

DAY OF INFAMY

Toll unknown in crash into the Pentagon

By Daniel F. Drummond
and Brian DeBose
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The Pentagon, which has stood as a testament to America's military dominance in the world, was attacked yesterday morning when a passenger plane taken over by terrorists smashed into the building, leaving death, destruction and dismay in its wake.

Hundreds of persons are believed to be injured or dead, but as of press time, military officials had not tallied the human loss from the attack on the Pentagon.

"We know there are casualties," Pentagon spokesman Adm. Craig Quigley said. "This was no accident. We had an aircraft intentionally fly into the Pentagon."

American Airlines Flight 77 was bound from Dulles to Los Angeles with 58 passengers on board, as well as four flight attendants and two pilots, when it crashed into the southwest side of the Pentagon about 9:30 a.m. Paramedics at the scene said about 200 people were in the vicinity of the plane's impact.

Adm. Quigley said the crash was an act of terrorism but did not have information about who the suspected terrorists were.

The design of the Pentagon is such that five rings or corridors make up the building. The rings are labeled from E to A, with the innermost being A and the outermost being E. Department of Defense Protective Services Chief John Jester said the plane smashed into the outside of the building, the E ring, and "cut into the E, D, and C rings."

During the half-hour after the attack, F-16 planes scrambled from Andrews Air Force base and circled the Pentagon. Crowds outside being evacuated cheered at the sight of the fighter jets.

Chief Jester said, as of late afternoon, Arlington County Search and Rescue crews had not yet begun to look for survivors or remains of the dead because the fire sparked by the impact of the plane was still burning.

A two-block stretch at the south end of the building continued to smolder after 5 p.m., more than six hours after the attack.

"Fires are still burning intensely inside the Pentagon," Adm. Quigley said at that time.

The damage done by the plane effectively split in half one side of the Pentagon, constructed at the height of the Cold War.

The gash looked like an alleyway ripped into the side of the building, witnesses said. The five-story wall of the Pentagon that was hit by the plane crumbled, falling in like a deck of cards collapsing, eyewitnesses said.

Thousands of Pentagon Naval Annex and other government employees who work in nearby buildings were evacuated, but many stayed and watched smoke billow from the gash as flames licked skyward. Survivors milled about, unable to grasp the shock of America suffering its worst attack since the Oklahoma City bombing and Pearl Harbor.

"We just felt a boom, we felt a shake," Navy Commander Tom Ransom said. "We knew something bad

"We just felt a boom, we felt a shake. We knew something bad had happened because we just saw everything on TV."

— Navy Cmdr. Tom Ransom

had happened because we just saw everything on TV."

Adm. Quigley said military planners inside the Pentagon were working on a response to the attacks on the World Trade Center when the Pentagon was attacked.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld was in the building but on the opposite side — the north side — when the attack occurred.

"He went down, running" to survey the damage and assist the victims, Adm. Quigley said.

After helping during the initial evacuation of the Pentagon, which military officials said was orderly and calm, Mr. Rumsfeld went to a command center.

Marine Maj. Stephanie Smith helped one victim who was suffering from smoke inhalation and a leg injury.

The injured "were covered with smoke and their uniforms were covered with smoke," Maj. Smith said. People were bloodied and soaked with water from the sprinkler system, she said.

Adm. Quigley said all joint chiefs of staff and their deputies were accounted for by yesterday afternoon and none were injured.

"I'm just upset. There's no revenge, just remorse," U.S. Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. Tony Simms said.

Sgt. Simms and fellow Marines watched the building turn into an inferno from atop a hill where the Marine Corps barracks is located on part of Arlington National Cemetery.

Along Columbia Pike, next to the disaster site, government workers streamed out of the Pentagon and surrounding complexes for more than two hours after the attack. Some walked several miles down a closed highway, next to the graves of Arlington National Cemetery, looking for a way to get home.

Dozens of military helicopters touched down at the site, joining hundreds of firefighters and emergency medical technicians in trying to rescue and aid the victims of this tragedy.

One of the difficulties search-and-rescue workers encountered was that the part of the building where the plane went in was undergoing renovation, Chief Jester said.

