



U.S. under attack

Hijacked jets destroy World Trade Center, hit Pentagon



AP photo

An aircraft, at right, is seen as it is about to fly into the World Trade Center in New York in this image made from television, Tuesday.



AP photo

A fireball explodes from one of the towers at the World Trade Center after a plane crashed into it.

Officials fear thousands killed in New York City

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Terrorists in at least three hijacked airliners staged a coordinated attack on the nation's financial, military and government centers Tuesday morning, devastating the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington and setting off a national panic as bewildered citizens raced for safety from a determined, but as yet unknown, enemy.

Although there were no early estimates, authorities feared a heavy loss of life in the attacks. One New York police official said thousands of people may have been killed or injured in the attacks.

Both towers of the huge World Trade Center, which houses some 50,000 workers, were destroyed after they were hit by two airliners that had been hijacked earlier in the day. Smoke billowed from the burning buildings, which collapsed at midmorning. The Federal Aviation Administration ordered all commercial airliners grounded. Financial and government centers were shut down and evacuations were underway all across the country.

The FAA said at least five planes operated by American Airlines and United Airlines were reported to have crashed or were "in trouble." The American planes were hijacked from Boston and

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AP Photo

Terrified New Yorkers flee a massive cloud of dust and debris as the World Trade Center collapses.