

AFGHAN MISSION INTRODUCTION

9/11: War in Afghanistan Begins

The Twin Towers

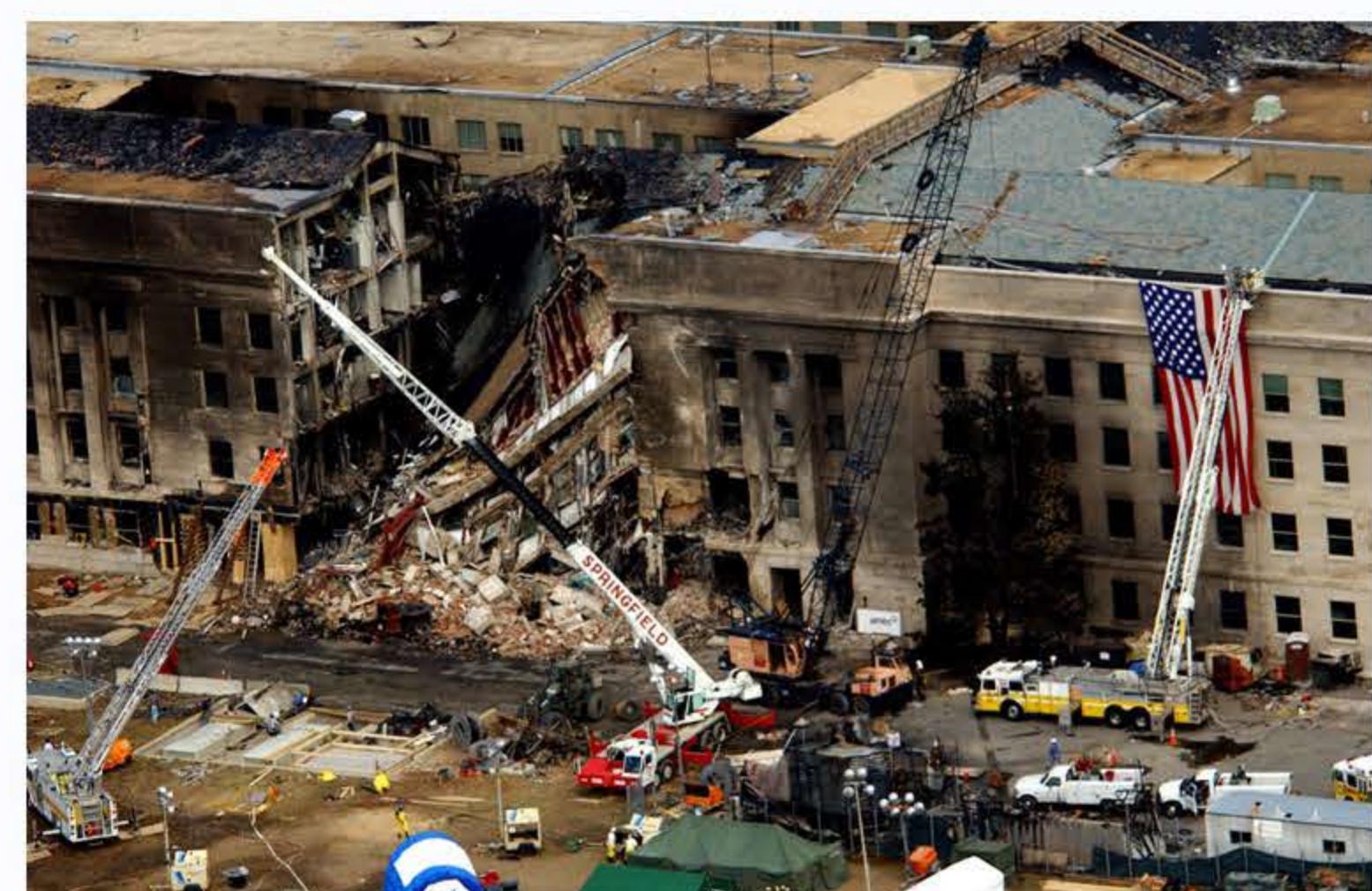
On the morning of Tuesday, September 11, 2001, some people on the east coast of the United States were having their breakfast, others were on their way to work, a great majority of people were settling in at their workstations, while others were just relaxing and taking in the lovely fall weather. Little did the free world know, that in a very short time, peoples' lives would be changed forever.