Pentagon spokeswoman Victoria Clarke said the government is "taking every appropriate means to find out who was responsible." Military sources said they believe Osama bin Laden is probably responsible for all of yesterday's attacks.

Arlington and Fairfax County Urban Search and Rescue teams, trained to remove people from building collapses, were dispatched



The plane smashed into the outermost, or E, ring of the Pentagon and into the next two concentric rings, called D and C, causing extensive damage.



THE PENTAGON

The Pentagon, headquarters of the Department of Defense, is one of the world's largest office buildings.

- It houses approximately 23,000 employees, both military and civilian.
- The building covers 29 acres, with a five-acre center court and 67 acres of parking.
- The 71-foot-tall building has five floors, including its mezzanine and basement.
- The gross floor area is 6.5 million square feet, with 3.8 million square feet available for office space, concessions and storage. That is three times the floor space of the Empire State Building in New York.
- The building has 17.5 miles of corridors, but, because of its circular shape and spoke hallways, it takes no longer than seven minutes to walk between any two points in the building.
- The Pentagon was constructed in 16 months and completed on Jan. 15, 1943, at an approximate cost of \$83 million, about \$750 million in today's dollars.

The Washington Times

throughout the afternoon, leading the search-and-rescue effort, military officials said.

Because of the magnitude of the attack, all U.S. military forces were put on the highest military state of

alert, Force Protection Condition Delta, Adm. Quigley said.

Virginia Gov. James S. Gilmore III put 300 Virginia Guard troops — mostly medics, military police and engineers — on active duty and put



Smoke and flames billowed from a window in the Pentagon yesterday after a hijacked plane crashed into its southwest side.

the entire Virginia National Guard on heightened alert. That includes a squadron of Guard F-16 fighter jets based at Richmond International

Airport, an administration source said.

• Guy Taylor contributed to this report.

BUSH

From page A1

Mr. Bush, in his first remarks on the national tragedy, vowed to "hunt down and punish" those responsible for attacks, which forced the president to hopscotch the country while the White House was evacuated.

"The resolve of our great nation is being tested," Mr. Bush said after his flight from Pensacola, Fla., to Washington was diverted to Barksdale Air Force Base near Shreveport, La. "But make no mistake: We will show the world that we will pass this test."

With red-rimmed eyes and a grim countenance, Mr. Bush then was flown to another Air Force base near Omaha, Neb., before returning to Washington for an 8:30 p.m. address to the nation.

During an extraordinary day that huddled Mr. Bush into the biggest crisis of his presidency, the administration struggled to make sense of the worst-ever terrorist attack against the United States. Before the president's return to Washington, concern was growing that the terrorists were forcing him into hiding.

Eager to quell the bunker image, Mr. Bush raced home to the White House, which reopened at 6 p.m., and prepared to deliver his first address to the nation from the executive mansion.

Meanwhile at a somber appearance on the East Steps of the U.S. Capitol, House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert, Illinois Republican, said, "We will stand shoulder to shoulder to fight the evil that has been perpetrated on this nation."

Speaking to reporters and the nearly 200 lawmakers that had gathered there, Mr. Hastert promised, "We will stand together to make sure that those who brought forth this evil will pay the price."

Senate Majority Leader Tom

Daschle, South Dakota Democrat, vowed to "stand strongly united behind the president and work together to ensure that the full resources of the government are brought to bear in these efforts."

"As the representatives of the people, we are here to declare that our resolve has not been weakened by these horrific and cowardly acts," Mr. Daschle said.

"Congress will convene tomorrow," Mr. Daschle said to applause, "and we will speak with one voice to condemn these attacks."

As Mr. Hastert, Mr. Daschle and the collected Republican and Democratic leadership of Congress led the Capitol steps, lawmakers spontaneously began singing, some with tears in their eyes, "God Bless America."

It was a day that ended much differently than it began for the president, who spent Monday night in a Sarasota hotel suite once occupied by Vice President Gore as he prepared for a debate with Mr. Bush.

