

**9/11 Omission Report:
A Citizens Critique of the Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist
Acts Upon the United States**

The Final Report

We are presented with a report authorized by the National Commission on Terrorist Acts Upon the United States (9/11 Commission), issued July 22, 2004 as the definitive account of the events of September 11, 2001 and the recommendations that flow from their conclusions and findings. The Final Report has been seen as authoritative, with little critical discussion, based on the “bipartisan consensus” of the Commission members. It has risen to the top of the New York Times’s bestseller lists. However, the assertions and analytical conclusions are based on sets of questionable assumptions, contradictions of fact, and on omissions of key areas of inquiry.

In our preliminary critique, 9/11 Citizen’s Watch discussed flaws and omissions in the Commission procedures and investigation. We had raised many of these issues with the Commission during its tenure as well, as did victim family members, and we had some effect on their work. However, their exemption from federal requirements to form family and citizen advisory panels and the Freedom of Information Act were barriers that prevented both transparency and accountability in the process.

Following termination of the 9/11 Commission’s work, two “monographs” were released, and more staff reports may follow. These two covered “Terrorist Financing” and “Terrorist Travel.” They are summaries of findings by the various investigative panels of the Commission, and contain a few source documents or pieces of evidence. Some of the material prepared by each team was used in the seventeen staff statements released during the public hearings, and for the “draft sections” of the final report.

The Commission’s Executive Director encloses a disclaimer in each report, noting that:

“Some of the specialized staff work, while not appropriate for inclusion into the report, nonetheless offered substantial information or analysis that was not well represented in the Commission’s report. In a few cases this supplemental work could be prepared to a publishable standard, either in unclassified or classified form, before the Commission expired... While the Commissioners have been briefed on the work and have had the opportunity to review earlier drafts of some of this work, they have not approved this text and it does not necessarily reflect their views.”

This may reflect a lack of consensus between the staff and the Commission members about some of the assumptions or conclusions reached by a consensus of the members.

The report initially lacked any index, though several usable online searchable versions exist. The Commission also released a brief topic index to the press, but it does not replace a fully detailed list of names and key issues. In the hardbound edition of the report, an index is included, but it is not thorough.

The extensive section of supporting notes is much less readable and accessible, reproduced in tiny print and without clear visual breaks. The report is essentially self-referential, despite some citations to published works. Most of the footnoted notations refer to interviews and documents that are not yet public. Despite numerous calls for transparency and release of all non-classified evidence and interviews, the report currently stands alone in a single volume with few supporting documents, transcribed interviews or items of forensic evidence.

The Warren Commission Report on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy was, by comparison, accompanied by 26 volumes of testimony, documents and evidence, which was still only a fraction of the collection. To date, over 6 million pages related to that government investigation have been released.

The 9/11 Commission interviewed almost 2,000 individuals and generated correspondence and internal records from a staff of over 80 people. Most of these interviews were held in private, not under oath, and we do not know whether they were recorded, transcribed or notated. National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice testified to the Commission in private, not under oath, and reportedly no record was kept besides “notes” of this critical interview. Until the unclassified portions of this vast body of evidence are released, public confidence in the conclusions of the report will be challenged.

Some of the public testimony, which was not all taken under oath, contradicted other testimony, printed reports, and even itself, as well as the conclusions reached by the Commission.

9/11 CitizensWatch had urged the Commission to avoid the pattern of previous Congressional inquiries into key historical events, gathering a body of documentary and other evidence for their work and then blocking its public release for up to fifty years. Instead, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman were urged to call for a full and immediate release of all non-classified records, and for an expedited release of the remaining evidence using the standards established and recommended by the JFK Assassination Records Review Board, not those of the Freedom of Information Act and the National Archives.

In their final public statement, the Commission chairs revealed that both classified and unclassified investigative and administrative files of the Commission have been transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration. The release date of these files, at the discretion of Chairman Kean, was set for a shorter period than usual, at January 2, 2009, at the start of a new presidential term. Until that date, only the known classified

records can be challenged for an agency review and early release. The unclassified documents are still exempted from the Freedom of Information Act, only a Congressional decision could force their release at this point.

Although the consistent, readable and accessible style of this report cannot have emerged from contributions by the nine separate investigative teams, the actual authorship of the report is not acknowledged. Was a single author assigned to write a final version of the text once the national security issues were resolved? If so, was it a staff member of the Commission or someone assigned from another federal agency?

9/11 Commission chairman, Governor Tom Kean, announced that his staff would be self-censoring the report in advance, to create a “non-classified” version. In addition, chapters were sent in advance to the White House for vetting to meet the July deadline facing the Commission for release. The 9/11 Commission’s Final Report was essentially co-authored with the White House, and the lack of any redactions makes it impossible to know what kind of information was withheld at White House insistence.

Other Congressional committee and commission reports in the past have been written independently, submitted to the White House for national security vetting, and released to the public months later with portions clearly redacted and withheld. The Joint Inquiry Report of the House and Senate Intelligence Committees was delayed for release for almost a year, then printed with sections clearly missing, including a controversial 28-page omission relating to “other countries” involved in the 9/11 attacks. The process used in creating the 9/11 Commission’s Final Report compromises and sanitizes the independent nature of its conclusions.

Several Congressional representatives (including Senators Dodd and Lieberman and Rep. Chris Shays) joined 9/11 victims’ family members in calling for the report to specifically address the long list of unanswered questions raised by the families during the investigation (www.9-11independentcommission.org), or to include those questions as an appendix. While the Final Report does address certain issues, it met neither request fully, and family members are compiling a final list of questions not addressed in the report’s conclusions.

The Final Report rests on a foundation of incorrect assumptions, incomplete testimony and evidence, major omissions, and unsupported conclusions that lead to faulty recommendations. Public hearings on those recommendations were completed long before the investigation of the events and causes of the 9/11 attacks. Without critical challenges to its conclusions, or release of additional evidence necessary to evaluate the report, the momentum will be to have recommendations to be adopted without serious review of their assumptions.

This Citizens' Criticism addresses some key flawed assumptions, contradictions and omissions in their investigation, a compromised process and faulty conclusions, as well as the recommendations that flow from them. Each of these areas relies on the other for its foundation. We draw from the work of a large number of family members and critics of the Commission and its report, as well as the public and sometimes conflicting testimony, staff statements, and the public record. Our goal is to show the inadequacies in the conclusions and recommendations, and to suggest other areas of inquiry, possible additional witnesses and alternatives to the unquestioned framework of policies that the Report supports.

Rush to Exoneration

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of this Final Report is its "rush to exoneration" of any and all government officials in their responsibility for the "failures" of intelligence collection and sharing, preparation for or prevention of the attack, lack of full investigations in response to complaints about the suspects or recommendations by active agents, and the inexplicable response of FAA, NORAD and other defensive systems to the air emergencies and attacks that morning.

Not only were there no visible reprimands, demotions or administrative actions taken against government employees, but there were no courts of inquiry or courts martial by the Pentagon. In fact, many of those in the most critical national command positions or heading key agencies were promoted after the attacks, despite an apparent lack of appropriate preparation or response to numerous warnings, opportunities, and the events of 9/11/01.

While no one is calling for a "witch hunt," the Commission's approach avoids naming any names or holding any person or office accountable for the nearly complete breakdown in standard procedures that might have prevented the success of the terrorist plot at many different points. This reluctance on their part made it impossible to learn from a more probative approach to witnesses called to task for their inactions or the obstacles that led to an inability to defend and protect Americans and their most visible institutions.

Thus, we are in danger of heading into the future without yet fully knowing the past or what was behind the attacks on 9/11, their historical causes, Nor can we know with confidence who can be held accountable for policies that could have prevented them and that will make terrorism more likely in the future. The omissions of the 9/11 Commission are potentially fatal not only to Americans but to the people of the world if these flawed policies continue and the recommendations that fail to challenge them are adopted as the solution.

Congressional Oversight

Following the end of their Congressionally mandated and extended term, the members of the National Commission on Terrorist Acts Upon the United States were required to be available for a period of 60 days to testify before appropriate Congressional committees. This process began during a legislative break period this summer, with special committee hearings on their 41 recommendations called in Washington, DC, and they continue with the return of Congress to the new session. However, no committee has done an oversight review on their process or their conclusions, or called for release of their unclassified records to date.

The members of the 9/11 Commission have also now created a non-profit group called the 9/11 Public Discourse Project, retaining a small staff to facilitate appearances around the country of pairs of Commission members to invite public discussion of the issues and recommendations raised by their report and to hear public concerns about the policies that have been or have not been adopted in the wake of the attacks.

Their lack of transparency, their failure to fully explore key areas of investigation raised by the public, and their decision to conceal forensic evidence and the basic sources for their conclusions have made any objective assessment of their work difficult and

The consensus of history must be more than bi-partisan at the upper levels of power, it must be agreed to from the non-partisan lowest levels of the society as well. The facts about 9/11 cannot be the sole purvey of any elite group, they must belong to the American people as a whole. Because, until we really know the truth about 9/11, we cannot responsibly act.

The Task Ahead

There is a great deal more work necessary to cover all the areas in which the investigative record and the known evidence fail to support the conclusions of the 9/11 Commission. More areas of conflict come to light in each Congressional hearing with Commission members, and the public record is not yet complete.

9/11 CitizensWatch began its work at the same time the Commission was formed, seeking a transparent and open process, integrity in the investigation, access to information, and answers to hard questions that still remain for the victims' families and the public. That work continues in this critique of the final report, in our monitoring of the Legislative and Executive branch responses to the recommendations, and in the ongoing need to satisfy both knowledge and accountability in relation to the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

As we suspected during the investigation, this may require the formation of a legitimate People's Truth Commission, including family members, based on principles of evidence and fairness, that can hear the evidence not considered by this Commission and review its findings. Early critics of the flawed conclusions and evidence of presented by the Warren

Commission created public support for a tribunal led by philosopher Bertrand Russell into the truth behind the assassination of President Kennedy. Our counter-report is a first step in that process, a step that the mainstream press, the Congress and most of the critical voices relating to 9/11 have yet to take.

The conclusions and findings of the 9/11 Commission have been accepted in the mainstream media without comment or questions, based on the fact that the members are bi-partisan and reached consensus. Their recommendations have gotten some critical review, but their underlying assumptions about the plot, response to the attack, foreign policy, real security, civil liberties, militarism, ongoing war, and the role of intelligence and covert operations have as yet met with silent assent in even the most critical quarters.

Only a thorough review of the Commission's report, compared with the information gathered by investigative journalists, international press sources, released government documents, whistleblower revelations and its own testimony and statements has the potential to rouse public concern about its credibility or justify further inquiry. This remains our most pressing task, as well as continuing to collect additional records and investigative reports about the events and those responsible, as well as the response of those tasked with national security and protection.

The Investigation

The Commission formed nine initial investigative teams, eventually merged to a total of eight. These teams collected and analyzed documents and evidence and interviewed thousands of witnesses, mostly in private. They generated a total of 19 staff reports, the last two referred to as "monographs". Most of them were read and presented at the public hearings of the Commission. These numbered statements covered the following investigative topics that the teams worked on:

Al Qaeda and the Organization of the 9-11 Attack:

- 15. Overview of the Enemy
- 16. Outline of the 9/11 Plot

Intelligence Collection, Analysis, and Management (including oversight and resource allocation):

- 2. Three 9/11 Hijackers: Identification, Watchlisting and Tracking
- 7. Intelligence Policy
- 10. Threats and Responses in 2001
- 11. The Performance of the Intelligence Community

International Counterterrorism Policy, including states that harbor or harbored terrorists, or offer or offered terrorists safe havens:

- 5. Diplomacy

Terrorist Financing:

18. Terrorist Financing (monograph)

Border Security and Foreign Visitors:

- Entry of the 9/11 Hijackers into the United States
- Terrorist Travel (monograph)

Law Enforcement and Intelligence Collection inside the United States:

9. Law Enforcement, Counterterrorism, and Intelligence Collection in the United States Prior to 9/11

12. Reforming Law Enforcement, Counterterrorism, and Intelligence Collection in the United States

Commercial Aviation and Transportation Security, including an Investigation into the Circumstances of the Four Hijackings:

3. The Aviation Security System and the 9/11 Attacks

4. The Four Flights

The Immediate Response to the Attacks [in New York City and at the Pentagon;]

13. Emergency Preparedness and Response

The Immediate Response to the Attacks [by] at the National [Leadership], State, and Local levels, including issues of Continuity of Government.

6. The Military

17. Improvising a Homeland Defense

8. National Policy Coordination

14. Crisis Management

In addition to this body of data and conclusions, the Commissioners issued periodic statements, including:

Interim reports 1 & 2, press and public statements by Commissioners

And a series of twelve public hearings included written statements and testimony from responsible or knowledgeable officials and policy experts, some of it not taken under oath. We will draw on all of these sources in our criticism, as well as thousands of press reports and a wide range of historical sources and current critiques presented in recently released books on 9/11 or aspects of the policies that led up to and followed to the attacks.

However, as noted above, the bulk of the investigative record, photographic, forensic, transcribed, recorded, and documentary is beyond our current reach.

Hostility and Frustration

The 9/11 Commission was finally signed into law and created well after the terrorist incidents that it was designed to study. It was born in the clash of the frustration of victim family members and other citizens for an open and independent review of the facts behind the attack, and the hostility of the Bush administration to having any review. Only the pressure brought on the White House by these family members, supported by some in Congress who wanted an investigation, forced the creation of the Commission. However, its membership did not include any family members, and was chosen instead by the President and leaders of both parties in the House and Senate.

The Commission was finally established by law (PL 107-306) in 2003, with several obstacles to its mandated task. Compared to investigations of other major events, it had severely limited funding and time for its massive task. Continued obstruction from the White House on the grounds that it would be a partisan attack or distract resources from the ongoing war on terror led to a long delay between the event and the investigation as well. Once established, the Commission faced additional obstruction from various executive agencies and the Bush administration in regard to release of or access to classified materials

Even the classified version of the Joint Inquiry report and testimony was initially withheld, though two of the Commission members, Tim Roemer and Max Cleland, had been part of the inquiry hearings. The rising obsession with secrecy and security that marked the post-9/11 federal administration included resistance to a federally appointed Commission seeking the facts. Max Cleland suggested that the long delay in the release of the vetted and redacted version of the Joint Inquiry report was to prevent disclosure of its findings on the flawed intelligence concerning the war on Iraq in advance of the US invasion there. Cleland later resigned from the Commission after appointment to head a federal agency, and had already started to warn of a flawed report due to White House obstruction.

