

THE U.S. UNDER ATTACK

"It looked like a ticker tape parade because there were parts of the building floating down with the dust."

MATTHEW LOW, Manhattan resident

State put on alert after 'act of unspeakable evil'

Davis sends 215,000 workers home until further notice

By Carla Marinucci, Lynda Gledhill, and Greg Lucas
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITERS

Californians reacted with numbed shock as thousands of businesses and government offices closed and schools and tourist landmarks were placed on high security alert after yesterday's lethal wave of East Coast terrorist attacks.

Fear of more attacks prompted tightened security at military bases and the U.S.-Mexican border and led to the closure of shopping malls and city halls up and down the state.

In San Francisco, the Transamerica Pyramid, the Bank of America building and the walkway on the Golden Gate Bridge were closed. In Anaheim, Disneyland shut down.

Saying he was taking "every necessary precaution" after an "act of unspeakable evil," Gov. Gray Davis ordered state-owned buildings closed until further notice, sending most of the state's 215,000 employees home.

The Davis administration moved all essential government offices to the California Highway

Patrol Academy in West Sacramento — the first time in state history such an emergency plan was put into effect.

Security was doubled at the historic state Capitol, which was closed and eerily silent except for a few Davis aides and reporters.

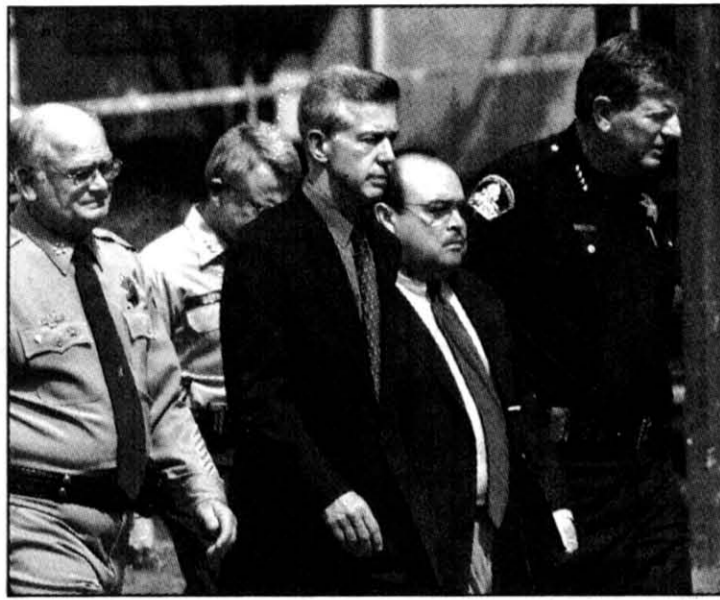
With a crunch of legislative business frozen and about 1,000 legislative staff members sent home, the normally bustling downtown Sacramento area turned into a ghost town. Shops and restaurants hung signs indicating that they were shuttered because of "today's events."

In cities around the state, federal buildings and courthouses were closed. Security patrols were also beefed up on major thoroughfares, dams and aqueducts to thwart possible attacks.

There was a wide range of immediate response across the state:

- On the seas, the U.S. Coast Guard escorted ships into the ports of Oakland and San Francisco, officials said. Coast Guard officials in Alameda immediately increased security, canceling all civilian entry and deliveries into its Alameda base.

- In the air, the CHP sent two dozen planes around the state,



Gov. Gray Davis was accompanied by CHP head Spike Helmick (left) and Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante on his way to the news conference.

monitoring state buildings, the electrical grid and major public facilities, said CHP head Spike Helmick.

- On the streets and in government offices, state workers who provide essential services such as medical personnel, law enforcement officers and firefighters remained on the job. California National Guard posts were placed on heightened alert.

- At military bases in the Bay Area, all personnel were put on

the highest state of alert. The condition — called "Threatcon Delta" — means that all vehicles entering a facility are searched and all personnel are required to produce identification and adhere to increased security measures.

- In California's two nuclear labs managed by the University of California, nonessential workers were sent home. At Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, only top managers remained on the job. Officials there said they were

standing by to track the spread of debris from the collapsed World Trade Center towers and the Pentagon in case terrorists planned to release chemical poisons or biological weapons as they crashed hijacked airliners into the buildings.

- In the schools, Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin asked officials to use their discretion in closing public campuses. The Los Angeles Unified School District, the nation's second-largest, kept schools open as teachers were urged to keep students in their normal routine.

But all California State University campuses were closed, and 900 law students at the private University of Santa Clara were also turned away as classes were canceled.

Around the state, thousands of shoppers were turned away at major malls shut as jittery residents worried about new terrorist targets. Shopping centers closed included Hilltop Mall in Richmond, Broadway Plaza in Walnut Creek, Sun Valley Mall in Concord, Valley Fair in San Jose, Stonestown and Serramonte in San Francisco and Northgate in San Rafael.