After a pre-dawn jog, Mr. Bush departed his hotel at 8:30 a.m. and headed for Emma Booker Elementary School. As the presidential motorcade neared its destination, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice telephoned Mr. Bush to alert him that a plane had crashed into the World Trade Center in New York. Details were still sketchy.

At 9:04 a.m., as the second jetliner was slamming into the World Trade Center in New York, the president was walking into a second-grade classroom here, not yet aware of the magnitude of the burgeoning calamity.

"Sit down, please," Mr. Bush said with a smile to two dozen black children. He sat in a chair next to the teacher, Sandra Kay Daniels, who asked the children: "Are you ready, my butterflies?"

At 9:07, as the children demonstrated a reading drill, White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card



President Bush returned to the White House yesterday evening to reassure the nation after a day of uncertainty.

approached his boss and whispered into his right ear the terrible news about the second crash. A sober expression spread over the president's face.

There was still no inkling that two other planes were about to crash, one into the Pentagon. Mr. Bush opened a children's textbook and followed along with the lesson. His lips were pursed, but he showed no signs of distress.

"Really good readers," he interrupted. "Whew: This must be sixth grade."

The exercise ended when the children read aloud the last words of the lesson, "more to come."

"What does that mean, 'more to come?'" the president asked.

The children replied that it meant something else was happening.

"That's exactly right," Mr. Bush said.

At 9:12 a.m., the president rose and abruptly ended the session. He left the room to huddle with aides and receive an update on the terrorist strikes. As he walked out, a reporter asked if he had a comment

Bush: Act 'cannot dent' American resolve

FEDERAL NEWS SERVICE

Excerpts from President Bush's televised address to the nation last night:

Today our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts. The victims were in airplanes or in their offices — secretaries, business men and women, military and federal workers, moms and dads, friends and neighbors. Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror.

The pictures of airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, huge structures collapsing, have filled us with disbelief, terrible sadness and a quiet, unyielding anger. These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat, but they have failed.

Our country is strong. A great people has been moved to defend

a great nation. Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shattered steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve.

America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining.

Today our nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature. And we responded with the best of America. . . .

The search is under way for those who are behind these evil acts. I have directed the full resources of our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and to bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them. . . .

Tonight I ask for your prayers for all those who grieve, for the children whose worlds have been shattered, for all whose sense of safety and security has been threatened.

And I pray they will be comforted by a power greater than any of us, spoken through the ages in Psalm 23: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for you are with me."

This is a day when all Americans from every walk of life unite in our resolve for justice and peace. America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time.

None of us will ever forget this day, yet we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world.

Thank you. Good night. And God bless America.

on the attacks.

"We'll talk about it later," the president said.

Eighteen minutes later, the president stepped into the school library, where hundreds of students, teachers and administrators had been waiting for more than an hour. Jet-tisoning his planned remarks on education, Mr. Bush strode to the podium and delivered a terse message.

"This is a difficult moment for America," he said. "We've had a national tragedy."

Mr. Bush vowed "to conduct a full-scale investigation to hunt down and to find those folks who committed this act. Terrorism against our nation will not stand."

The president then called for a

moment of silence before departing the room at 9:31 a.m. Although he promised to proceed directly to Washington, those plans quickly changed as the disaster deepened.

At 9:40 a.m., an airliner crashed into the Pentagon. Forty minutes later, another crashed near Pittsburgh. News reports said terrorists had planned to crash the fourth plane into the White House or the Capitol. Both buildings were evacuated.

Air Force One was diverted to Barksdale Air Force Base, where the president faced cameras for a second time. By now, it was obvious this would be the most difficult day of his presidency.

"We will do whatever is necessary to protect America and Amer-

icans. Join me in saying a prayer for the victims and their families."

Mr. Bush then led a meeting of his national security team via teleconference. Back in Washington, Bush counselor Karen Hughes assured the nation the situation was in hand.

To the consternation of Secret Service officials, Mr. Bush insisted on returning to the White House. Security around Air Force One was beefed up significantly, with fighter jets off each wing as the plane headed to Andrews Air Force Base.

Attorney General John Ashcroft said authorities will "expend every effort" and "devote all the necessary resources" to find the people responsible.

• John Godfrey contributed to this report.