Beyond these problems, the Commission was riddled with serious conflicts of interest of its own regarding both members and staff. Many of the people working on the Commission had ties with intelligence agencies and operations, previous flawed investigations, corporate or investment ties to the airline industry, law firms involved in suits brought by family members, and to international operations that involved the bin Laden family. Philip Zelikow, the Executive Director and Commissioner Jamie Gorelick so directly conflicted that they had to appear as witnesses before the Commission and to “recuse” themselves at points in the investigative work. Many victim family members called for Zelikow to step down once they learned he was close to Condoleezza Rice and had attended the briefings by Richard Clark and Sandy Berger to the White House National Security team warning of immanent attacks by bin Laden. Commissioner Kean

responded to these requests by noting, “all of us on the Commission will have to recuse ourselves at some point.”

The conflicts with the executive branch often led to compromises, rarely to subpoenas, though the Commission had and sometimes threatened to use that power. The Commission did subpoena several agencies, the Department of Defense and the FAA included, but never an individual. Often the most conflicted members were chosen by the White House to have full access to records, and to make carefully edited reports back to the full body.

One of the major compromises made by the Commission was to agree to call only one current White House advisor, Condaleeza Rice for public testimony, and to meet privately with President Bush and Vice President Cheney to hear their unsworn and unrecorded testimony, and a single set of notes was released to the Commission only after review. Similar agreements were made regarding access to other records and investigations, requiring that originals be seen by pre-selected staff or members in closed rooms with no copies or notations allowed.

Other compromises and procedural problems included testimony without oaths, concessions to secrecy, lack of transparency, allowing the presence of agency minders during interviews, incomplete recording of testimony, and the voluntary joint vetting and editing of Final Report with the White House.

Neither the families nor the public had any formal advisory role, and ordinary citizens had very limited direct access to the Commission staff. At one point 9/11 Citizens Watch was told that the names of the heads of the investigative teams was not public information. The public affairs director attempted to route all external communication through his office.

A special liaison and meetings were established on behalf of the victim family members, but their frustration with the progress, assumptions and lack of investigative interest in key questions raised by the family members led to additional frustration.

The public hearings of the Commission brought forward many witnesses that could not answer questions of accountability directly, failed to ask the more important witnesses probing questions, and did not include a range of alternate witnesses in regard to the plot and the policy recommendations.

The Commission’s policy of refusing to name names or hold individual officials responsible for their lack of proper response led to a conclusion that only a systemic failure was responsible for the tragedy, allowing a lack of accountability or consequence to the command structure in charge of that system.

The Commission's lack of transparency or a "sunshine" policy regarding non-classified and forensic data prevented a wider range of expertise available to evaluate the record and the events, and created a situation where speculation and inference replaced known facts regarding the events. These unresolved forensic anomalies remain, and are the subject of ongoing government studies and court suits.

9/11 CitizensWatch sent a recommendation to the Commission requesting full release of unclassified records and evidence and a call for accelerated declassification of other records. We suggested they rely on the redaction standards of the JFK Assassination Records Review Board instead of the much broader categories used under FOIA, and that they consider that panel's recommendations for future classification and release policies. The Commission recommendations do call for a decrease in the government-wide abuse of classification and secrecy, and they will release their records and correspondence in four and a half years, a shorter period than is usually demanded for such collections.

This request was aimed both at increasing transparency of the Commission's work, and its public credibility, and at countering the current administration's obsession with secrecy, a trend that began even before 9/11. Special White House Executive Orders give the sitting president control over all the official papers of the last two office holders. Teams of people have been assigned to examine previously declassified records at the National Archives and reclassify them. The Justice Department has offered the full weight of its legal team to any agency challenged to produce records under the Freedom of Information Act. Numerous law suits have been brought to challenge decisions to withhold records of meetings and operations from the public. An unprecedented level of classification actions has taken place since the Bush administration came to office, totaling over 14 million decisions in the last year.

Not only has evidence been concealed from the public in this case, it has been destroyed. Large amounts of potentially forensically significant materials were removed from the attack sights in New York and DC in a short period of time, and some of the metal was sold for scrap. Recordings of conversations among air traffic controllers on duty on 9/11, including reminiscences about their experiences, were inexplicably and wrongfully destroyed by an FAA supervisor in New York. Claims were made by investigators that some of the "black box" recording devices from the planes involved in the attacks, though built to withstand crashes and fires, were destroyed or damaged to the extent that recordings could not be restored. Photographic evidence from the Pentagon attack was confiscated by FBI investigators, but never made public. Footage from security cameras at the Dulles airport was not made public until the report was released, and the existence of other such footage in Boston's Logan airport has never been confirmed or released.

After the failures of the Warren Commission investigation, and the Watergate and Conragate investigations to resolve public doubts about the scope and nature of illegal activities and the role of government agencies in them, the 9/11 Commission cannot hope

to gain credibility over time without transparency and full disclosure. They have the opportunity to continue that process at the Congressional hearings and in the many public appearances they will make as part of the new 9/11 Public Discourse project, but only if they are willing to be fully forthcoming with the victim families and the public about the questions that remain.

9/11 Omissions

What follows is a discussion of key areas of research that the Commission either omitted from the report or contradictions in their assumptions, statements and conclusions based on the evidence and testimony presented. These are research areas that in our view have the potential to bear the most fruit in any further investigation, and that have sufficient public sources of information or possible investigation to be within the reach of any independent inquiry. These areas of interest also incorporate some of the unanswered questions that still remain.

“Intelligence Failures”

As stated in our earlier Citizen’s Critique of the Commission process, one of the primary weaknesses of the investigation was that it followed directly in the footsteps of the congressional Joint Inquiry into intelligence collection prior to 9/11, which framed the entire matter as a “failure”. Many of the recommendations of the Commission are adopted directly from those of the Joint Inquiry, including the consolidation of control over intelligence agencies under a single director.

Following this premise, the Commission failed to pursue the historical framework that connects the growth and continuation of Islamic fundamentalism, militancy and terrorism with a standing policy of US covert operations abroad that view such groups as both positive and negative assets at different junctures, and continue to support them for clandestine purposes, often hidden by one agency from another, or from congressional or even executive scrutiny.

The international policies and economic goals that drove these covert operations over the last five decades were not in keeping with the democratic ideals of the country, nor were they open to public debate or consent. Actions taken in secret, and in our name, led directly to the overthrow of popular governments, the assassination of elected leadership, and the establishment and arming of despotic regimes. However, the global community saw the US hand behind the events while most Americans assumed that the clandestine agencies and military operations carried out abroad were in their best interest and that of other people around the world. (Killing Hope, Bill Blum, Common Courage Press, 1995)

The Historical Framework: Deep Politics

A closer scrutiny of this “deep politics” reveals that the interests of small groups of investors and ideologues drove the policies, more in relation to immediate profits from the sales of illegal drugs and weapons and access to key resources and the labor to produce them cheaply than to any stated ideals. A complex interrelationship of international criminal cartels, paramilitary organizations, undemocratic forces, and US intelligence agencies created an amoral pragmatism framed in winning the Cold War at any cost, and maintaining and spreading the hegemony of global corporate expansion and access to markets, including the destruction of governments who stood in the way of that agenda, even if democratically chosen. (Oil, Drugs & War, Peter Dale Scott).

During the 1980s and 1990s, Europe and other parts of the world saw the rise of terrorist activities that were ultimately sponsored by elements of their national security state, specifically by police and military covert operations groups, willing to use the public response to the violence as a reason to justify increased state repression against a wide range of dissident groups. Similar tactics were proposed in the US from the 1960s on, through military intelligence, CIA and FBI, including the infamous COINTELPRO program that tried to manipulate progressive groups into violence among themselves, or to provoke illegal violence against the state in order to allow a repressive response against the organizations targeted. In Europe this was known as a “strategy of tension”.

The two largest and most costly covert operations in US history were conducted by both CIA and DIA when William Casey was Director of Central Intelligence. Both involved joint funding from Saudi Arabia, the corrupt Bank for Credit and Commerce International, drug and weapons sales, and the support of viciously violent paramilitary forces opposing popularly elected governments.

One involved a coup by reactionary Islamic fundamentalists, and the arming, training and support, through the cover of the ISI military intelligence agency of Pakistan, of the mujehaddin guerillas in Afghanistan to fight the Soviet Union’s intervention on behalf of the targeted government. Long after the ouster of the socialist government of Afghanistan and the ultimate rise of the brutal Taliban regime, the US was still supporting the fundamentalists there. In 1998, the Taliban was offered a payment in exchange for allowing Union Oil of California (UNOCAL) to build a pipeline from the Caspian Sea basin to the Indian Ocean. In 2001, the US sent \$43 million to the Taliban to curb opium production, which has now returned to approximately 85% of the world’s supply under the US-backed government in power. (Taliban, Ahmed Rashid and Scott, op.cit.)

The other major operation involved covert transshipments of US missiles through Israel into Iran at a time when we were also arming and supporting Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Funds from this operation were also used to support the Contra operations against the government in Nicaragua. Again, Saudi Arabia played an equal partner/broker role through BCCI. The resultant scandal, since such funding for the Contras was illegal, was tagged “Contragate”.

The people who created, conducted and covered-up these operations from the American people range across five administrations, starting with President Jimmy Carter's security advisor, Zbigniew Brezezinski, to William Casey, intelligence director under both Presidents George H.W. Bush and Ronald Reagan, the operations and military interventions of the Clinton years, and a host of "Contragators" who were appointed by the current President Bush into high level cabinet positions. These include Colin Powell, John Poindexter, Otto Reich, Elliott Abrams, and Richard Armitage.

The intelligence agencies, the defense and weapons establishment and even the covert operations outlast Presidential terms and successions, each new elected leader inheriting willingly or not the continuing policies and interventions of their predecessors. Dependency on this "military-industrial-intelligence complex," was warned about in the first draft of President Eisenhower's final address, but never successfully opposed or avoided.

The hidden "black budget" of US intelligence operations helped to put Saddam Hussein in power in Iraq, armed both sides of the regional war between Iran and Iraq, introduced weapons of mass destruction to unstable regions of the world, armed and supported Afghani drug kingpin Hekmyatar and his protégé Osama bin Laden when they opposed the USSR, facilitated and relied on the growth of illegal drug markets in Southeast Asia, Latin and Central America, and in Afghanistan as one source of funding for US-backed paramilitary groups like the Kosovo Liberation Army, the Nicaraguan Contras, and the rising Islamic militants that would become known as "al Qaeda". In many cases, these forces were remnants of previously dictatorial regimes put in place and supported by the US, and ousted by democratic changes in the social order. Evidence of support for such groups by different elements of the covert operation arms of US intelligence agencies and their international allies continued up to the attacks on 9/11 as well as beyond.

By posing 9/11 as an "intelligence failure" of the agencies that can be remedied by increasing their funds, their powers, their lack of accountability and their capabilities for more covert operations, the Commission investigation failed to address the most glaring "failure" of that system of secrecy at home and manipulations abroad that has gained the US many of its current critics and enemies in other countries.

The Commission criticizes a lack of effective Congressional oversight on these agencies, but recommends passing control of their budgets, the only leverage Congress has over them, into the hands of a White House-appointed Director of National Intelligence instead. The two individuals most responsible for that oversight, Senator Porter Goss and Representative Bob Graham were the initiators of the Joint Inquiry that defined "intelligence failures" as the central problem in the 9/11 attacks and response. Goss is now being promoted to the strengthened position of Director of Central Intelligence at the CIA by the Bush administration.

These massive “failures” have never led to any internal agency actions to hold key people responsible or to take away their positions or powers. The DoD has reportedly finished its internal investigation, yet no one has lost rank or been brought to an inquiry of any kind. The CIA is said to be continuing its own unfinished review, now three years after the attacks. The Inspector General at the Justice Department has recently completed a review as well. These studies are no doubt classified as well, but Congress could ask for an accounting.

The Roots of Al Qaeda

No thorough understanding of the events of 9/11 can emerge without a full study of the history of the development of militant Islam and the creation and nature of what is referred to as al Qaeda. This generic term refers to “the base” or foundation upon which the aspirations of Islamic fundamentalists to create theocratic states or gain political control is built. It is a term that covers many different and diverse terrorist groups across many countries, not all of whom share the same leadership or agendas at any given time. A comparable term here would be “The Movement” in reference to a wide range of organizations mobilizing for social change. The term al Qaeda does not refer to a single, monolithic organization or even to a single source of leadership or goals. This is counter to its common usage in mainstream media which depicts it as a top-down, structured organization led by Osama bin Laden and his circle of supporters.

It is also critical to realize much of the funding for weapons and the training of potential terrorists came historically from United States intelligence agencies and from Saudi Arabia. Also, in the case of bin Laden and Hekmyatar in Afghanistan, the sale of opium fueled the operations of these groups and the governments that provide them shelter or sanction.

Osama bin Laden has been involved in many different struggles in a wide range of countries, and has reportedly carried out operations in France, Bosnia, Chechnya, Russia, Malaysia and other countries. His loyalties and his alliances are not fully known, but for many years they included US intelligence support. His family has also worked closely with the CIA and the US military, taking contracts to fortify and equip the various caves in Afghanistan that was the hiding and staging ground for bin Laden and the other mujehaddin.

There were reports in the international press post-9/11 indicating that both his family and American officials continued to have contact with bin Laden. The director of the Pakistani ISI, an intelligence agency that had served as the main conduit of CIA funds to the mujehaddin, lost his position for being too closely related to bin Laden and the Taliban right after 9/11 suggests an ongoing relationship. In fact, he was responsible for directing a

transfer of \$100,000 through an intermediary to Mohammed Atta, one of the suspected terrorist pilots on 9/11.

Suspects and plot

The public was never presented with the promised State Department “White Paper” that Secty. Colin Powell promised would make the case linking the murder suspects to bin Laden. It is not yet clear to many researchers that the 10 hijackers of 9/11, most of whom were Saudi Arabian, were directly related to or working under the direction of Osama bin Laden.

George Tenet of the CIA and other top analysts said that the events indicated 9/11 was a sophisticated, state-level covert operation, requiring massive support and capabilities. His first suspicions were that it came from the Taliban. The Joint Inquiry report found that “foreign countries” had a role, its authors hinting at Saudi Arabia but refusing to directly name any of them. Thus, to date, we may not know the real sponsors behind 9/11.

The idea that a group of 19 individuals, working independently with only sanction and a small budget would or could form a successful mass suicide pact on 9/11 capable of piloting huge planes into buildings at high speeds still stretches credulity for many reasons. One is the lack of any documented mass suicide pacts that were not forensically determined to be murders instead. One is the varied piloting skills of those named as pilots in planes that banked at high speeds or spiraled almost 360% while diving to fly just above the ground at over 500 knots into the Pentagon.