- In the workplace, supervisors and employees at major firms responded in different ways to the attacks. Hewlett-Packard in Palo Alto encouraged workers to labor at home, while Intel, the world's largest chipmaker, beefed up se-

curity. Sporting and entertainment events across the state, including all Major League Baseball games, were canceled.

In Los Angeles, the police went on tactical alert and anti-terrorist divisions were mobilized to meet possible threats.

Entertainment extravaganzas were also put off as communities prepared to mourn: The Second Annual Latin Grammy Awards, scheduled for Tuesday night in Los Angeles, were postponed, along with the 53rd annual Primetime Emmy Awards scheduled on Sunday.

In Southern California, the U.S.-Mexico border crossing between San Diego and Tijuana remained open — even as federal agents were put on security alert for terrorist activity, according to Lauren Mack, spokeswoman for the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Meanwhile, Disney closed resorts, theme parks and hotels, disappointing and stranding thousands of tourists in Anaheim, the home of Disneyland.

Chronicle staff writers Robert Salladay, Stacy Finz, Tyra Lucile Mead, Jaxon Van Derbeek, Tyche Hendricks and Nanette Asimov contributed to this report.

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L.A. in shock — 3 of the 4 crashed planes were bound for LAX

By Carol Ness, Tanya Schevitz, and Justino Aguila
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITERS

LOS ANGELES — Gas masks flew off the shelves, bomb-sniffing dogs prowled LAX, and FBI agents and police shut down all major buildings and events, as Los Angeles went on near-war footing in response to yesterday's terrorist attack.

Although all the casualties occurred back east, the West Coast's largest city experienced a dark shiver of vulnerability, because three of the four American planes hijacked and turned into terrorist weapons were bound for Los Angeles.

Last night, families and friends consoled one another in seclusion near Los Angeles International Airport as they dealt with the horror: The 221 people on the three flights were dead, immolated as they were deliberately crashed into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Names of the victims were not

yet available early last night.

But the city was in shock, and all public events — including the Latin Grammys and a Madonna concert — were canceled.

"Our hearts and prayers go out to the victims of the tragedy in New York and Washington," said David Gershwin, press secretary to the acting mayor, city council president Alex Padilla. "This is a horrible disaster. I don't think anyone could have anticipated this. It's worse than Pearl Harbor."

With no idea if the terror was over, city law enforcement remained on its highest tactical alert last night. LAX, closed by federal order right after the attacks, was evacuated and remained ringed by police, FBI and explosive-seeking dogs almost 12 hours later.

"Since these flights were L.A.-bound and we are a major city, we are taking all precautions to make sure all the residents are safe, and that we provide as much assistance as possible to the families of the victims," Gershwin said.

Law officers responded to 20 bomb threats but found none credible.

Some Los Angeles residents, however, were nervous. At Supply Sergeant, an Army surplus store in Burbank, about 50 gas masks were sold in 2½ hours.

"We went through everything on our shelf," said a clerk, Brent Keith.

At Doughboys Surplus in Bellflower, stun guns, pepper spray, ready-made food and American flags were in demand.

"It's similar to what happens after an earthquake," said store manager Nora Andujo. "The only thing different are those American flags."

Because major landmarks in New York and Washington were struck, all sites that might provide a target were closed down yesterday: City Hall, the county courthouse, the Federal Building, Dis-

neyland in Anaheim and the major movie studios.

The business district in downtown Los Angeles emptied rapidly, leaving few people other than security guards.

"It's a ghost town, man," cab driver Adrian Escalante said, as he waited in vain with other cabbies for fares on Grand Avenue.

In addition to the two shows scheduled for last night — Madonna at the Staples Center and the Latin Grammys at the Forum — El Grito, a Mexican independence day celebration on Saturday, and the Emmys on Sunday were canceled. But a city council election went ahead as planned.

LAX, where the three planes had been headed, was eerily quiet, with none of the roar of jets taking off and landing.

The airport was closed early in the morning and evacuated. All day long, teams of police

and federal agents searched terminal by terminal in response to specific concerns that bombs might be found there. Law enforcement would not give further details on the threats.

Thousands of passengers were stranded, some without money and with nowhere to go.

One was 16-year-old Tracy Kealiinohomoku, who was flying on her own for the first time. She was returning from Hawaii to her home in Las Vegas, after assuring her worried mother that she did not need a chaperone.

"Oh mom, nothing will happen," the girl told her mother.

Locked inside LAX, alone with her luggage, she waited for her mother to drive in to pick her up.

"Now I would be too scared to get on a plane..." she said. "Maybe I'll tell my grandchildren about this — but I'll never fly again."

Some stranded passengers complained that the airlines had done little to help them.

Alba Escobar, who had been visiting San Diego, was dropped off at 6 a.m. for a Chicago flight, only to have the airport shut down. Because she had no money, Escobar said, she could not get a hotel room and her airline did nothing to help her.

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