

ATTACK ON AMERICA

AIRBORNE SCENARIO

Pilots say crews likely overpowered, slain

By Matthew Breilis  
GLOBE STAFF

For the passengers and crew on board American Airlines Flight 11 and United Airlines Flight 175, the terror most likely began minutes after the Los Angeles-bound flights lifted off from Boston's Logan International Airport.

Several commercial airline pilots and aviation specialists believe the flight crews were overpowered and most likely killed long before the two planes struck the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York.

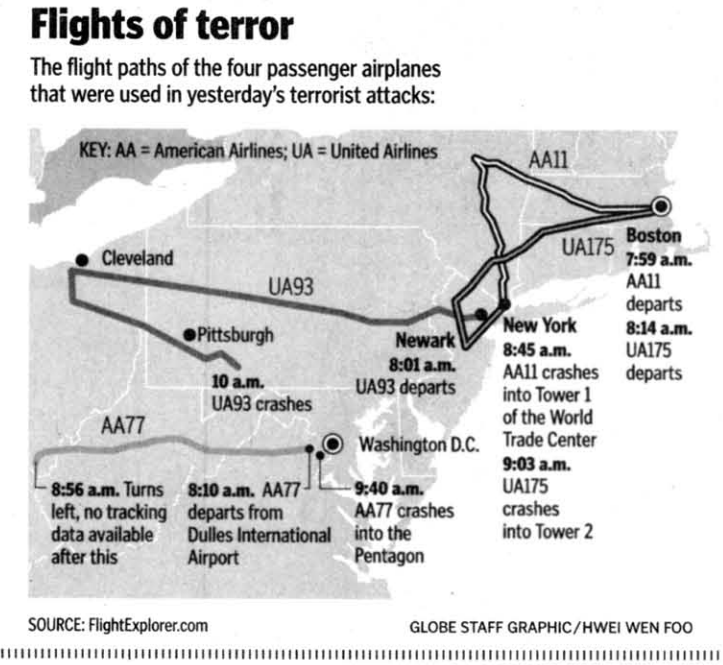
"You had to get rid of the crew because they would not fly their plane into a building," said Michael Barr, director of aviation safety programs at the University of Southern California. "The pilot is dead anyways. He is dead if it hits the World Trade Center or doesn't. He is going to fly it into the ocean to minimize the death."

Barr said the person who took control of the plane "had to change course, he had to know how to navigate. Those buildings stand out and are not hard to hit on a clear day, but he still has to maintain altitude and still has to have some ability to fly."

Barr and several commercial airline pilots said they assumed that the terrorists were skilled pilots who had to have received some training in flying transport jets, particularly the Boeing 757 and 767 aircraft, which are from the same family of airplane with the same cockpit. Pilots stressed it was not a coincidence that all of the planes hijacked were transcontinental 757s or 767s. They were full of fuel and did not require additional special training.

"You only have to train one group of people," said a 767 pilot, speaking on condition of anonymity. "The perpetrators were trained pilots and trained to operate the 757-767 family of aircraft. They seemed to have no consideration for airport passenger security and it did not seem to bother them that the flying was very demanding. To hit something with an airplane is easy only if you have been flying for 20 years."

The pilot noted that the video of the second aircraft striking the World Trade Center shows the plane is banked, or turning, making the maneuver more difficult. And hitting the Pentagon was extremely difficult. "One degree off



and he either overshoots it or undershoots it," he said.

"If you put 15 guns to my head you are going to have to kill the crew outright and no one knows how to fly that airplane," said the pilot. "They were all full of fuel

struggle with the crew. "My guess is somebody decided to fight back. Maybe they lucked out and had a flight attendant who was a black belt. Otherwise what kind of political statement are you trying to make blowing up farmland?"

On American Flight 11, one terror-stricken flight attendant managed to call her supervisor in Boston saying that a man seated in the business section had stabbed flight attendants and passengers and the flight was hijacked, according to three sources familiar with the investigation.

Radar tracks obtained from a private firm show American Flight 11 making a hard left turn after crossing from Massachusetts into New York State and heading down the Hudson River Valley towards New York City.

And on United Flight 175, instead of preparing to watch the scheduled movie, "A Knight's Tale," the 56 passengers on board were given a terrifying ride. United said the plane was lost from radar between Newark and Philadelphia. Radar tracks from that flight indicate that the plane turned around over New Jersey and headed back to lower Manhattan. The

tracks indicate the plane flew at low altitude for nearly an hour.