Another major problem in the official conclusions is that international press reported that as many as eight of the suspects were using false identification because the people named and pictured were still alive overseas. While this would not be surprising in a covert or illegal operation of this scale, we have never been given any independent verification of the names used by those who boarded the attack planes, nor what their real names are if they used false identities. Such false identity could be passed to many individuals, and yet the Commission builds its case on the movements and activities of the 19 official suspect names. In intelligence parlance, claiming an identity as cover for an operation can also be used to create a “legend”, a false history that will later lead investigators to accept a false sponsorship for the events.

The airline manifests that were claimed in testimony to the Commission to be the source of the 19 names made public so quickly have never been officially released in any form that contains any of those names. The first evidence linking the names to the events came from a story about a “road rage” argument in Logan airport’s parking area between a man traveling to Seattle that day and “four Arab men”. A call later in the day to the FBI by the individual accosted led them directly to an automobile that contained such clues as a copy of the Koran and a flight manual for a 757 in Arabic, and that had been rented that

morning north of Boston by individuals using some of the suspects identification cards. The second major piece of evidence was luggage left behind at the airport that was identified as belonging to Mohammed Atta, and which contained incriminating evidence. It was not clear why this luggage did not accompany the flight.

Another area ripe for detailed research is the repeated pattern of public attention and FBI suspicion regarding these suspects, which did not lead to their questioning or detention. These range from FBI field agent requests for further inquiries that were turned down and ignored, to activities in both Venice, Florida and Langley, Virginia that led to people calling in complaints about them that were not pursued. Another example that the Commission sees as only a failure to share information among agencies was their ability to pass through a number of INS, CIA, FBI and airline security scrutinizes that did not result in them being put on the appropriate watch lists or put under surveillance. This sort of “hands off” treatment is also consistent with a covert operation being given special cover.

The question of a breakdown in FBI surveillance or interest towards these suspects has been called to public attention and continued questions by whistleblowers like Colleen Rowley, Robert Wright and Sybil Edmonds. The story of John O’Niell is also instructive, an FBI counter-terrorism expert focused on bin Laden since the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center building who was pressured to leave the FBI and then took over security at the Twin Towers, dying there on the day of the attack. There is more to be learned in each of these stories as well as press accounts of other whistleblowers or individuals who tried to warn about the suspects and the attacks in advance.

These leads point less to a massive “intelligence failure” than to a breakdown in the standard operating procedures that occurred across the board on 9/11 or in the months prior to it. The “wall” between intelligence and law enforcement was put there for good reason, since combining these functions can lead to violations of civil liberties and due process of law, but it was not the cause of missed opportunities and miscommunications that had previously been handled routinely to initiate inquiries or place names on watch lists. Why did these procedures break down in relation to 9/11, and who was specifically responsible in each instance for this misfeasance?

Were We Unprepared?

The Commission and chairman Governor Thomas Kean have stated repeatedly their conclusion that we were “unprepared” for such an attack and forced to improvise a response. Is this assumption verified by the evidence?

The Joint Inquiry report and the press revealed numerous warnings to American intelligence and officials from foreign leaders, governments or intelligence networks about immanent attacks during the months preceding the 9/11 attack. Some had more detail than

others, but if combined they were warning of a serious incident abroad on in the US, involving foreign terrorist cells, perhaps involving planes, meant to cause a spectacular level of destruction. These were either not conveyed to other organizations as would be the normal practice or they were ignored.

Another unexplored related area of inquiry should be the specific forewarnings about taking commercial flights on 9/11 (San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown, Salman Rushdie, and unnamed “Pentagon brass,” according to Newsweek). The Commission attempted to dismiss Ashcroft’s decision to stop taking commercial flights in the period before 9/11 during his testimony, claiming it had to do with routine security considerations. It was reported but not explored whether Cheney, who was also reported to have stopped using commercial aircraft in advance, was doing it in relation to warnings about a 9/11 style event.

At a press conference on the issuance of the Joint Inquiry report, 9/11 CitizenWatch asked Senator Richard Shelby about Condaleeza Rice’s claims that no one could have imagined planes being hijacked and used as weapons prior to 9/11. Shelby revealed that their investigation had found numerous instances of planes being used as weapons in similar ways, or plans for doing so, all related to Osama bin Laden or other militant Islamic groups. But in response to a follow up question about whether there was evidence found of precautions being taken in response to these pre-911 findings, Shelby conferred with another person present and said “on advice from counsel, my answer is no”.

Were preparations made in response to the revelations of the Bojinka Plot in the Philippines in the mid-90’s? Were they a classified matter?

9/11 CitizensWatch co-founder John Judge was told by the head of security at the Pentagon, Colonel Robinson in 1999 that they were on Delta alert, their highest status, due to “bomb threats from Muslims every day”, and that they had installed “cameras and radar on the roof so they don’t try to run a plane into the building. A surface-to-air missile port was installed on the White House lawn following an attack by a small private plane that landed on the White House lawn during the Clinton administration. Special precautions were made to protect President Bush from a threat to use an airplane as a weapon against him during the economic summit in Genoa in 2000.

In addition to these preparations, there were numerous agency readiness and security/response drills and exercises proposed and carried out up to 9/11 regarding airplanes crashing into the structures by the Pentagon, the National Reconnaissance Organization and NORAD, the North American Regional Air Defense system that guards America’s shores and skies from air attacks.

So, even if interagency memos failed to inform every level of the government to the possibility of hijacked planes being used as weapons here and abroad, the agencies later

attacked as well as those tasked to defend them knew of the possibility and prepared for it. Forewarnings to individuals and inexplicably useless prior preparations for the attacks at the specific target sites involved indicate more than confusion about a possible method of attack. In testimony to the Commission, Rice and other officials took the position that while the system might have known or suspected such attacks, they personally did not - an answer that, if true, should raise the issue of competence to sit as a National Security officials.

Undefended Skies

Perhaps the most troubling area investigated by the Commission was the lack of air defense in New York, and Washington, DC on 9/11 in response to multiple air emergencies involving large civilian airliners. The final version of events compiled by the Commission fails to explain violations of procedure by several government agencies and three layers of defense structure that day.

During recent Congressional testimony, Senator Mark Dayton raised numerous inconsistencies between the timelines and accounts of events provided by NORAD and FAA officials at Commission hearings last year, and those given at the final hearings in June by the same agencies and endorsed by the Final Report. Though last spring's testimony was not given under oath, it is still improper for a government agency to provide false or misleading information to any governmental inquiry. Significantly enough, NORAD officials on both occasions praised the Commission staff for helping them "prepare our testimony" and for "correcting our timeline".

9/11 CitizensWatch has prepared an exhaustive timeline for each flight and the national command structure, drawing on a combination of all known sources, including press or published accounts, testimony before the Commission, staff and other written statements, government documents and regulations, and a careful indexing of the Final Report, and statements to Congressional hearings. This has revealed not only the false assumptions used to create the Commission narrative, but also glaring discrepancies in testimony and even at different points in the report or staff statements.

These are the major areas that raise concern, highlight false assumptions, or warrant further investigation:

- When a transponder fails or is turned off, communication with air traffic controllers is cut off, planes veer off course for even a short period of time, or commands from towers are ignored by pilots, these are all considered significant and urgent signs of an air emergency that must be addressed immediately. The first response to these signs is to attempt to establish communication with the pilot to correct the situation, but failing that after a period of minutes, superiors above the level of the individual controllers are notified. Signs of air emergencies in all four

flights on 9/11 occurred as early as 8:13 am, and in each case at a time significantly distant from their impact into buildings or the ground to allow for reporting and the required intervention.

- These FAA officials in turn notify military liaisons at their centers and Pentagon officials at the National Military Command Center, who in turn activate within minutes a response by NORAD defense systems and either designated or tasked fighter jets that are scrambled to go airborne and intercept and engage in a variety of ways the plane in question. Testimony and timing suggests that in all four cases, there was sufficient time to notify officials and scramble an effective response before the planes did their damage, but that did not happen on 9/11. Conflicting testimony also suggests that officials along the chain of response were all notified in a timely manner but failed to act. However, in a total of 67 incidents in the months prior to 9/11, the air emergency defense system had worked efficiently.
- There is no requirement in FAA or DoD regulations that air emergencies have to be officially or otherwise suspected to be hijacking in order to generate a scramble defense response by NORAD and FAA. There is certainly no requirement on behalf of controllers or others to wait until such a determination is made to notify, alert and scramble interceptor jets toward an emergency. In fact, such close communication and contact, as well as pilot observation is usually the best basis for determining the nature of the air emergency. Once determined, a wide range of options and rules of engagement apply. However, officials at the top levels of command over NORAD and the NMCC have stated publicly or testified that they did not respond immediately because the FAA had not declared these planes to be hijackings. The Commission makes a similar case, tracking NORAD responses only from the point that certain flights are declared as hijackings.
- In each case, there were multiple clear indicators ranging from radar feedback, controller communications, transmissions from cockpits, calls from airline attendants to airline headquarters, or observed behavior to declare these flights as air emergencies well before they became air disasters. Although some turned off transponders, which are usually relied on by controllers for quick identification of radar signatures, and for altitude and speed readings, the planes were not invisible to primary radar and could have been tagged by alert controllers or military personnel. The Commission would have us believe that both the FAA and NORAD were unable to properly track or identify as hijack situations either Flight 77 or Flight 93 until they were down or too close to their targets to respond.
- Air defense interceptors are usually armed jet fighters, F-16 or F-18 craft with pilots trained to fly at very high speeds, up to 1,800 mph, and to know intercept

procedures. In order to reach such speeds, they have to be airborne to a certain height, and can usually do that within a few minutes along pre-designated routes that will not interfere with commercial traffic. Once airborne and ready, they will be given destinations or coordinates for the actual plane they are to intercept. They will be guided toward their target by FAA controllers, who will clear a path through commercial traffic. On 9/11 they worked to clear such paths for the hijacked planes until all flights were ordered to land nationwide. Contact can be established within 10-15 minutes, and then certain procedures are followed based on the situation. However, interceptors do not have to be armed in all air emergency situations, and in most cases a combination of eye contact, signals, or flight maneuvers they can guide cooperative planes out of trouble or accompany and track hijacked planes to their ultimate destinations. These rules of engagement are standard procedure, or can be altered by the chain of command in special situations.

- Although NORAD was engaged in readiness exercises on 9/11, and certain planes were in the air on training missions, there was ample response time to send up fighters from the two designated NEADS bases at Otis and Langley Field, or to task other available planes from other bases. DoD regulations allow for any base commander to respond to an air defense situation as well. Otis AFB in Massachusetts and Pomona Air Field in New Jersey were both alerted directly by controllers at FAA's Boston Center to scramble planes before the Pentagon was attacked, but neither did so at the time. The 177th ANG unit at Pomona had two unarmed fighters on the tarmac that could have been tasked but were called back to arm the planes instead. Canadian fighters are also under NORAD command, and the Canadian officer at NORAD headquarters that day could have ordered planes from their base northeast of New York to scramble. Planes from Andrews AFB, which routinely guard DC airspace, were airborne on training duties, but close enough that they could have been alerted and sent towards DC. The Otis AFB pilots were eventually scrambled, but arrived in New York after the second Tower was hit. These pilots told others on their base they had wanted to turn to intercept Flight 77, but the Commission report states that they were ordered to stay in New York airspace. Fighters eventually scrambled from Otis and Langley AFBs were not given target coordinates or destinations once they reached proper altitude until it was too late to engage them. Langley pilots told reporters they assumed they were being sent to New York, flying first to a point more distant from DC than their base, and were then turned towards Baltimore according to the Commission because of a false report that Flight 11 was still southbound towards DC, although there was no radar signature. These pilots were later asked to confirm that the Pentagon had been hit, and were close enough to see a plume of smoke rising from it. All planes were scrambled long after controllers and officials knew there were urgent air emergencies involving the four planes, for periods that ranged up to 35 minutes, and NORAD acknowledged that all four planes could

have been intercepted had normal notification and procedure been followed instead. However, the testimony by NORAD and the Commission conclusions about when they had notice of each emergency are contradictory and change over time and according to sources. If we accept the official account, no notice of hijacking was given by FAA until too late to scramble the planes, but this is a very misleading interpretation of events, since the initial air emergency signs should have been determinant.

- The Commission took a good deal of testimony regarding whether or not there was a shoot down order given on 9-11 and when. Vice President Cheney confirms that such an order was given, but only after the Pentagon was hit, and planes scrambled belatedly by Andrews AFB were unarmed, but pilots considered ramming any threatening planes. No shoot down order seems to have been carried out, though rumors persist regarding the cause of the crash of Flight 93. None of the pilots interviewed heard about a shoot down order, and a ranking officer over NORAD testified that he did not convey the order to the pilots concerned. This seems a clear break in the chain of command or dereliction of duty, but there were no charges brought against him. In light of the testimony about the timing of the shoot down order, agreed to by both Bush and Cheney, there is a section of testimony by Secretary of Transportation Minetta concerning a conversation he overheard on arrival at the White House Situation Room. His statement to the Commission reveals that when he arrived the White House was being evacuated, and that a short time later, Flight 77 struck the Pentagon. The conversation was between Cheney and an unidentified young lieutenant:

MR. HAMILTON: We thank you for that. I wanted to focus just a moment on the Presidential Emergency Operating Center. You were there for a good part of the day. I think you were there with the vice president. And when you had that order given, I think it was by the president, that authorized the shooting down of commercial aircraft that were suspected to be controlled by terrorists, were you there when that order was given?

MR. MINETA: No, I was not. I was made aware of it during the time that the airplane coming into the Pentagon. There was a young man who had come in and said to the vice president, "The plane is 50 miles out. The plane is 30 miles out." And when it got down to, "The plane is 10 miles out," the young man also said to the vice president, "Do the orders still stand?" And the vice president turned and whipped his neck around and said, "Of course the orders still stand. Have you heard anything to the contrary?" Well, at the time I didn't know what all that meant. And --

MR. HAMILTON: The flight you're referring to is the --

MR. MINETA: The flight that came into the Pentagon.

MR. HAMILTON: The Pentagon, yeah.

MR. MINETA: And so I was not aware that that discussion had already taken place. But in listening to the conversation between the young man and the vice president, then at the time I didn't really recognize the significance of that. And then later I heard of the fact that the airplanes had been scrambled from Langley to come up to DC, but those planes were still about 10 minutes away. And so then, at the time we heard about the airplane that went into Pennsylvania, then I thought, "Oh, my God, did we shoot it down?"

