&action=edit&redlink=1) on the 2004 memorial of the September 11 attacks.

Memorials to the victims and heroes of the attacks of September 11 have been planned for the three sites. An outdoor [memorial](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Pentagon_Memorial&action=edit&redlink=1) at the Pentagon, for the public, has been designed by Keith Kaseman and Julie Beckman of KBAS of New York City.[[1]](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/September_11,_2001_attacks#_note-0#_note-0) Construction of the memorial is scheduled for completion in Fall 2006. Within the Pentagon itself, the [America's Heroes Memorial](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=America%27s_Heroes_Memorial&action=edit&redlink=1) was added in September, 2002, when the building repairs were completed. Public access to this memorial is restricted to group tours.

The proposed design for [Flight 93 National Memorial](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Flight_93_National_Memorial&action=edit&redlink=1) is called, "Crescent of Embrace," and it has created some controversy due to its large red [crescent](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Crescent&action=edit&redlink=1) plan which also points toward [Mecca](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Mecca&action=edit&redlink=1). Recently, due to the amount of public pressure, it has been announced that the memorial will be redesigned as to avoid any confusion with the sign of [Islam](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Islam&action=edit&redlink=1).

Currently, there is no memorial at the [World Trade Center site](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=World_Trade_Center_site&action=edit&redlink=1). There is one planned called [Reflecting Absence](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Reflecting_Absence&action=edit&redlink=1), which was designed by [Michael Arad](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Michael_Arad&action=edit&redlink=1) and selected through a [design competition](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=World_Trade_Center_Site_Memorial_Competition&action=edit&redlink=1). This memorial design has been generally praised, while other proposed elements for the site have drawn controversy. Among these were [The Drawing Center](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=The_Drawing_Center&action=edit&redlink=1) and the [International Freedom Center](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=International_Freedom_Center&action=edit&redlink=1) (IFC). The Drawing Center withdrew its proposal for the site, and in consideration of objections raised by some victims' families, New York Governor [George Pataki](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=George_Pataki&action=edit&redlink=1) has barred the IFC from building at the site.

[File:Groundzero212292005.JPG](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Special:Upload&wpDestFile=Groundzero212292005.JPG)

World Trade Center site as of December 2005

In addition to physical monuments, a number of September 11th family members and friends have set up memorial funds, scholarships, and charities in honor of lost loved ones.

*Further information:* [*Financial assistance following the September 11, 2001 attacks*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Financial_assistance_following_the_September_11,_2001_attacks)

**Arts and literature**

The September 11, 2001 attacks have been the subject of numerous [films](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Films&action=edit&redlink=1) and other works of art and literature.

*Main article:* [*September 11, 2001 attacks in arts and literature*](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=September_11,_2001_attacks_in_arts_and_literature&action=edit&redlink=1)

**Media**

[Template:Multi-listen start](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Template:Multi-listen_start&action=edit&redlink=1) [Template:Multi-listen item](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Template:Multi-listen_item&action=edit&redlink=1) [Template:Multi-listen end](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Template:Multi-listen_end&action=edit&redlink=1)

**See also**

* [Collapse of the World Trade Center](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Collapse_of_the_World_Trade_Center)
* [National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/National_Commission_on_Terrorist_Attacks_Upon_the_United_States)
* [Criticisms of the 9/11 Commission Report](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Criticisms_of_the_9/11_Commission_Report&action=edit&redlink=1)
* [War games in progress on September 11, 2001](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=War_games_in_progress_on_September_11,_2001&action=edit&redlink=1)
* [Osama bin Laden's Declaration of War](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Osama_bin_Laden%27s_Declaration_of_War&action=edit&redlink=1)
* [Osama tapes](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Osama_tapes&action=edit&redlink=1)
* [Slogans and terms derived from the September 11, 2001 attack](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Slogans_and_terms_derived_from_the_September_11,_2001_attack)
* [World Trade Center bombing](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=World_Trade_Center_bombing&action=edit&redlink=1) (1993)
* [World Trade Center Site Memorial Competition](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=World_Trade_Center_Site_Memorial_Competition&action=edit&redlink=1)
* [World Trade Center Memorial](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=World_Trade_Center_Memorial&action=edit&redlink=1)
* [Freedom Tower](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Freedom_Tower&action=edit&redlink=1)
* [7 World Trade Center](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=7_World_Trade_Center&action=edit&redlink=1)
* [Able Danger](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Able_Danger&action=edit&redlink=1)
* [Harry Samit](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Harry_Samit&action=edit&redlink=1)
* [Pavel Hlava](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Pavel_Hlava&action=edit&redlink=1)
* [Project Bojinka](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Project_Bojinka&action=edit&redlink=1)
* [9/11 (film)](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=9/11_(film)&action=edit&redlink=1)
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**Victims**

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