"I can't think but that the people who did this had at least a rudimentary knowledge of how to fly, and I cannot imagine any crew member doing something like this," said another 767 pilot. "Weapons, guns, and knives can be brought on board easily and the cockpit door can be kicked in with a good swift kick."

The pilot, who flies out of Logan frequently, said "every airport is vulnerable. I don't imagine that Logan is any worse than any other airport, and it may be better."

The 767 pilot said the cockpit voice recorder may not contain the sounds of the struggle to control the plane because the tape is a 30-minute loop and any previous conversation is recorded over.

"The flight data recorder will tell a lot about the flight path itself. Just think about finding those things, oh my goodness. We live in a changed world from this morning on. I don't know what to do aside from giving blood."



The Peace Arch border crossing at Surrey, Canada, was temporarily closed yesterday after terrorist attacks in the United States.

IN CANADA

Neighbor offers aid, tightens security

By Colin Nickerson  
GLOBE STAFF

MONTREAL — As hundreds of aircraft bound for the United States were diverted to Canadian airports and Canadian authorities tightened security as an emergency measure, horrified citizens across the northern land that considers itself America's best friend rushed to donate blood for victims of yesterday's attacks in New York and Washington, D.C.

Hospitals in Toronto and other Canadian centers also prepared for a possible influx of attack victims. And emergency hot lines were established for the huge numbers of Canadians who frantically tried to reach relatives, friends, or business associates in the United States.

Toronto's 1,815-foot CN Tower, the world's tallest structure, and other popular landmarks were closed as Canadian officials boosted security in several major cities. Churches were thronged by ordinary Canadians who paused to pray for their neighbor.

A grim Prime Minister Jean Chretien pledged his country would provide whatever assistance is necessary and condemned what he termed "a cowardly and depraved attack" on Canada's closest ally.

Every commercial airport in Canada was ordered closed. Their runways served as diversion points for more than 500 passenger and cargo craft that originally set out for US destinations from Europe, Asia, and elsewhere.

Within two hours of the attacks, Canada had transformed itself into a sort of emergency runway for the entire continent.

Thousands of travelers were forced to remain aboard stranded jumbo planes or in terminals last night as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police conducted exhaustive searches of the aircraft and baggage, and closely questioned each passenger. In Halifax, Nova Scotia, where about 50 European and US flights were forced to land, travelers were shuttled to sports facilities converted into temporary shelters and interrogation centers.

Canadian CF-18 fighter jets, meanwhile, escorted a Korean Airlines passenger plane into Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, after it was refused permission to land in Alaska and was running low on fuel.

Meanwhile, Canadian investigative teams — working with the FBI — probed the possibility that individuals involved in the deadly assaults in the United States might have links to terrorist cells that authorities believe to be active in Montreal and Toronto.

Although law enforcement sources stressed that there is no evidence so far of a Canadian connection, police remember 1999's "millennium" bomb plot — in which Islamic radicals tied to

Osama bin Laden used Quebec and British Columbia as staging grounds for planned attacks against US targets. Those plans were thwarted after an Algerian national named Ahmed Ressam was caught by US authorities carrying explosives across the border.

The world's longest undefended border remained opened yesterday, but delays stretched for hours at the busiest points and US immigration officials were generally permitting only American citizens and Canadians with urgent business to cross.

Travelers were questioned closely on both sides of the line and nearly every vehicle entering the United States was subjected to a close search, a highly unusual procedure especially when carried out along the 5,255-mile border.

In Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver, British Columbia, hospitals prepared emergency wards and surgical teams in anticipation of an overflow of patients from the United States.

"It's a precautionary measure, we don't know for certain if Canada will handle patients," said Craig Duhamel, spokesman for Toronto's Sunnybrook & Women's Health Sciences Center, a top teaching hospital. "But we want to be prepared to help our neighbor any way we possibly can."

Canadians were nearly as shocked by yesterday's attacks as Americans themselves. The two nations are deeply intertwined by blood kinship and business — there are probably few Canadians without a close relative or friend living in the United States.

The Canadian Consulate in New York City was investigating the likelihood that some Canadians were victims of the World Trade Center attacks.

At Montreal's Dorval Airport, travelers who found themselves stranded in Quebec remained somber.

"How can I complain? I am alive amid a national calamity," said Daniel Lepage, 76, who had been headed home to Boston after visiting relatives in Quebec. His flight was canceled. "This is a dark and terrible day."

