"The resolve of our great nation is being tested. But make no mistake, we will show the world that we will pass this test. God bless."

PRESIDENT BUSH, SPEAKING AT BARKSDALE AFB, LA.

A DAY OF TERROR

# WASHINGTON REACTS

# Attacks put Bush on the move all day

*For safety concerns, the president visits several states, making brief appearances*

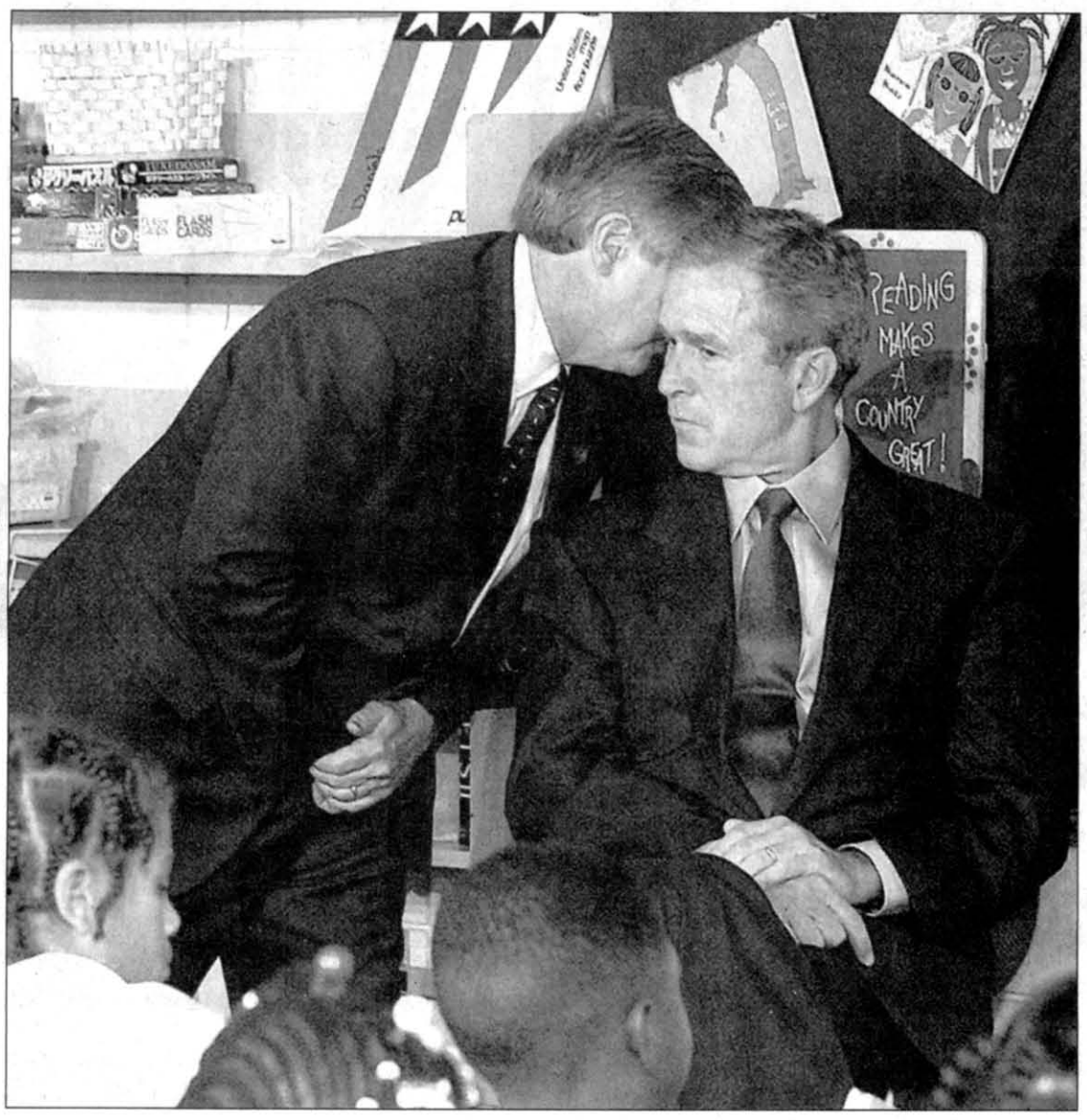
By DANA MILBANK and MIKE ALLEN
NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON — The word came to President Bush in a classroom in Sarasota, Fla., at 9:07 a.m. He had already heard that a plane had crashed into New York's World Trade Center in what appeared to be a terrible accident. Now Chief of Staff Andrew H. Card Jr. whispered in his ear that a second plane had hit the complex. Bush's sunny countenance went grim.

So began a day for the president and the country's national security apparatus unlike any before it.

Bush boarded Air Force One and, escorted by fighter jets, hopscotched the country, from Florida to military installations in Louisiana and Nebraska and then to Washington, D.C. — part of precautions designed to protect the commander in chief's life. Only after stopping at the nation's nuclear Strategic Command near Omaha, Neb. — interpreted by national security experts as a sign of the administration's anxiety about further attacks — did Bush return to address the nation from the Oval Office.