American Airlines flight 11 left Boston's Logan Airport for a scheduled flight to Los Angeles, fifteen minutes into the flight the plane was taken over by terrorists, in which one of the terrorists was a commercial pilot and changed course for New York City. At 08:46:40 EDT the plane had crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center.

United Airlines Flight 175 was another flight leaving Boston for Los Angeles and approximately 30 minutes into the flight terrorists had taken over the plane and preceded to New York City and at 09:03 EDT crashed their plane into the South Tower of the World Trade Center.



Sept. 11, 2001: Terrorists hijack four U.S. planes, crashing two into the Twin Towers.
Photo: Roberto Robanne/AP



FBI agents, fire fighters, rescue workers and engineers work at the Pentagon crash site.
Photo: Tech. Sgt. Cedric H. Rudisill/DoD

The Pentagon

American Airlines Flight 77 left Washington's Dulles International Airport for a flight to San Francisco, California, within 35 minutes into the flight, terrorists took control of the plane and returned to the Washington area and crashed the plane into the west side of the Pentagon building at 09:37 EDT.

FBI agents, fire fighters, rescue workers and engineers work at the Pentagon crash site September 14, 2001, where a hijacked American Airlines flight slammed into the building three days before. The terrorist attack caused extensive damage to the west face of the building and followed similar attacks on the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City.



FBI investigators comb the crater left by the crash of United Airlines Flight 93 in Shanksville, Pa.
Photo: Gene J. Puskar/Associated Press

Shanksville, Pa.

United Airlines Flight 93 left Newark International Airport in New Jersey for a flight to San Francisco, and 46 minutes into the flight, terrorists took command of the plane turning it east towards Washington D.C. Passengers on this plane had already been receiving messages on their phones of the hijackings and attempted to retake the plane, preventing the terrorists from reaching their target. The terrorists crashed the plane into a field about **65 miles** southeast of Pittsburgh.

FBI investigators combed the crater left by the previous day's crash of United Airlines Flight 93 in Shanksville, Pa., on Sept. 12, 2001. The hijacked plane crashed about **80 miles** southeast of Pittsburgh after first flying near Cleveland and then turning around.

The United States immediately went into lock down. All aircraft in the air were forced to land at the nearest airport. International flights, whose destination was the United States, were told to return to their airport of departure or land in a foreign country. They were not to enter U.S. air space, if so, they would be shot down. All land borders and ocean ports were now closed. The United States was now at war with an unknown enemy.