MR. HAMILTON: Let me see if I understand. The plane that was headed toward the Pentagon and was some miles away, there was an order to shoot that plane down.

MR. MINETA: Well, I don't know that specifically, but I do know that the airplanes were scrambled from Langley or from Norfolk, the Norfolk area. But I did not know about the orders specifically other than listening to that other conversation.

MR. HAMILTON: But there were military planes in the air in position to shoot down commercial aircraft.

MR. MINETA: That's right. The planes had been scrambled, I believe, from Otis at that point.

MR. ROEMER: Nice to see you, Mr. Secretary, and nice to see you feeling better and getting around as well, too. I want to follow up on what happened in the Presidential Emergency Operations Center and try to understand that day a little bit better. You said, if I understood you correctly, that you were not in the room; you were obviously coming from the Department of Transportation, where you had been busy in a meeting in official business, but you had not been in the room when the decision was made -- to what you inferred was a decision made to attempt to shoot down Flight 77 before it crashed into the Pentagon. Is that correct?

MR. MINETA: I didn't know about the order to shoot down. I arrived at the PEOC at about 9:20 a.m. And the president was in Florida, and I believe he was on his way to Louisiana at that point when the conversation that went on between the vice president and the president and the staff that the president had with him.

MR. ROEMER: So when you arrived at 9:20, how much longer was it before you overheard the conversation between the young man and the vice president saying, "Does the order still stand?"

MR. MINETA: Probably about five or six minutes.

MR. ROEMER: So about 9:25 or 9:26. And your inference was that the vice president snapped his head around and said, "Yes, the order still stands." Why did you infer that that was a shoot-down?

MR. MINETA: Just by the nature of all the events going on that day, the scrambling of the aircraft and, I don't know; I guess, just being in the military, you do start thinking about it, an intuitive reaction to certain statements being made.

MR. ROEMER: Who was the young man with the vice president?

MR. MINETA: Frankly, I don't recall.

The significance of this testimony cannot be overlooked. This clearly occurs in the period before the Pentagon is struck and also clearly indicates that at least the White House, and by implication NORAD or other defense systems are aware of its approach. The question raised begins at a point when the plane is "50 miles out," which is the Air Defense Intercept Zone around P-56, the restricted air space circling the Capitol and White House that is protected locally by a separate command center, and by fighters from Andrews AFB and the Anacostia ANG unit, both within a few miles of DC. No other plane besides Flight 77 gets within 50 miles of DC. They are not mistakenly tracking Flight 11 because it had no recognizable radar signature south of New York City that could be tracked in terms of mileage from DC. Flight 93 crashed in Shanksville, PA, over 160 miles from DC. Local officials knew a plane was headed for DC in advance, as in indicated here by the White House evacuation taking place at 9:20 am. Local News Channel 8 announced this evacuation as well as at the Capitol and the Pentagon, and warned a plane was headed to DC before the Pentagon was struck. As the plane nears the young lieutenant returns at intervals to question an order given by Cheney, and is then brusquely told the "order stands." Although Minetta assumes it is a shoot down order, what planes are available to carry it out? Arguably the Otis fighters could have been tasked, but they were not according to the Commission. No other interceptors were yet airborne at that time. And if it is not a shoot down order, what is it? In addition, the Commission does not include this incident in its Final Report, but does mention a discussion between Cheney and another unidentified military member, timed at 10:15 am, concerning a plane that is "80 miles out", where Cheney confirms that they should "engage". This does not concern any of the four attack planes, since they were all down at that point.

There are other issues worthy of investigation and more work to be done on the report itself. Our earlier critique covered the issues strategy of tension incidents in which intelligence agencies encourage or assist in creating domestic terrorist incidents in order to increase domestic repression or destroy dissenting organizations. Operation Northwoods, proposed by the Joint Chiefs to blame Cuba for such incidents here, and the FBI's COINTELPRO and CIA's Chaos programs used similar goals and tactics.

Another major area not investigated, though within its purview, were the as yet unsolved anthrax attacks that followed the month after 9/11. Forensic evidence points to a strain and a very sophisticated weaponization that had to have originated here within the biological warfare establishment, and investigations pointed to Fr. Dietrick, MD, the CIA's Operation Clear Vision and the DIA's Project Jefferson to create a more lethal and distributable form of anthrax. To date, the investigations have halted at that juncture.

Qui bono?

There has been speculation along the lines of who might have benefited from creating the 9/11 attacks or allowing them to happen. These range from the Project for New American Century neo-conservatives now in the White House, who longed for a "new Pearl Harbor" to justify a "Pax Americana, to unidentified stock options traders, to oil producers and weapons manufacturers. The problem is that who might benefit from or take advantage of a situation only identifies possible suspects, it does not prove their guilt. There are many rationales that could be posited for the aftermath of a domestic terrorist attack, including a permanent war economy, establishment of a stronger security state, or erosion of civil liberties to give more power to the government. It seems more important to address these responses and their shortcomings, and to criticize anyone who would take advantage of such a tragedy for any purpose, than to try to assign blame based solely on benefit. A thorough investigation of the actual sponsorship of 9/11 or what made it possible for so much normal procedure and prepared defense to fail that day may eventually reveal a motive and the means.

Why an independent commission?

The tasks ahead for concerned citizens include expanding this criticism to include the policy recommendations being pushed through Congress, and further research and investigation into the failures and contradictions of the 9/11 Commission's Final Report. There are many other areas and details not included here because time for analysis has not yet allowed a finished review of all the data available or the complete record still being released.

One important step would be to push for a Congressional review of the study, not the recommendations, and perhaps for legislation to force the release of the records so recently denied us. Senators Wyden and Lott have introduced a bill to change the

classification and secrecy procedures, perhaps they can be approached along with others to make the Commission's work transparent and open to review by the public.

While recent polls have shown a certain level of public skepticism about government failures or complicity in regard to 9/11, and there is also sentiment in support of continued investigation, especially in New York, the national mood is arguable different and would require education and exposure of the flaws of the Commission and its report before there would be any rationale for an independent review panel. This work remains to us, but could be accomplished by adding commentary to the 9/11 Public Discourse meetings wherever they occur, and holding other public panels that will really inform people using hard research and evidence to contest the official story.

APPENDICES

Comparative Timelines:

Flight 11

Flight 175

Flight 77

Flight 93

9/11 Source Bibliography

This report relied on the research and work of many people. John Judge and Kyle Hence of 9/11 CitizensWatch continue to compile it, Paul Thompson and Derrick Mitchell of Cooperative Research, Alan Duncan, Khalid Rosenberg, Gary Lapon, Penny Schoner, David Ratcliffe, Dan Alcorn, Peter Dale Scott, William Kelly, Len Bracken, many victim family members, and many more have added to public understanding of 9/11 and this Commission's process.

TIMELINE FOR FLIGHT AA11

(cr) = www.cooperativeresearch.org 9/11 timeline; (nt) = NORAD Timeline released 9/17/01; (p. #) = 9/11 Commission Report

TIME	SUSPECTS/ WITNESSES	ATC	FAA	NMCC/ OFFICIALS	NORAD	SCRAMBLERS
0553	Hijackers Mohamed Atta and Abdulaziz Alomari board a Colgan Air flight from Portland, Maine, to Boston. They are filmed going through security in Portland. This is the only footage of the hijackers in airports on 9/11, and it's not even one of the suicide flights. (cr)					
0600	Mohamed Atta and Abdulaziz Alomari's flight from Portland, Maine to Boston takes off. [FBI, 10/4/01] Two passengers later say Atta and Alomari board separately from each other, keep quiet, and don't draw attention to themselves. (cr)					
0630	A man has an argument with five Middle Eastern men over a parking space in the parking lot of Boston's Logan Airport. Later in the day he reports the event, and the car is discovered					

	to have been rented by Mohamed Atta. Inside, police find a ramp pass, allowing access to restricted airport areas. (cr)					
0645	“Approximately two hours prior to the first attack”, at least two workers at the instant messaging company Odigo receive messages warning of the WTC attack. This Israeli owned company has its headquarters two blocks from the WTC.] (cr)					
Between 0645 and 0740	Atta and Omari, along with Satam al Suqami, Wail al Shehri, and Waleed al Shehri, checked in and boarded American Airlines Flight 11, bound for LA. The flight was scheduled to depart at 7:45. (p. 1)					
0650	Mohamed Atta and Abdulaziz Alomari’s flight from Portland arrives on time at Boston’s Logan Airport. (cr)					
Between 0731 and 0740	All five men cleared the checkpoint and made their way to the gate for American 11. Atta, Omari, and Suqami took their seats in business class					

	<p>(seats 8D, 8G, and 10B, respectively). The Shehri brothers had adjacent seats in row 2 (Wail in 2A, Waleed in 2B), in the firstclass cabin. They boarded American 11 between 7:31 and 7:40. The aircraft pushed back from the gate at 7:40. (p. 2)</p>					
0745	<p>Mohamed Atta and Abdulaziz Alomari board Flight 11. Atta's bags contain airline uniforms and many other remarkable things, but are checked through to his final destination, making them unusable for the attacks. The bags are not loaded onto the plane in time and are later found by investigators. But at least two other hijackers on Flight 11 are able to use stolen uniforms and IDs to board the plane. (cr)</p>					
Before 0759	<p>Hijacker Mohamed Atta on Flight 11 calls hijacker Marwan Alshehhi in Flight 175 as both planes sit on the runway. They confirm the plot is on. (cr)</p>					
0759		<p>Flight 11 takes off from Boston's</p>				

		<p>Logan Airport, 14 minutes after scheduled departure. (cr) (p. 4)</p> <p>Takeoff (p. 32)</p>				
<p>0813-0830 (various times given on cr)</p>		<p>Shortly after flight controllers ask Flight 11 to climb to 35,000 feet, the transponder stops transmitting. A transponder is an electronic device that identifies a jet on a controller's screen, which gives its exact location and altitude. Among other vital functions, it is also used to transmit a four-digit emergency hijack code. Air traffic manager Glenn Michael later says, "We considered it at that time to be a possible hijacking." "When given permission to climb to 35,000 feet," 8:13, shortly after trying emergency frequencies, 8:15, "Just moments" after radio contact is lost, Initial stories after 9/11 suggest the transponder is turned off around 8:13, but one year after 9/11, Pete Zalewski, the flight controller handling the flight, says the transponder is turned off at 8:20.</p>				

		<p>[The 9/11 Commission later places it at 8:21. Colonel Robert Marr, head of NORAD's Northeast Air Defense Sector, later claims the transponder is turned off some time after 8:30. (cr)</p>				
0813	<p>Flight 11 is hijacked around this time.(cr)</p>	<p>The last routine communication takes place between ground control and the pilots of Flight 11. Flight controller Pete Zalewski is handling the flight. The pilot responds when told to turn right, but immediately afterwards fails to respond to a command to climb. Zalewski repeatedly tries to reach the pilot, even using the emergency frequency, but still gets no response.(cr)</p> <p>In the case of American 11, the last normal communication from the plane was at 8:13 A.M. EDT. (p. 459)</p>				
0814		<p>At that same time, American 11 had its last routine communication with the ground when it acknowledged navigational instructions from the FAA's air traffic control</p>				

		(ATC) center in Boston. Sixteen seconds after that transmission, AT C instructed the aircraft's pilots to climb to 35,000 feet. That message and all subsequent attempts to contact the flight were not acknowledged. From this and other evidence, we believe the hijacking began at 8:14 or shortly thereafter. (p. 4, 32)				
After 0814		After the hijacking begins, the pilot of Flight 11, John Ogonowski, activates the talk-back button, enabling Boston flight controllers to hear what is being said in the cockpit. Transmission continues until 0838. (cr)				
0815		Two Boston flight controllers, Pete Zalewski and Lino Martins, discuss the fact that Flight 11 can't be contacted. (cr)				
About 0819	About five minutes after the hijacking began, Betty Ong contacted the American Airlines Southeastern Reservations Office in Cary, North Carolina, via an AT&T airphone to report an					

	<p>emergency aboard the flight. This was the first of several occasions on 9/11 when flight attendants took action outside the scope of their training, which emphasized that in a hijacking, they were to communicate with the cockpit crew. The emergency call lasted approximately 25 minutes, as Ong calmly and professionally relayed information about events taking place aboard the airplane to authorities on the ground. (p. 5, 32)</p>					
0820	<p>Flight 11 attendant Amy (Madeline) Sweeney uses an Airfone to call Logan Airport. She speaks to Michael Woodward, an American Airlines flight service manager about the hijacking. (cr)</p>	<p>Boston flight control decides that Flight 11 has probably been hijacked. (cr)</p> <p>Flight 11 starts to veer dramatically off course. (cr)</p> <p>Flight 11 stops transmitting its IFF (identify friend or foe) beacon signal. (cr)</p>				
Before 0821	<p>Four hijackers get up from their seats and stab or shoot passenger Daniel Lewin. (cr)</p>					
0821	<p>Woodward relays hijacking info to Nancy Wyatt, a Logan supervisor, who</p>	<p>Boston flight controller Pete Zalewski, handling Flight 11, sees that the</p>				

	<p>notifies AA top management, who then decide to keep things quiet. (cr)</p>	<p>flight is off course and has both transponder and radio off. Tom Roberts, has another nearby American Airlines flight try to contact Flight 11. There is still no response. The flight is now “drastically off course” but NORAD is still not notified. (cr)</p> <p>Transponder is turned off (p. 32)</p> <p>Flight attendant Betty Ong calls Vanessa Minter, an AA reservations agent in North Carolina, using an Airfone from the back of the plane. Officials on the ground don’t believe it’s a hijacking. (cr)</p>				
0822	<p>Amy Sweeney attempted by airphone to contact the American Airlines flight services office at Logan, which managed the scheduling and operation of flight attendants. Sweeney’s first attempt failed, as did a second at 8:24 (p.453 #32)</p>					
0823		<p>Nydia Gonzalez, an AA supervisor with expertise on security matters, is patched in to a call with Ong. Gonzalez contacts ATC. (cr)</p>				