In what was unquestionably the greatest test of his presidency, the administration stuck to a game plan that has guided it through the first eight months of Bush's presidency and, before that, his campaign.




DOUG MILLS / ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Andrew Card, President Bush's chief of staff, informs him of the attacks in New York and Washington, D.C. The president was reading with second-graders at Emma E. Booker Elementary School in Sarasota, Fla.**

### Little public information

For much of the day, Bush made brief and minimal appearances in public, teleconferencing with his national security team. His Cabinet and top aides, struggling to get a full understanding of the attack and to coordinate a response, provided very little public information throughout the day.

The first administration official to give a public briefing was not a military or security adviser but presidential counselor Karen Hughes, who read a prepared statement and didn't take questions.

Meanwhile, Vice President Cheney and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice hunkered underground in the White House situation room, while Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld strategized with the military chiefs of staff in a Pentagon still on fire after being struck by a terrorist-hijacked jet.

Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta, overseeing the first grounding of all commercial air traffic in the nation's history, joined senior Bush staff in the White House command center. Then Bush conducted a teleconference of the National Security Council, members of which were in various locations. The senior official in the White House through the day was the vice president, joined in the command center by his staff chief, Lewis "Scooter" Libby.

### A "solemn" evacuation

About 9:30 a.m., as White House officials worked in the West Wing and the adjacent Eisenhower Executive Office Building, a droning horn sounded, followed by a standard fire-alarm recording ordering an evacuation. Secret Service agents passed word that a plane may be targeting the White House. Bush aides said there was no panic in the evacuation, calling it "mechanical" and "solemn."

First lady Laura Bush, on Capitol Hill to testify on education before a Senate committee, was ushered by motorcade to a secure location outside the White House with her aides. The first lady spoke by telephone with her husband and her daughters, who just began their second year of college.

Bush appeared to be slow to acknowledge the import of the attacks on the Twin Towers. He had been told about the first crash in his motorcade on the way to the school, and slipped into a holding room upon his arrival to take a call from Rice.

After the whisper from Card, Bush looked distracted and somber but continued to listen to the second-graders read and soon was smiling again. He joked that they read so well, they must be sixth-graders. "Ooo! These are good readers — very impressive," Bush said, and asked them his standard question about whether they read more than they watch television.

After huddling with advisers, Bush entered the school's media center for what was to have been an education speech. He looked stunned, but by the time he reached the podium, he looked stern and composed and at 9:30 a.m. delivered the chilling news of "an apparent terrorist attack on our country."

### Flying with fighter escort

Air Force One left Sarasota at 9:55 a.m., the mood aboard tense. Aides, stewards and Secret Service agents were not told where they were going. The staff watched coverage from television stations that faded in and out along the way. Secret Service agents noted worriedly that their New York headquarters is in the World Trade Center.

A fighter jet could be seen off the right wing. When Bush landed, the plane was surrounded by Air Force personnel in full combat gear — green fatigues, flak jackets, helmets and drawn M-16 rifles.

A senior administration official said aides wanted Bush to return to the White House as soon as it was safe, to send a message of stability. Instead, Bush landed first at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana, where he spoke to the nation in front of a pair of American flags. He stumbled a few times, but his jaw was set and his eyes glinted.

"I ask the American people to join me in saying a thanks for all the folks who have been fighting hard to rescue our fellow citizens and to join me in saying a prayer for the victims and their families," Bush said. "The resolve of our great nation is being tested. But make no mistake, we will show the world that we will pass this test. God bless."

Several journalists traveling on Air Force One were left behind at Barksdale when the president departed at 1:37 p.m. The entourage was slimmed down for safety, officials said.

At 1:47 p.m., White House press secretary Ari Fleischer told reporters aboard Air Force One that Bush had received "no warnings" about the attacks. Fleischer said that while he was on the ground at Barksdale, Bush spoke several times with Cheney, who was at the operations center at the White House, as well as with his wife, Rumsfeld and Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y. After taking off, he continued to make calls from his cabin.

The White House issued a statement at 6:42 p.m. that began, "The president today declared a major disaster exists in the state of New York," and went on to give information about federal disaster funding. Bush's helicopter, Marine One, landed at the White House at 6:58 p.m. Stepping off, he saluted an officer and walked inside to get ready for his speech.

## ADDRESS TO THE NATION

*Text of President Bush's televised national address from the Oval Office on Tuesday, as transcribed by eMediaMillWorks Inc.:*

Good evening.

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, businessmen 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 shatter 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, with the daring of our rescue workers, with the caring for strangers and neighbors who came to give blood and help in any way they could.

Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our government's emergency response plans. Our military is powerful, and it's prepared. Our emergency teams are working in New York City and Washington, D.C., to help with local rescue efforts.

Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured and to take every precaution to protect our citizens at home and around the world from further attacks.