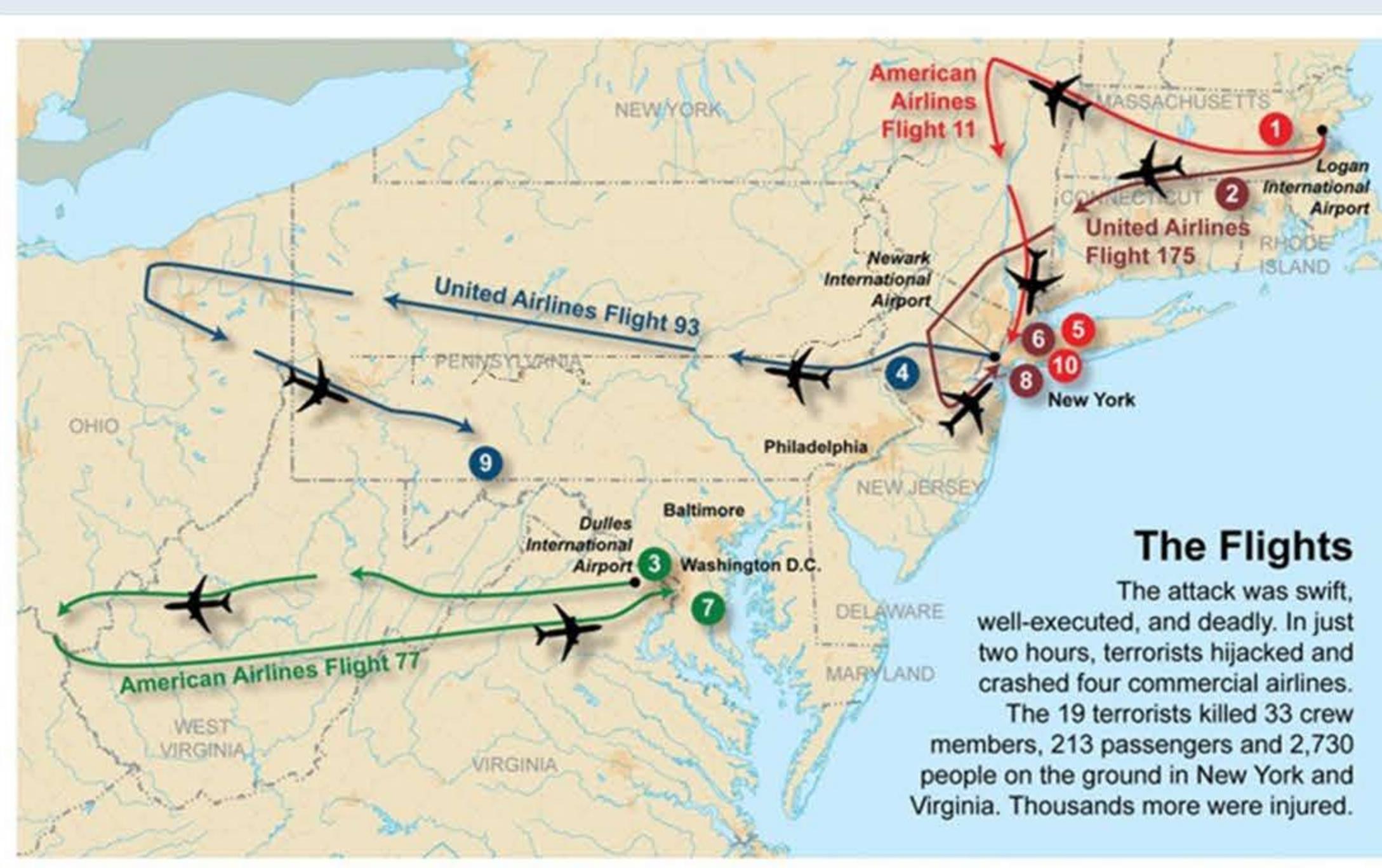
The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the National Security Agency (NSA), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and other governmental departments and military were now on the hunt as to who and what were behind these attacks.



A fire engine at the site of the World Trade Center collapse following the Sept. 11 terrorist attack. Photo: Department of Defense



A fiery blast rocks the World Trade Center after being hit by two planes.
Photo: Spencer Platt/Getty Images



The Flights

The attack was swift, well-executed, and deadly. In just two hours, terrorists hijacked and crashed four commercial airplanes. The 19 terrorists killed 33 crew members, 213 passengers and 2,730 people on the ground in New York and Virginia. Thousands more were injured.

1 7:59 a.m. American Airlines Flight 11, a Boeing 767, departs Boston's Logan Airport bound for Los Angeles with 81 passengers and crew of 11.

2 8:14 a.m. United Airlines Flight 175, a Boeing 767, also departs Boston for Los Angeles with 56 passengers and crew of nine.

3 8:20 a.m. American Airlines Flight 77, a Boeing 757, departs Washington's Dulles Airport for Los Angeles with 58 passengers and crew of six.

4 8:42 a.m. United Airlines Flight 93, a Boeing 757, leaves Newark for San Francisco with 37 passengers and crew of seven.

5 8:46 a.m. American Airlines Flight 11 crashes into the North Tower of the World Trade Center.

6 9:03 a.m. United Airlines Flight 175 slams into the South Tower of the World Trade Center.

7 9:37 a.m. American Airlines Flight 77 hits the Pentagon. Hijacked from Dulles, Flight 77 slams into the West side of the Pentagon.

8 9:59 a.m. The South Tower collapses.

9 10:03 a.m. United Airlines Flight 93 crashes in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, 80 miles southeast of Pittsburgh.

10 10:28 a.m. The North Tower collapses.