		At 8:23, the AA dispatcher tried unsuccessfully to contact the aircraft (AA 11) (p. 5, 32)				
0824		<p>The pilot of Flight 11, John Ogonowski, activates the talk-back button, enabling Boston flight controllers to hear a hijacker talking to passengers. Immediately after hearing this voice, Flight controller John Zalewski “knew right then that he was working a hijack” and calls for his supervisor. The frequency of Flight 11 is played on speakers so everyone in Boston flight control can hear. (cr)</p> <p>Boston flight control radar sees Flight 11 making an unplanned 100-degree turn to the south. (cr)</p> <p>At 8:24:38, the following transmission came from American 11: We have some planes. Just stay quiet, and you’ll be okay. (p. 19)</p>	Before this [100 deg.] turn, the FAA had tagged Flight 11's radar dot for easy visibility. (cr)			
0825		The Guardian reports that Boston flight control “notifies several air traffic control centers that a hijack is taking place.” (cr)	FAA Boston Center aware of hijacking (p. 32)			

Between 0825 and 0832			Between 8:25 and 8:32, in accordance with the FAA protocol, Boston Center managers started notifying their chain of command that American 11 had been hijacked. (p. 19)			
0826-0830	<p>Woodward ID's hijackers using seating info relayed by Sweeney. This conflicts with where Ong said they were sitting. Sweeney indicates Alomari, Atta, and Al Suqami. (cr)</p> <p>At 8:26, Ong reported that the plane was "flying erratically." A minute later, Flight 11 turned south. American also began getting identifications of the hijackers, as Ong and then Sweeney passed on some of the seat numbers of those who had gained unauthorized access to the cockpit. (p. 6)</p>					
0828			Boston flight control center calls the FAA's Command Center in Herdon, Virginia, and tells them that it believes Flight 11 has been hijacked and is			

			heading towards New York airspace. (cr)			
0829			The ATC specialist in American's operations center contacted the FAA's Boston Air Traffic Control Center about AA 11. The center was already aware of the problem. (p. 5)			
0830			The FAA's Command Center in Herndon, Virginia begins their usual daily senior staff meeting. National Operations Manager Ben Sliney interrupts the meeting to report a possible hijacking in progress, as the Center has been told about the Flight 11 hijacking a few minutes earlier. (cr)	Captain Charles Leidig, the Deputy for Command Center Operations at the National Military Command Center (NMCC) takes over temporarily from Brigadier General Montague Winfield and is effectively in charge of NMCC during the 9/11 crisis. (cr)		
0832			At 8:32, the Command Center passed word of a possible hijacking of AA 11 to the Operations Center at FAA headquarters. The duty officer replied that security personnel at headquarters had just begun discussing the apparent hijack on a conference call with the			

			New England regional office. FAA headquarters began to follow the hijack protocol but did not contact the NMCC to request a fighter escort. (p. 19)			
0834		the Boston Center controller received a third transmission from American 11: "Nobody move please. We are going back to the airport." (p. 19)	Ben Sliney, the FAA's National Operations Manager, soon gets word of the message "We have some planes" and later says the phrase haunts him all morning. (cr)			<p>Boston flight controllers attempt to contact the military through the FAA's Cape Cod facility...result of call is unclear. Lt. Col. Duffy recalls being warned: "I was just standing up by the ops desk and I was told I had a phone call. I asked who it was and they said the [Boston] Tower calling and something about a hijacking. It was Flight American 11, a 767, out of Boston going to California. At the time we ran in and got suited up." (cr)</p> <p>Around this time, Boston flight control attempts to contact an Atlantic City, New Jersey air base, to send fighters after Flight 11, but don't reach anyone. (cr)</p>
0835		Sweeney Tells Woodward that the plane begins a rapid descent. (cr)				
0836		On Flight 11, flight attendant Betty Ong reports that the plane tilts all the way on one side and then becomes horizontal again. Flight attendant				

		Amy Sweeney then reports on her phone that the plane has begun a rapid descent. (cr)				
0837		<p>Flight controllers ask the United Airlines Flight 175 pilots to look for a lost American Airlines plane 10 miles to the south— a reference to Flight 11. They respond that they can see it. They are told to keep away from it.</p> <p>Just prior to this, Flight 11 passes from Boston flight control airspace into New York flight control airspace. John Hartling was the New York flight controller put in charge of the hijacked flight.(cr)</p>			<p>Boston flight control contacts NEADS (NORAD's Northeast Air Defense Sector) at this time about AA 11. This is apparently the first successful notification of the military about the crisis that morning. Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Powell, a member of the Air National Guard at NEADS, initially takes the call from Boston Center. (cr)</p>	<p>NORAD gives the command to scramble fighters after Flight 11 after being notified. Lt. Colonel Dawne Deskins at NEADS tells Colonel Robert Marr, head of NEADS, “I have FAA on the phone, the shout line, Boston Center. They said they have a hijacked aircraft.” Marr then calls Major General Larry Arnold at NORAD's command Center in Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, and says, “Boss, I need to scramble [fighters at] Otis [Air National Guard Base].” Arnold recalls, “I said go ahead and scramble them....”(cr)</p>
0838		<p>Flight 11 pilot John Ogonowski's periodic activation of the talk-back button, begun around 8:14, stops around this time. It is suggested that means this is when the hijackers replace him as pilot. (cr)</p> <p>UA 175 reports spotting AA 11. (p. 454 #42)</p>			<p>Boston Center notifies NEADS of hijacking (p. 32)</p> <p>In response to allegations that NORAD responded more quickly to the October 25, 1999, plane crash that killed Payne Stewart than it did to the hijacking of American 11, we compared NORAD's response time for each incident. The</p>	

					<p>last normal transmission from the Stewart flight was at 9:27:10 A.M. Eastern Daylight Time. The Southeast Air Defense Sector was notified of the event at 9:55, 28 minutes later. In the case of American 11, the last normal communication from the plane was at 8:13 A.M. EDT. NEADS was notified at 8:38, 25 minutes later. We have concluded there is no significant difference in NORAD's reaction to the two incidents. (p. 459)</p>	
0840					<p>NEADS is notified by the FAA of AA 11. (nt)</p>	<p>Major Daniel Nash says that at this time, a colleague at the Otis Air National Guard Base tells him that a flight out of Boston has been hijacked, and to be on alert. (cr)</p>
0841		<p>Bottoglia has just been told by the pilot of Flight 175 that he's heard threatening communications from Flight 11 (see 8:41 a.m.). Seconds later, a controller sitting next to Bottoglia gets up and points to a radar blip. He says,</p>				

		<p>“You see this target here? This is American 11. Boston center thinks it's a hijack.” Someone keyed the mike and said: ‘Everyone stay in your seats.’ It cut out.” (cr)</p> <p>At 8:41, in American’s operations center, a colleague told Marquis that the air traffic controllers declared Flight 11 a hijacking and “think he’s headed toward Kennedy. They’re moving everybody out of the way. They seem to have him on a primary radar. They seem to think that he is descending.” (p. 6)</p> <p>The crew of UA 175 reported having “heard a suspicious transmission” from another aircraft shortly after takeoff, “like someone keyed the mike and said everyone stay in your seats.” (p. 454 #42)</p>				
0844	<p>At 8:44, Gonzalez reported losing phone contact with Ong. About this same time Sweeney reported to Woodward, “Something is wrong. We are in</p>					

	<p>a rapid descent . . . we are all over the place.” Woodward asked Sweeney to look out the window to see if she could determine where they were. Sweeney responded: “We are flying low. We are flying very, very low. We are flying way too low.” Seconds later she said, “Oh my God we are way too low.” The phone call ended. (p. 6)</p>					
0845	<p>At American Airline's headquarters in Fort Worth, their crisis command center used in emergencies is activated: “Confirmed hijacking Flight 11.” However, pilots on other American flights apparently are not notified. Top managers gather at the command center and watch the radar blip of Flight 11 until it disappears over New York City.(cr)</p>	<p>Amy Sweeney is asked on the phone if she can recognize where she is. She says, “I see the water. I see the buildings. I see buildings,” then after a pause, a quiet “Oh, my God!” Mere seconds later the line goes dead. Meanwhile, flight attendant Betty Ong ends her call repeating the phrase “Pray for us” over and over. Apparently there is quiet instead of screaming in the background. (cr)</p>				
0846	<p>AA 11 hits WTC (nt)</p> <p>At 8:46:40, American 11 crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City. (p. 7)</p> <p>8:46 – North Tower (Exec.</p>	<p>Rick Tepper, a flight controller at the Newark, New Jersey tower, looks across the Hudson River at New York City in time to see the explosion caused by Flight 11. Word begins to spread among ATCs about the</p>	<p>Shortly after the North Tower of the WTC is hit at 08:46:26 by Flight 11, the FAA has an open telephone line with the Secret Service, keeping them informed of all events. (cr)</p>		<p>NEADS scrambles Otis fighter jets in search of AA11 (p. 32)</p>	<p>Two F-15 fighters are ordered to scramble from Otis Air National Guard Base in Massachusetts to find Flight 11. Supposedly, NORAD makes the decision to scramble after only one phone call, as the decision is made to act first</p>

	Summ. p. 1)	hit. (cr)				and get clearances later. (cr) Fighter Scramble Order (Otis, two F-15s). The fighters are 153 miles away from the WTC and not airborne at time of crash. (nt) Officials activate the Conplan—the Interagency Domestic Terrorism Concept of Operations Plan. (cr)
0848			While the controller was still trying to locate American 11, a New York Center manager provided the following report on a Command Center teleconference about American 11: Manager, New York Center: Okay. This is New York Center. We're watching the airplane. I also had conversation with American Airlines, and they've told us that they believe that one of their stewardesses was stabbed and that there are people in the cockpit that have control of the aircraft, and that's all the information they have right now. (p. 21)		Canadian Air Force Major General Rick Findley, in charge of battle stations at NORAD's Colorado headquarters, sees news of AA11's hit on CNN. (cr)	
0850		As soon as Boston flight controllers hear news that a plane might have hit			NEADS personnel were still trying to locate AA 11. Word reached	

		the WTC, they know it was Flight 11. They have been tracking it continually since it began behaving erratically. It takes "several minutes" for Boston to report to NORAD that Flight 11 is responsible. (cr)			them that a plane had hit the World Trade Center. (p. 20)	
0852						Two F-15s take off from Otis Air National Guard Base, six minutes after being ordered to go after Flight 11. (cr) Fighters airborne (nt)
0853						Otis fighter jets airborne (p. 32)
0900				Inside the National Military Command Center, the deputy director of operations and his assistant began notifying senior Pentagon officials of the incident. At about 9:00, the senior NMCC operations officer reached out to the FAA operations center for information. Although the NMCC was advised of the hijacking of American 11, the scrambling of jets was not discussed. (p. 35)		
0903			A manager at Boston flight			

			control reports to the FAA's New England regional headquarters the "we have some planes" suggesting there may be multiple hijackings. (cr)			
0905			Boston Center confirmed for both the FAA Command Center and the New England Region that the hijackers aboard American 11 said "we have planes ." At the same time, New York Center declared "ATC zero"—meaning that aircraft were not permitted to depart from, arrive at, or travel through New York Center's airspace until further notice. (p. 23)			
0906		All air traffic facilities nationwide are notified that the Flight 11 crash into the WTC was probably a hijacking. (cr)				
0907			FAA controllers at Boston Center, which had tracked the first two hijackings, requested at 9:07 that Herndon Command Center "get messages to airborne aircraft to increase security for the cockpit." There is no evidence that Herndon took			

			such action. Boston Center immediately began speculating about other aircraft that might be in danger, leading them to worry about a transcontinental flight—Delta 1989—that in fact was not hijacked. (p. 10)			
0913						<p>The FAA cleared the airspace. Radar data show that at 9:13, when the Otis fighters were about 115 miles away from the city, the fighters exited their holding pattern and set a course direct for Manhattan. (p. 24)</p> <p>NOTE: Overall distance from Otis AFB, MA to New York City, NY is approximately 234.81 miles by car. Otis jets scrambled a longer route, going over the Atlantic to a point 115 miles east of New York, then holding, and arriving in NYC at 9:25. The overall average speed during those 32 minutes would have been 440 mph. If they “flew like scalded apes” it would have been to the holding point only. The average speed from 9:13 to 9:25, covering 115 miles in 12 minutes was 575 mph. Both speeds are well</p>

						below the capacity of the jets, which can top 1,500 mph.
0916		AA headquarters aware that Flight 11 has crashed into WTC (p. 32)				
0919		FAA air traffic control tapes indicate that at 9:19 the FAA Air Traffic Control System Command Center in Herndon ordered controllers to send a cockpit warning to Delta 1989 because, like American 11 and United 175, it was a transcontinental flight departing Boston's Logan Airport. (p. 455)				
0921			FAA Boston Center advises NEADS that AA11 is airborne headed for Washington (p. 32)		According to the 9/11 Commission, NORAD's NEADS is contacted by Boston flight control. A controller says, "I just had a report that AA 11 is still in the air, and it's on its way towards—heading towards Washington. That was another—it was evidently another aircraft that hit the tower. That's the latest report we have. I'm going to try to confirm an ID for you, but I would assume he's somewhere over, uh, either	

					<p>New Jersey or somewhere further south.” The NEADS official asks, “He—AA 11 is a hijack? And he's heading into Washington?” The Boston controller answers yes both times and adds, “This could be a third aircraft.” Somehow Boston is told by FAA headquarters that AA 11 is still airborne, but the Commission hasn't been able to find where this mistaken information came from. (cr)</p> <p>FAA Boston Center advises NEADS that AA11 is airborne headed for Washington (p. 32)</p> <p>At 9:21, NEADS received a report from the FAA: FAA: Military, Boston Center. I just had a report that American 11 is still in the air, and it's on its way towards—heading towards Washington. (p. 26)</p>	
0924					NEADS	NEADS scrambles

					<p>scrambles Langley fighter jets in search of AA11 (p. 32)</p> <p>The notice NEADS received at 9:24 was that American 11 had not hit the World Trade Center and was heading for Washington, D.C. (p. 34)</p>	Langley fighter jets in search of AA11 (p. 32)
0925		By 9:25, FAA's Herndon Command Center and FAA headquarters knew two aircraft had crashed into the World Trade Center. (p. 25)				Radar data show that when the Otis fighters were about 115 miles away from the city, the fighters exited their holding pattern and set a course direct for Manhattan. They arrived at 9:25 and established a combat air patrol (CAP) over the city. (p. 24)
0929				<p>Inside the NMCC, the deputy director for operations called for an all purpose "significant event" conference. It began at 9:29, with a brief recap: two aircraft had struck the World Trade Center, there was a confirmed hijacking of American 11, and Otis fighters had been scrambled. The FAA was asked to provide an update, but the line was silent because the</p>	<p>NORAD confirmed that American 11 was airborne and heading toward Washington, relaying the erroneous FAA information already mentioned. (p. 37)</p>	