Canadians reacted in disbelief and horror at the events unfolding next door. "This is not terrorism, this is war," said Peter Mansbridge, the highly respected anchorman for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's national news network, which joined other major television and radio stations in providing nonstop broadcasts about the attacks.

The most common reaction among Canadians was empathy for their stricken neighbor. A teller at a Bank of Montreal branch, upon recognizing her customer as a US citizen, wiped tears from her eyes and blurted, "God bless the poor Americans. We are praying for you."

AT LOGAN

Travelers, workers cry, console, cope

By John Ellement  
and Raphael Lewis  
GLOBE STAFF

Like a funeral cortege, the black limousines lined up outside Logan International Airport by noon yesterday, waiting to ferry to the Airport Hilton the kin of those who perished on two jets that had left Boston just hours earlier.

While the somber procession formed outside, stunned travelers grieved by yesterday's chaos watched televisions in the airport's bars, some of them stonefaced, others clapping when American officials spoke of revenge.

In the shadows, airport employees cried and consoled one another. And at the nearby Holiday Inn bar, idled flight crews drowned their sorrows before the day's endless TV news coverage, weeping for their dead friends and colleagues.

Yesterday was a day like no other in the annals of Boston travel, even though the city was miles away from the carnage in New York.

"It's total devastation. I'm sick," said John Federico of Somerville, who works as a ramp agent for Delta Airlines. "This is a war."

Fearful that terrorist violence could reach Boston, State Police officers, federal law enforcers, and a host of bomb-sniffing dogs fanned out over Logan yesterday, scouring the terminals for anything suspicious, and interviewing as many of the 17,000 employees who work at the airport as they could find.

Even though the Massachusetts Port Authority closed the airport at 10:18 a.m., it wasn't until 2:30 p.m. that police began to shoo the stranded travelers and the overwhelmed and saddened employees still milling about Logan.

The skies above the airport were preternaturally quiet, though. On a typical day, Logan averages 1,400 flights, and as many as 8,000 people make their way through the airport, but just 200 flights arrived or took off yesterday.

Two of them met with a fate few could have foreseen in their wildest nightmares.

American Airlines Flight 11, a Boeing 767, took off from Gate 26 in Terminal B at 7:59 a.m., carrying 92 passengers and crew members. That jet is believed to have been hijacked and flown into the World Trade Center shortly before 9 a.m.

United Airlines Flight 175, also a Boeing 767, took off at 8:14 a.m. from Terminal C's Gate 19, carrying 56 passengers, two pilots, and seven flight attendants. Aviation officials say they believe that was the second plane to plunge into

the World Trade Center, about 18 minutes after the American Airlines flight crashed.

Many of those stuck at Logan thanked God, fate, or simple luck that they had survived the day.

"I'm safe; my family knows I'm OK," said Ernie Chappell, a software company owner from Nashville who never got a chance to leave yesterday. "It could be much worse. I could've been on one of those flights."

"I don't want to get near an airplane," said Colin Williams, a British businessman whose flight to Washington was canceled.

Inside the airport, an eerie quiet descended upon the terminals at 10:30 a.m. as the entire facility headed into lockdown. An announcement made over the public address system said that some baggage was being held from some flights. Passengers were asked to show identification before they picked up their bags from flights that had arrived.

Long lines formed at pay phones as passengers tried to call their families, and the Sam Adams Bar in Terminal C was packed with grounded flight crews watching the news unfold on television.

A Massport shuttle bus driver started crying on his rounds. "These people, I laugh and joke with them every morning," said Mike Walen, a 14-year veteran.

Alice Price, 62, was at Logan on her way to Oklahoma City, where she lives. Price said two of her friends had died in the Oklahoma City bombing.

"I'm terrified," she said. "We've been in tears. It definitely brings it back."

Some feared that the worst was yet to come, that the crushing loss of four jetliners, untold numbers of other lives in New York and at the Pentagon, and national landmarks had just begun.

"I'm a very religious person, and I believe we're in the time of Revelation," said Buddy Shelton, 58, a professional golfer trying to get home to Orlando, Fla. "We're in the end of days."

Bill Shields was on a jet preparing to leave Logan to San Diego when the pilot announced they would not take off, stunning the packed jet. "It was almost surreal," Shields said. "No one said a word."

Shields, who recently accepted a job that would involve much air travel, immediately called his wife, who was in tears, and then his parents. Their message, he said, was simple. "They said: 'I don't care what you do. You can pick up garbage. But don't fly.'"

Ellen Barry, Farah Stockman, and Michael Rosenwald of the Globe staff contributed to this report.