The functions of our government continue without interruption. Federal agencies in Washington which had to be evacuated today are reopening for essential personnel tonight and will be open for business tomorrow.

Our financial institutions remain strong, and the American economy will be open for business as well.

The search is under way for those who are behind these evil acts.

I've directed the full resources for our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them.

I appreciate so very much the members of Congress who have joined me in strongly condemning these attacks. And on behalf of the American people, I thank the many world leaders who have called to offer their condolences and assistance.

America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the world, and we stand together to win the war against terrorism.

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.

ANALYSIS

# Response to crisis tests president's skills as leader

*Finding an unknown enemy won't be easy, and questions also cloud Bush's defense plan*

By MICHAEL KRANISH
THE BOSTON GLOBE

WASHINGTON — As President Bush hunkered down Tuesday afternoon in an underground command center in Nebraska, he found himself in the extraordinary position of being at war with a faceless enemy, vowing to hunt down and punish a moving target that may not be tied directly to any country.

Although suspicions centered on groups in the Middle East, there was no certified claim of responsibility for the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. If the assault was not sanctioned by any country, the United States will be in the difficult position of trying to identify beyond doubt which terrorist group was responsible.

The attacks immediately tested the president's capabilities as a leader and healer. Like his father, who once commented that he hadn't been "tested by fire" until the Persian Gulf War, Bush was thrust into a crisis that is bound to define his presidency.

Reprising a refrain used by his father in the Gulf War, Bush solemnly declared, "Terrorism against our nation will not stand."

The horrifying morning of death and destruction occurred as Bush was preparing to speak to elementary school children in Florida.

"Today we've had a national tragedy. Two airplanes have crashed into the World Trade Center in an apparent terrorist attack on our country," Bush said at 9:30 a.m. to the stunned gathering of children, parents and teachers at Emma E. Booker Elementary School in Sarasota, Fla.

In Nebraska, Bush talked via secure communications links with his top advisers, including Vice President Dick Cheney, who was in an underground building on the White House grounds.

But unlike a war situation, in which it is well known which country is responsible for an attack, a terrorist assault is a much more shadowy undertaking. The direct link to the attacks, the hijackers, presumably was killed in the attacks. Now a trail must be established to their partners in the worst crime in U.S. history.

"We are likely not dealing with a state-sponsored group," said counter-terrorism specialist William Banks of Syracuse University. "When you are dealing with a sovereign state, you have laws of war and diplomacy and expectations that define the parameters of what is permissible and what is not. It is a very dicey thing to strike back at a nonstate actor."

In 1998, when the United States responded to the bombings of U.S. embassies in Africa, the mission ended in a failure to catch the alleged leader of the terrorist ring or to stop its activities. In that case, the target was Osama bin Laden, who also is a top suspect in Tuesday's attacks.

DOUG MILLS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

**President Bush, arriving Tuesday at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., faces a crisis that will define his presidency.**

Sen. Orrin Hatch, the Utah Republican who has long warned about bin Laden, said Tuesday on CNN that U.S. intelligence had intercepted communications in which bin Laden was informed that two targets had been destroyed.

### Defense strategy questioned

Whatever Bush determines about the perpetrator of Tuesday's assaults, the success or failure of his response is also likely to spell the success or failure of his presidency.

The attacks also raised serious questions about what is called homeland defense.

So far, Bush's focus on defending the United States from within has been on developing a space-based anti-missile system. But that system almost certainly would have been useless against the hijacked commercial airliners involved in Tuesday's assaults.

The best defense against such assaults is solid intelligence, but terrorists have apparently learned from prior investigations how to keep their plotting secret and their conversations private.

One possible result of the attacks is some restraint on the civil liberties that many Americans take for granted, with much tougher security searches at airports and looser constraints on police investigative methods. Some specialists are already calling for an end to separation between the military and domestic law enforcement.

Questions will immediately be asked about why the CIA failed to issue warnings about an attack. For years, analysts have warned that this country was vulnerable to attacks from within.

Just last December, a congressional advisory panel on terrorism issued a report that received little notice but which predicted that a major attack was imminent.

"We are impelled by the stark realization that a terrorist attack on some level inside our borders is inevitable and the United States must be ready," the report said. The panel called for a national strategy to address all forms of domestic terrorism while not circumventing civil liberties.

Anthony Lake, national security adviser to President Clinton, said the attacks should be a wake-up call to Americans. "I hope everybody recognizes we are at war with terrorists," said Lake, who predicted horrific terrorist attacks in his recent book, "Six Nightmares: Real Threats in a Dangerous World and How America Can Meet Them."

Lake said Bush must first identify the group behind the attack, adding that "this fits the MO of Osama bin Laden."

But whether or not the United States can identify the perpetrator and retaliate, "The country should use the horror of this and the rage we feel to take actions that are effective over the longer run," Lake said. "We must alter our thinking about security threats we face and understand the defenses of our homeland are a lot more than missile defense."