				FAA had not been added to the call. A minute later, the deputy director stated that it had just been confirmed that American 11 was still airborne and heading toward D.C. He directed the transition to an air threat conference call. (p. 37)		
0930						Radar data show the Langley fighters airborne at 9:30. NEADS decided to keep the Otis fighters over New York. The heading of the Langley fighters was adjusted to send them to the Baltimore area. The mission crew commander explained to us that the purpose was to position the Langley fighters between the reported southbound American 11 and the nation's capital. (p. 26)
0934				The NMCC call then ended, at about 9:34. (p. 37)		
1028	The World Trade Center's north tower collapses. It was hit by Flight 11 at 8:46. (cr)					

UNITED AIRLINES FLIGHT 175 TIMELINE

(cr) = www.cooperativeresearch.org ; (nt) = NORAD Timeline
 released 9/17/01; (p. #) = 9/11 Commission Report

TIME	PASSENGERS/ WITNESSES	ATC	FAA	NMCC/ OFFICIALS	NORAD	SCRAMBLERS
Between 0723 and 0728	Shehhi and his team, none of whom had been selected by CAPPs, boarded UA 175 (Banihammad in 2A, Shehri in 2B, Shehhi in 6C, Hamza al Ghamdi in 9C, and Ahmed al Ghamdi in 9D). (p. 2)					
0758 – 0833		UA 175 pushed back from its gate at 7:58 and departed Logan Airport at 8:14. By 8:33, it had reached its assigned cruising altitude of 31,000 feet. The flight attendants would have begun their cabin service. (p. 7)				
Before 0759	Hijacker Mohamed Atta on Flight 11 calls hijacker Marwan Alshehhi in Flight 175 as both planes sit on the runway. They confirm the plot is on. (cr)					
0814		Flight 175 takes off from Boston's Logan Airport, 16 minutes after the scheduled departure time. (cr) Takeoff (p. 32)				
0837		Flight controllers ask				

		the United Airlines Flight 175 pilots to look for a lost American Airlines plane 10 miles to the south— a reference to Flight 11. They respond that they can see it. They are told to keep away from it. (cr)				
0838		UA175 reports spotting AA 11. (p. 454 #42)				
0841		The pilots of Flight 175 tell ground control about Flight 11, “We figured we’d wait to go to your center. We heard a suspicious transmission on our departure out of Boston. Someone keyed the mike and said: ‘Everyone stay in your seats.’ It cut out.” The last transmission from Flight 175, still discussing this message, comes a few seconds before 8:42. (cr)				
Between 0842 and 0846	The hijackers attacked sometime between 8:42 and 8:46. They used knives (as reported by two passengers and a flight attendant), Mace (reported by one passenger), and the threat of a bomb (reported by the same passenger). They stabbed	Last radio communication. (p. 32)				

	members of the flight crew (reported by a flight attendant and one passenger). Both pilots had been killed (reported by one flight attendant). (p. 7, 32)					
0843					<p>NORAD is notified that UA175 has been hijacked. Apparently NORAD doesn't need to be notified, because by this time NEADS technicians have their headsets linked to the FAA in Boston to hear about Flight 11, and so NORAD learns instantly about Flight 175. (cr)</p> <p>FAA notification to NEADS (nt)</p>	
0844		<p>The pilot of US Airlines Flight 583 tells a flight controller, regarding UA 175, "I just picked up an ELT [emergency locator transmitter] on 121.5 it was brief but it went off." One minute later, another pilot</p>				

		says, "We picked up that ELT, too, but its very faint." (cr)				
0846		Flight 175 stops transmitting its transponder signal. It is 50 miles north of New York City, heading toward Baltimore.] However, the transponder is turned off for only about 30 seconds, then changed to a signal that is not designated for any plane on that day. This "allow[s] controllers to track the intruder easily, though they couldn't identify it." (cr)				Fighter scramble order from Otis (2 F-15s, same as for AA 11) (nt)
0847		At 8:47, seconds after the impact of American 11, United 175's transponder code changed, and then changed again. These changes were not noticed for several minutes, however, because the same New York Center controller was assigned to both American 11 and United 175. The controller knew American 11 was hijacked; he was focused on searching for				

		it after the aircraft disappeared at 8:46. (p. 21, 32)				
0849	Businessman Peter Hanson calls his father from UA 175. Despite being cut off twice, he manages to report how men armed with knives are stabbing flight attendants, apparently in an attempt to force crew to unlock the doors to the cockpit. He calls again and says good-bye just before the plane crashes. (cr)		United headquarters gets a call from the FAA saying the plane that crashed into the WTC was an American Airlines passenger plane. A manager says to Jim Goodwin, United's chairman and chief executive, "Boss, we've lost contact with one of our airplanes [Flight 175]. (cr)			
0850	Rich "Doc" Miles, manager of United's Chicago system operations center, receives a call from a mechanic at an airline maintenance center in San Francisco that takes in-flight calls from flight attendants about broken items. The mechanic says a female flight attendant from Flight 175 just called and said, "Oh my God. The crew has been killed, a flight attendant has been stabbed. We've been hijacked." Then the line goes dead. (cr)	Flight 175, already off course, makes a near complete U-turn and starts heading north towards New York City. (cr)				
0851		At 8:51, the controller				

		noticed the transponder change from United 175 and tried to contact the aircraft. There was no response. (p. 21)				
0852	<p>A male flight attendant on UA 175 called a United office in San Francisco, reaching Marc Policastro. The flight attendant reported that the flight had been hijacked, both pilots had been killed, a flight attendant had been stabbed, and the hijackers were probably flying the plane. The call lasted about two minutes, after which Policastro and a colleague tried unsuccessfully to contact the flight. In Easton, Connecticut, a man named Lee Hanson received a phone call from his son Peter, a passenger on United 175. His son told him: "I think they've taken over the cockpit—An attendant has been stabbed— and someone else up front may have been killed. The plane is making strange moves. Call United Airlines—Tell them it's Flight 175, Boston to LA." Lee Hanson then called the Easton Police Department and relayed what he had</p>	<p>Mike McCormick, head of New York flight control center, sees the first WTC attack on CNN. He assumes that Flight 175, which he is seeing on his radar screen, is also headed into the WTC. (cr)</p> <p>The controller made repeated attempts to reach the crew of United 175. Still no response. (p. 21)</p>			<p>Two F-15s take off from Otis Air National Guard Base, six minutes after being ordered to go after Flight 11. They inadvertently head toward Flight 175 instead. There are differing accounts on how long the F-15s scrambled from Oti Air National Guard Base take to reach New York City. according to a NORAD timeline just after 9/11, these planes take about 1' minutes to reach New York City (putting them there at 9:11), traveling below supersonic speeds at less than 600 mph. The 9/11 Commission later concludes that the fighters are never directed toward New York City at all, despite the accounts of the pilots and others, and head ou over the ocean instead. They don't reach New York City until 9:25. (cr)</p> <p>Fighters airborne (nt)</p>	

	heard. (p. 7, 32)					
0853		The controller checked his radio equipment and contacted another controller at 8:53, saying that “we may have a hijack” and that he could not find the aircraft. (p. 21)				
0854		UA attempts to contact the cockpit (p. 32)				
0855		The head New York flight controller notifies a manager at the facility that she believes Flight 175 has been hijacked. The manager tries to notify regional managers about this, but is told the managers are discussing the hijacking of Flight 11 and refuse to be disturbed. However, even though the controller managing Flight 175 said “we may have a hijack” at 8:53, NORAD is still not notified. The head of the flight control center, Mike McCormick, has already decided at 8:52 that Flight 175 has been hijacked and is on a suicide run to New York City (cr)	FAA New York Center suspects a hiacking (p.32)			
0858	Brian Sweeney on Flight 175	At 8:58, the				

	<p>Flight 175 calls his wife and leaves a message: we've been hijacked, and it doesn't look too good." Then he calls his mother and tells her what's happening. She recalls him saying, "We are going to try to do something about this." She recalls him identifying the hijackers as Middle Eastern. Then he tells his mother he loves her and hangs up. She turns on the television and soon sees Flight 175 crash into the WTC. The 9/11 Commission later concludes that the Flight 175 passengers planned to storm the cockpit but didn't have time before the plane crashed. (cr)</p>	<p>New York Center controller searching for United 175 told another New York controller "we might have a hijack over here, two of them." (p. 22)</p>				
<p>Between 0901-0903</p>		<p>UA 175 is an unmarked blip to flight controllers in New York City. One controller stands up in horror. "No, he's not going to land. He's going in!" "Oh, my God! He's headed for the city," another controller shouts. "Oh, my God! He's headed for Manhattan!" Managers at American Airlines' headquarters in Fort Worth, Texas closely watch radar</p>	<p>Between 9:01 and 9:02, a manager from New York Center told the Com mand Center in Herndon: Manager, New York Center: We have several situations going on here. It's escalating big, big time. We need to get the military involved with us. . . . We're, we're involved</p>			

		<p>showing UA 175 head into New York City. Yet, according to the 9/11 Commission, no one has notified NORAD. (cr)</p>	<p>with something else, we have other aircraft that may have a similar situation going on here. (p.22)</p>			
0901		<p>NY flight control contacts NY terminal approach control and asks for help in locating UA 175. Different flight controllers scan different altitudes, and terminal approach only deals with low flying planes. These low altitude flight controllers remain uninformed about what happened to AA 11 until about now: "By the time anybody saw anything, it was over." (cr)</p>	<p>A manager from New York flight control tells the FAA Command Center in Herndon, Virginia, "We have several situations going on here. We need to get the military involved. We have other aircraft." The 9/11 Commission calls this the first notification to FAA leadership of the second hijack. (cr)</p> <p>While the Command Center was told about this "other aircraft" at 9:01, New York Center contacted New York terminal approach control and asked for help in locating United 175 (p. 22)</p>			

0902	Airline Impact Time WTC 2 (estimated) (nt)		Center (at 9:02): Alright. Heads up man, it looks like another one coming in. [About UA 175 approaching NYC] (p. 22)			Fighters were 71 miles (8 minutes at .9 Mach) at the time of the crash. (nt)
0902:54	Flight 175 hits the south tower, 2 World Trade Center. (cr)					F-15 fighter jets from Otis Air National Guard Base are still 71 miles or eight minutes away when the tower is hit. (cr)
0903:11	Flight 175 crashes into 2 WTC (South Tower) (p. 32)					
0903-0908		Flight control managers ban aircraft from flying near the cities used by the hijackers. First, takeoffs and landings in New York City are stopped within a minute of the UA175 crash, without permission from DC. Boston and Newark follow suit in the next few minutes. Around 9:08, departures nationwide heading to or through New York and Boston airspace are canceled. The actual order to stop all planes from taking off at New York's La Guardia airport is given to the airplanes on the			The first indication that the NORAD air defenders had of the second hijacked aircraft, United 175, came in a phone call from New York Center to NEADS at 9:03. The notice came at about the time the plane was hitting the South Tower. (p. 23)	

		ground at 9:07. Mike McCormick, head of a Long Island, New York air traffic control center, makes the decision without consulting any superiors. Also “a few minutes” after the Flight 175 crash into the WTC at 9:03, all takeoffs from Washington are stopped. (cr)				
0903	9:03 South Tower (Exec. Summ. p. 1)	Flight controllers in Newark, New Jersey are on the phone with NY flight controllers and asked to visually find UA 175. They see it and watch in horror as it drops the last five thousand feet and crashes into the WTC. Rick Tepper (who also saw the explosion of the first crash) recalls: “He was in a hard right bank, diving very steeply and very fast. And he—as he was coming up the Hudson River, he—he made another hard left turn and—just heading for downtown Manhattan. You could see that he was trying to line himself up on the tower.			The 9/11 Commission later concludes that New York flight control tells NEADS that Flight 175 has been hijacked at this time. The Commission calls this “the first indication that the NORAD air defenders had of the second hijacked aircraft.” Robert Marr, head of NEADS, claims that he only learns a flight other than Flight 11 has been hijacked by watching Flight 175 crash into the WTC on television. However,	The minute Flight 175 hits the south tower, F-15 pilot Nash says that clear visibility allows him to see smoke pour out of Manhattan, even though NORAD says he is 71 miles away. The other pilot, Duffy, recalls “We're 60 miles out and I could see the smoke from the towers.” They call to NORAD right then for an update, and Duffy relates, “At that point, they said the second aircraft just hit the WTC. That was news to me. I thought we were still chasing AA 11,” Duffy again relates, “It was right about then when they said the second aircraft had just hit the WTC, which was quite a shock to both [Nash] and I, because we both thought there was only one aircraft out there. We were

		<p>Just before he hit the tower, he almost leveled it out and just— just hit the building.” Newark immediately calls the Air Traffic Control System Command Center in Washington and tells them they will not land any more airplanes in Newark, in an effort to keep aircraft away from NYC. It is the first step in shutting down the national airspace system. (cr)</p>			<p>after 9/11, NORAD originally concluded they were notified about Flight 175 at 8:43. Additionally, as Flight 175 crashes into the WTC, Canadian Captain Mike Jellinek overseeing the command center in NORAD's Colorado headquarters is on the phone with NEADS. He sees this live on television and asks NEADS, “Was that the hijacked aircraft you were dealing with?” The reply is yes. This contradicts the Commission's conclusion that NEADS has not yet been told about Flight 175. But even if the Commission's account is correct, Flight 175 lost radio contact at 8:42, changed transponder signals at 8:46 a flight controller called it possibly</p>	<p>probably 70 miles or so out when the second one hit. So, we were just a matter of minutes away.” He asks for clarification of their mission, but is met with “considerable confusion.” Bob Varcadapane, a Newark, New Jersey flight controller who sees the Flight 175 crash, claims, “I remember the two F-15s. They were there moments after the impact..” But the 9/11 Commission later concludes that the pilots never get near New York City at all at this time. According to the Commission's account, from 8:46 until 8:52, NORAD personnel are unable to find Flight 11. Shortly after 8:50, and just before the fighters take off, NORAD is given word that a plane has hit the WTC. So, lacking a clear target, the fighters take off toward a military controlled airspace over the ocean, off the coast of Long Island. (cr)</p>
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					<p>hijacked at 8:46 and/or 8:53 and a flight control manager called it hijacked at 8:55. The Commission has not explained why New York flight control would wait at least 10 and as many as 17 minutes before warning NORAD that Flight 175 is possibly hijacked. It would also mean that United Airlines headquarters fails to notify NORAD despite knowing the plane has been hijacked for about a dozen minutes. (cr)</p>	
0906-0916						<p>Bush is in a classroom in Sarasota, Florida and has just been told of the attacks. CNN reported in 1999, "Only the president has the authority to order a civilian aircraft shot down." The pilot of one of the planes flying to catch Flight 175 notes that it wouldn't have mattered if he caught up with it, because only Bush could order a shutdown, and</p>

						Bush is at a public event at the time. (cr)
0908						By 9:08, the mission crew commander at NEADS learned of the second explosion at the World Trade Center and decided against holding the fighters in military airspace away from Manhattan: Mission Crew Commander, NEADS: This is what I foresee that we probably need to do. We need to talk to FAA. We need to tell 'em if this stuff is gonna keep on going, we need to take those fighters, put 'em over Manhattan. That's the best thing, that's the best play right now. So coordinate with the FAA. Tell 'em if there's more out there, which we don't know, let's get 'em over Manhattan. At least we got some kind of play. (p. 23)
0909						Because the Otis fighters had expended a great deal of fuel in flying first to military airspace and then to New York, the battle commanders were concerned about refueling. NEADS considered scrambling alert fighters from Langley Air Force Base in Virginia to New York, to provide backup. The Langley fighters were placed on battle stations at

						9:09.137 NORAD had no indication that any other plane had been hijacked. (p. 24)
0909-0913						Radar data show the Otis fighters were airborne at 8:53. Lacking a target, they were vectored toward military-controlled airspace off the Long Island coast. To avoid New York area air traffic and uncertain about what to do, the fighters were brought down to military airspace to "hold as needed." From 9:09 to 9:13, the Otis fighters stayed in this holding pattern. (p. 20)
0912						At 9:12:54, the Otis fighters told their Boston Center controller that they needed to establish combat air patrol over New York, and they immediately headed for New York City. This series of communications explains why the Otis fighters briefly entered and then soon departed the holding pattern, as the radar reconstruction of their flight shows. (p.459)
0913						The FAA cleared the airspace. Radar data show that at 9:13, when the Otis fighters were about 115 miles away from the city, the fighters exited their holding pattern and set a course direct for Manhattan. (p.

						24)
0915		FAA New York Center advises NEADS that UA 175 was the second aircraft crashed into (North Tower) WTC. (p. 32)			FAA New York Center advises NEADS that UA 175 was the second aircraft crashed into (North Tower) WTC. (p. 32)	
0919	<p>United's first decisive action to notify its airborne aircraft to take defensive action did not come until 9:19, when a United flight dispatcher, Ed Ballinger, took the initiative to begin transmitting warnings to his 16 transcontinental flights: "Beware any cockpit intrusion— Two a/c [aircraft] hit World Trade Center." Ballinger was still responsible for his other flights as well as Flight 175 (p. 11)</p> <p>FAA air traffic control tapes indicate that at 9:19 the FAA Air Traffic Control System Command Center in Herndon ordered controllers to send a cockpit warning to Delta 1989 because, like American 11 and United 175, it was a transcontinental flight departing Boston's Logan Airport. (p. 455)</p>					
0920	United Airlines headquarters aware that Flight 175 had crashed into WTC (p.32)					
0925		By 9:25,				Radar data show

		FAA's Herndon Command Center and FAA headquarters knew two aircraft had crashed into the World Trade Center. (p. 25)				that when the Otis fighters were about 115 miles away from the city, the fighters exited their holding pattern and set a course direct for Manhattan. They arrived at 9:25 and established a combat air patrol (CAP) over the city. (p. 24)
						NOTE: This puts the average speed from 9:13 to 9:25, a distance of 115 miles in 12 minutes at 575 mph, well below the capacity of the jets.
0958						Speaking to Chris Henick, deputy political director to President Bush, Giuliani learns the Pentagon has been hit and asks about fighter cover over New York City. Henick replies, "The jets were dispatched 12 minutes ago and they should be there very shortly, and they should be able to defend you against further attack." If this is true, it means fighters scramble from the Otis base around 9:46, not at 8:52 as others have claimed. (cr)
0959	The south tower of the World Trade Center collapses. It was hit by Flight 175 at 9:02. (cr)					According to Major Daniel Nash, pilot of one of the two fighters first scrambled on 9/11 the fighters over New York City are never given a shoot down order by the military that day. He recalls that around the time of the collapse of the

						South Tower, "The NY controller did come over the radio and say if we have another hijacked aircraft we're going to have to shoot it down" However, he says this is an off-the-cuff personal statement, not connected to the chain of command. (cr)
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AMERICAN AIRLINES FLIGHT 77 TIMELINE

(cr) = www.cooperativeresearch.org ; (nt) = NORAD Timeline released 9/17/01; (p. #) = 9/11 Commission Report

TIME	PASSENGERS/ WITNESSES	ATC	FAA	NMCC/ OFFICIALS	NORAD	SCRAMBLERS
0718	<p>Apparently, according to a security video seen by the 9/11 Commission, AA 77 hijackers Majed Moqed and Khalid Almihdhar pass through a security checkpoint at Dulles International Airport in Washington. While their carry-on bags fail to set off any alarms, both set off alarms when passing through the magnetometer. They are directed to a second magnetometer. Almihdhar passes, but Moqed fails again. He is subjected to a personal screening with a metal detection hand wand. This time he is cleared and he is permitted to pass through the checkpoint. (cr)</p>					
0735	<p>According to the 9/11 Commission's review of airport security footage, the remaining three Flight 77 hijackers pass through a security checkpoint at Dulles International Airport in Washington. Hani Hanjour and his two carry-on bags fail to set off any alarms. One</p>					

	<p>minute later, Nawaf Alhazmi and Salem Alhazmi enter the same checkpoint. Salem Alhazmi successfully clears the magnetometer and is permitted through the checkpoint. Nawaf Alhazmi sets off the alarms for both the first and second magnetometers. He is subsequently subjected to a personal screening with a metal detection hand wand. He finally passes. In addition, his shoulder strap carry-on bag is swiped by an explosive trace detector and returned without further inspection. The video footage of the hijackers going through this security checkpoint has yet to be publicly released. (cr)</p>					
0750	<p>Majed Moqed and Khalid al Mihdhar boarded the flight and were seated in 12A and 12B in coach. Hani Hanjour, assigned to seat 1B (first class), soon followed. The Hazmi brothers, sitting in 5E and 5F, joined Hanjour in the first-class cabin. (p. 3)</p>					
0809		<p>AA 77 pushed back from its gate. (p. 8)</p>				
0820		<p>Flight 77 departs Dulles International Airport near Washington, ten minutes after</p>				

		the scheduled departure time. (cr)				
		Takeoff (p. 33)				
0825		The Guardian reports that Boston flight control “notifies several air traffic control centers that a hijack is taking place.” But supposedly they don't notify NORAD for another 6 to 15 minutes, depending on the account (see However, the Indianapolis flight controller monitoring AA 77 claims to not know about this or UA 175's hijacking twenty minutes later. (cr)				
0846		AA77 reached its assigned cruising altitude of 35,000 feet. (p. 8)				At the time of the first WTC crash, three F-16s assigned to Andrews Air Force Base, 10 miles from Washington, are flying an air-to-ground training mission on a range in North Carolina, 207 miles away. Eventually they are recalled to Andrews and land there at some point after Flight 77 crashes into the Pentagon. (cr)
0850		The last radio contact with AA 77 is made when a pilot asks for clearance to fly higher. But then, six minutes later,				

		the plane fails to respond to a routine instruction. Presumably it is hijacked during that time. The plane is being handled by the Indianapolis flight control center at this time. (cr)				
0851		AA 77 transmitted its last routine radio communication. (p.8, 33)				
Between 0851 and 0854	The hijacking began between 8:51 and 8:54. As on AA 11 and UA 175, the hijackers used knives (reported by one passenger) and moved all the passengers (and possibly crew) to the rear of the aircraft (reported by one flight attendant and one passenger). Finally, a passenger reported that an announcement had been made by the "pilot" that the plane had been hijacked. (p. 8, 33)					
0854		Flight 77 from Washington begins to go off course over southern Ohio. It turns to the southwest. (cr) Flight 77 makes unauthorized turn to south (p. 33)				
0856		Flight 77's transponder signal is turned off. According to the 9/11 Commission,				

		<p>the Indianapolis flight controller in charge of the flight had seen it go off course and head southwest before the signal disappeared. He looks for primary radar signals along its projected flight path as well as in the airspace where it had started to turn. He can't find the plane. He tries contacting the airline but gets no answer. The controller has not been told about any other hijacked planes. He assumes Flight 77 has experienced electrical or mechanical failure. Even though Flight 77 is off course with its radio and transponder not working, NORAD is supposedly not notified at this time. (cr)</p> <p>Transponder is turned off (p. 33)</p>				
After 0856		<p>Radar reconstructions performed after 9/11 reveal that FAA radar equipment tracked AA 77 from the moment its transponder was turned off at 8:56. But for 8 minutes and 13</p>		<p>The New York Times reports, "During the hour or so that American Airlines Flight 77 [is] under the control of hijackers, up to the moment it struck the west side of the Pentagon, military officials in [the Pentagon's National Military</p>		

		seconds, between 8:56 and 9:05, this primary radar information on American 77 was not displayed to controllers at Indianapolis Center. The reasons are technical, arising from the way the software processed radar information, as well as from poor primary radar coverage where American 77 was flying. (p. 25)		Command Center [are] urgently talking to law enforcement and air traffic control officials about what to do.” (cr)		
Before 0900		American Airlines headquarters in Forth Worth, Texas, learns that Flight 77 is not responding to radio calls, is not emitting a transponder signal, and flight control has lost its location. Airline executive Gerard Arpey gives an order to stop all American flight take-offs in the Northeast. Within minutes, American gets word that United also has an airliner missing and out of contact (presumably UA 175). (cr)				
0856-0905			According to the 9/11 Commission, “Radar reconstructions			

			<p>performed after 9/11 reveal that FAA radar equipment tracked [Flight 77] from the moment its transponder was turned off at 8:56.” For eight minutes and thirteen seconds, this primary radar data is not displayed to Indianapolis flight controllers. “The reasons are technical, arising from the way the software processed radar information, as well as from poor primary radar coverage where American 77 was flying.” Apparently, a radar tower in West Virginia doesn't have primary radar. (cr)</p>			
After 0900		<p>According to the 9/11 Commission, shortly after 9:00, Indianapolis flight control starts notifying other government agencies that American 77 is missing and has possibly crashed. For instance, at 9:08, Indianapolis contacts Air Force Search</p>				

		and Rescue at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, and tells them to look out for a downed aircraft. They also contact the West Virginia State Police, and asked whether they have any reports of a downed aircraft. (cr)				
0900	Renee May, a flight attendant on Flight 77, calls her mother who is living in Las Vegas, using a cell phone. She tells her mother that the flight has been hijacked, and that everyone has been asked to move to the back of the plane. She asks her mother to call American Airlines and let them know Flight 77 has been hijacked. The mother calls the airline. (cr)	At 9:00, American Airlines Executive Vice President Gerard Arpey learned that communications had been lost with American 77. This was now the second American aircraft in trouble. He ordered all American Airlines flights in the Northeast that had not taken off to remain on the ground. (p. 9) Indianapolis Center started notifying other agencies that American 77 was missing and had possibly crashed. (p. 24)		The Pentagon moves its alert status up one notch from normal to Alpha. It stays on Alpha until after AA 77 hits, and then goes up two more notches to Charlie later on in the day. (cr)		
After 0903		Controllers at the New York traffic center are briefed by their supervisors to watch for airplanes whose speed indicated that they are				A few minutes after 9:03 a.m., a squadron pilot at Andrews Air Force Base, located 10 miles from Washington, hears that two planes have crashed into the

		<p>jets, but which either are not responding to commands or have disabled their transponders. “Controllers in Washington [get] a similar briefing, which [help] them pick out hijacked planes more quickly.” (cr)</p>				<p>WTC. He calls a friend in the Secret Service to see what's going on. The Secret Service calls back, and asks whether Andrews can scramble fighters. One commander had already anticipated the need, and started preparing weapons for the fighters. But the weapons are located in a bunker on the other side of the base, and the process takes time. The fighters don't take off for about another hour and a half (10:42 a.m.). Meanwhile, there are also three unarmed F-16 fighters assigned to the Andrews base on a training mission 207 miles to the south in North Carolina. These are not recalled until much later, and don't reach Washington until 10:45 (see (10:38 a.m.)). [<u>Aviation Week and Space Technology, 9/9/02</u>] NORAD commander Major General Larry Arnold has said, “We [didn't] have any aircraft on alert at Andrews.” [<u>MSNBC, 9/23/01 (C)</u>] However, prior to 9/11, the District of Columbia Air National Guard based at Andrews had a publicly stated mission “to provide combat units in the highest possible state of readiness.”</p>
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						Shortly after 9/11 this mission statement on its website is changed, so it merely has a "vision" to "provide peacetime command and control and administrative mission oversight to support customers, DCANG [District of Columbia Air National Guard] units, and NGB in achieving the highest levels of readiness." (cr)
0905		West Virginia flight control notices a new eastbound plane entering its radar with no radio contact and no transponder identification. They are not sure it is Flight 77. Supposedly they wait another 19 minutes before notifying NORAD about it. (cr)				
0905 and after		According to the 9/11 Commission, AA 77's radar blip reappears on Indianapolis flight control's primary radar scopes after being missing for eight minutes. It is east of its last known position. It remains in air space managed by Indianapolis until 9:10, and then passes into Washington air space. Two				

		<p>managers and one flight controller continue to look west and southwest for the flight, but don't look east. Managers don't instruct other Indianapolis controllers to join the search for the flight. Neither they nor FAA headquarters issues an "all points bulletin" to surrounding centers to search for Flight 77. Newsday claims that rumors circulate the plane might have exploded in midair. But the idea they wouldn't look east is contradicted by an account that American Airlines headquarters was told Flight 77 had turned around. (cr)</p> <p>9:05 AA headquarters in aware that Flight 77 is hijacked. (p. 33)</p>				
0907		<p>At 9:07, Boston Air Traffic Control Center recommended to the FAA Command Center that a cockpit warning be sent to the pilots of all commercial aircraft to secure their cockpits.</p>				

		<p>While Boston Center sent out such warnings to the commercial flights in its sector, we could find no evidence that a nationwide warning was issued by the ATC system. (p. 455)</p> <p>FAA controllers at Boston Center, which had tracked the first two hijackings, requested at 9:07 that Herndon Command Center “get messages to airborne aircraft to increase security for the cockpit.” There is no evidence that Herndon took such action. Boston Center immediately began speculating about other aircraft that might be in danger, leading them to worry about a transcontinental flight—Delta 1989—that in fact was not hijacked. (p. 10)</p>				
0908						At 9:08, Indianapolis Center asked Air Force Search and Rescue at Langley Air Force Base to look for a downed aircraft. The center also contacted

						the West Virginia State Police and asked whether any reports of a downed aircraft had been received. (p. 24)
0909		Shortly before 9:10, suspecting that American 77 had been hijacked, American headquarters concluded that the second aircraft to hit the World Trade Center might have been Flight 77. After learning that United Airlines was missing a plane, American Airlines headquarters extended the ground stop nationwide. (p. 9)	<p>Around this time, the FAA command center reports 11 aircraft either not in communication with FAA facilities, or flying unexpected routes. Indianapolis fight control reports the loss of contact with Flight 77 to the FAA regional center. They describe it as a possible crash. This center waits 16 minutes before passing the information to FAA headquarters. (cr)</p> <p>FAA Indianapolis center also contacted the West Virginia State Police and asked whether any reports of a downed aircraft had been received. At 9:09, it reported the loss of contact to the FAA regional center. (p. 24)</p>			Supposedly, NORAD orders F-16s at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, on battle stations alert. The 9/11 Commission later concludes that the battle stations alert happens at this time. They claim the alert is not to protect Washington, but because there's concern that the fighters over NYC will run low on fuel and need to be replaced. But one pilot account says the battle stations alert doesn't happen until 9:21, and another pilot account says 9:24. (cr)
0909 to 0913						Radar data show the Otis fighters were airborne at 8:53. Lacking a target,

						they were vectored toward military-controlled airspace off the Long Island coast. To avoid New York area air traffic and uncertain about what to do, the fighters were brought down to military airspace to "hold as needed." From 9:09 to 9:13, the Otis fighters stayed in this holding pattern. (p. 20)
0910		Washington flight control notices a new eastbound plane entering its radar with no radio contact and no transponder identification. They don't realize it is Flight 77. They are aware of the hijackings and crashes of Flights 11 and 175, Yet apparently they fail to notify anyone about the unidentified plane. Another report says they never notice it, and it is only noticed when it enters radar coverage of Washington's Dulles International Airport at 9:24. (cr)				
0912	At 9:12, Renee May called her mother, Nancy May, in Las Vegas. She said her flight was being hijacked by six individuals who had					At 9:12:54, the Otis fighters told their Boston Center controller that they needed to establish a combat air patrol over New York, and

	<p>moved them to the rear of the plane. She asked her mother to alert American Airlines. Nancy May and her husband promptly did so. (p.9)</p>					<p>they immediately headed for New York City. This series of communications explains why the Otis fighters briefly entered and then soon departed the holding pattern, as the radar reconstruction of their flight shows. (p. 459)</p>
0913						<p>The FAA cleared the airspace. Radar data show that at 9:13, when the Otis fighters were about 115 miles away from the city, the fighters exited their holding pattern and set a course direct for Manhattan. (p. 24)</p>
0915 to 0930	<p>The records available for the phone calls from American 77 do not allow for a determination of which of four “connected calls to unknown numbers” represent the two between Barbara and Ted Olson, although the FBI and DOJ believe that all four represent communications between Barbara Olson and her husband’s office (all family members of the Flight 77 passengers and crew were canvassed to see if they had received any phone calls from the hijacked flight, and only Renee May’s parents and Ted Olson indicated that they had received</p>					

	such calls).The four calls were at 9:15:34 for 1 minute, 42 seconds. (p. 455)					
0916 to 0926	At some point between 9:16 and 9:26, Barbara Olson called her husband, Ted Olson, the solicitor general of the United States. She reported that the flight had been hijacked, and the hijackers had knives and box cutters. She further indicated that the hijackers were not aware of her phone call, and that they had put all the passengers in the back of the plane. About a minute into the conversation, the call was cut off. Solicitor General Olson tried unsuccessfully to reach Attorney General John Ashcroft. (p. 9)					
0918			The FAA Command Center finally issues a nationwide alert to flight controllers to watch for planes disappearing from radar or making unauthorized course changes. (cr)			
0919		At 9:19, the FAA's New England regional office called Herndon and asked that Cleveland Center advise Delta 1989 to				

		use extra cockpit security. (p. 10)				
0920	Barbara Olson call to Ted Olson 9:20:15 for 4 minutes, 34 seconds. (p. 455)	<p>According to the 9/11 Commission, Indianapolis flight control learns that there are other hijacked aircraft. Those crashes have been broadcast on CNN and all other media began broadcasting images from NY but Indianapolis is supposedly unaware until this time. The Indianapolis flight controllers begin to doubt their assumption that AA 77 has crashed and consider that it might be hijacked. (cr)</p> <p>By 9:20, Indianapolis Center learned that there were other hijacked aircraft, and began to doubt its initial assumption that American 77 had crashed. A discussion of this concern between the manager at Indianapolis and the Command Center in Herndon prompted it to notify some FAA field</p>	<p>After a discussion between the Indianapolis manager and the FAA Command Center, the Command Center notifies some other FAA facilities that Flight 77 is lost. (cr)</p> <p>At about 9:20, security personnel at FAA headquarters set up a hijacking teleconference with several agencies, including the Defense Department. (p. 36)</p>	<p>At about 9:20, security personnel at FAA headquarters set up a hijacking teleconference with several agencies, including the Defense Department. The NMCC officer who participated told us that the call was monitored only periodically because the information was sporadic, it was of little value, and there were other important tasks. The FAA manager of the teleconference also remembered that the military participated only briefly before the Pentagon was hit. Both individuals agreed that the teleconference played no role in coordinating a response to the attacks of 9/11. Acting Deputy Administrator Belger was frustrated to learn later in the morning that the military had not been on the call. (p. 36)</p>		

		facilities that American 77 was lost. (p. 24)				
0921	A companywide order for dispatchers to warn cockpits was not issued until 9:21. (p. 455)		<p>By 9:21, the Command Center, some FAA field facilities, and American Airlines join the search for Flight 77. (cr)</p> <p>According to the 9/11 Commission, the FAA Command Center advises the Dulles Airport terminal control facility in Washington to look for primary targets. By at least one account, Dulles notices AA 77 a few minutes later. (cr)</p> <p>The Command Center kept looking for American 77. At 9:21, it advised the Dulles terminal control facility, and Dulles urged its controllers to look for primary targets. (p. 25)</p> <p>By 9:21, the Command Center, some FAA field facilities, and American Airlines had started to search for American</p>		<p>According to the 9/11 Commission, NORAD's NEADS is contacted by Boston flight control. A controller says, "I just had a report that AA 11 is still in the air, and it's on its way towards—heading towards Washington. That was another—it was evidently another aircraft that hit the tower. That's the latest report we have. I'm going to try to confirm an ID for you, but I would assume he's somewhere over, uh, either New Jersey or somewhere further south." The NEADS official asks, "He—AA 11 is a hijack? And he's heading into Washington?" The Boston controller answers yes both times and adds, "This could be a third aircraft." Somehow</p>	<p>Major Dean Eckmann, an F-16 fight pilot at Langley, Virginia, recalls, "The scramble horn goes off and we get the yellow light, which is our battle stations. So at that point I go running out to the airplanes—to my assigned alert airplane—get suited up and I get into the cockpit ready to start." A few minutes before the battle stations order, Eckmann is told that the WTC has been hit by a plane. He assumes it's some kind of accident. However, another pilot, codenamed Honey (apparently Craig Borgstrom), claims the battle stations command happens at 9:24 while the 9/11 Commission claims it happens at 9:09. (cr)</p>

			77.They feared it had been hijacked. (p. 24)		Boston is told by FAA headquarters that AA 11 is still airborne, but the Commission hasn't been able to find where this mistaken information came from. (cr)	
0922:34					NEADS audio file, Mission Crew Commander, Channel 2, 9:22:34. The mission commander thought to put the Langley scramble over Baltimore and place a "barrier cap" between the hijack and Washington, D.C. (p. 461)	
0923					According to the 9/11 Commission, NEADS has just been told that the hijacked Flight 11 is still in the air and heading toward Washington. The NEADS Battle Commander says, "Okay, uh, American Airlines is still airborne. Eleven, the first guy, he's heading towards Washington. Okay? I think	

					<p>we need to scramble Langley right now. And I'm gonna take the fighters from Otis, try to chase this guy down if I can find him." The NEADS Mission Crew Commander issues the order, "Okay . . . scramble Langley. Head them towards the Washington area." (cr)</p> <p>After consulting with NEADS command, the crew commander issued the order at 9:23: "Okay . . . scramble Langley. Head them towards the Washington area. . . . [I]f they're there then we'll run on them. . . . These guys are smart." (p. 26)</p>	
0924			<p>FAA Indianapolis Center also contacted the FAA regional center to report Flight 77 missing, which passed this information to FAA headquarters at 9:24. (p. 24)</p>	<p>CNN notes that "after the FAA warned the military's air defense command that a hijacked airliner appeared to be headed toward Washington, the federal government failed to make any move to evacuate the White House, Capitol, State</p>	<p>The Langley, Virginia base gets the scramble order at 9:24. NEADS keeps their fighters from the Otis base over New York City. (cr)</p> <p>That order</p>	<p>The BBC later reports that at this time, Robert Marr, head of NEADS, gives the scramble order to the F-16 fighters based in Langley, Virginia. The 9/11 Commission concurs that the scramble order is given now. NORAD also has agreed.</p>

				<p>Department or the Pentagon.” A Pentagon spokesman says, “The Pentagon was simply not aware that this aircraft was coming our way.” Even Defense Secretary Rumsfeld and his top aides in the Pentagon remain unaware of any danger up to the moment of impact 14 minutes later. Most senators and congressmen are in the Capitol building, which is not evacuated until 9:48. Only Vice President Cheney, National Security Advisor Rice and possibly a few others, are evacuated to safety a few minutes after 9:03. Yet, since at least the Flight 11 crash, “military officials in [the NMCC] on the east side of the [Pentagon] [are] urgently talking to law enforcement and air traffic control officials about what to do.” (cr)</p>	<p>was processed and transmitted to Langley Air Force Base at 9:24. (p. 26)</p> <p>Shortly after 9/11, NORAD reported that the FAA notified them at this time that Flight 77 “may” have been hijacked and appears to be headed toward Washington. Apparently flight controllers at Dulles International Airport discover a plane heading at a high speed toward Washington, and sound an alert within moments that the plane appears to be headed toward the White House. In 2003, the FAA supported this account, but claimed that they had informally notified NORAD earlier. “NORAD logs indicate that the FAA made formal notification about American Flight 77 at</p>	<p>However, many media reports have placed it later. A pilot codenamed Honey gives a slightly different account. He claims that at this time a battle stations alert sounds, and two other pilots are given the order to climb into their F-16s and await further instructions. Then, Honey, who is the supervising pilot, talks to the two other pilots. Then, “five or ten minutes later,” a person from NORAD calls, and Honey speaks to him at the nearby administrative office. He is told that all three of them are ordered to scramble. Honey goes to his living quarters, grabs his flight gear, puts it on, runs to his plane, and takes off. Honey appears to be the codename for Captain Craig Borgstrom, because in another account it is Borgstrom who is given an alert and then talks to the two other pilots. A different pilot account has the battle stations warning three minutes earlier while the 9/11 Commission claims that it happens fifteen minutes earlier Pilot Major Dean Eckmann recalls, “They go ‘active air scramble, vector zero one zero</p>
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					<p>9:24 a.m., but information about the flight was conveyed continuously during the phone bridges before the formal notification.” Yet in 2004 the 9/11 Commission claims that both NORAD and the FAA are wrong, and NORAD is never notified by the FAA, but accidentally learns about Flight 77 at 9:34. (cr)</p> <p>FAA notification to NEADS (nt)</p> <p>In this same public testimony, NORAD officials stated that at 9:24, NEADS received notification of the hijacking of American 77. This statement was also incorrect. The notice NEADS received at 9:24 was that American 11 had not hit the World Trade Center and was heading for Washington, D.C. (p.34)</p>	<p>one, max speed'. And then I push us over to the tower frequency and get our departure clearance and they launch us out right away. We can carry M9-Heat Seekers, Side Winders for the M7-Sparrow, plus we have an internal 20mm Vulcan Cannon, and we were pretty much armed with all that. We had a pretty quick response time. I believe it was four to five minutes we were airborne from that point.’ ” The BBC reports, “Even while last minute pre-launch checks are being made, the controllers learn that a third plane —American Airlines flight 77 out of Washington—may have been hijacked.” Just before the fighters take off, the BBC says, “The pilots get a signal over the plane's transponder—a code that indicates an emergency wartime situation.” (cr)</p> <p>Fighter scramble order (Langley AFB, Hampton, Va. 2 F-16s) (nt)</p> <p>That[scramble] order was processed and transmitted to Langley Air Force Base at 9:24. (p. 26)</p>
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0925	<p>A passenger on Flight 77, Barbara Olson, calls her husband, Theodore (Ted) Olson, who is Solicitor General at the Justice Department. Ted Olson is in his Justice Department office watching WTC news on television when his wife calls. "She told me that she had been herded to the back of the plane. She mentioned that they had used knives and box cutters to hijack the plane. She mentioned that the pilot had announced that the plane had been hijacked." He tells her that two planes have hit the WTC. She feels nobody is taking charge. He doesn't know if she was near the pilots, but at one point she asks, "What shall I tell the pilot? What can I tell the pilot to do?" Then she gets cut off without warning. (cr) Barbara Olson call to Ted Olson 9:25:48 for 2 minutes, 34 seconds. (p. 455)</p>	<p>American 77.They feared it had been hijacked. At 9:25, the Command Center advised FAA headquarters of the situation. (p. 24)</p>	<p>According to the 9/11 Commission, the FAA Command Center advises FAA headquarters that American 77 is lost in Indianapolis flight control's airspace, that Indianapolis has no primary radar track, and is looking for the aircraft. The Command Center had learned this 16 minutes earlier. American Airlines headquarters has been notified of the same information before 9:00. (cr)</p> <p>By 9:25, FAA's Herndon Command Center and FAA headquarters knew American 77 was lost. (p. 25)</p> <p>Concerns over the safety of other aircraft began to mount. A manager at the Herndon Command Center asked FAA headquarters if they wanted to order a "nationwide ground stop."</p>			<p>At the White House, the video teleconference was conducted from the Situation Room by Richard Clarke, a special assistant to the president long involved in counterterrorism. Logs indicate that it began at 9:25 and included the CIA; the FBI; the departments of State, Justice, and Defense; the FAA; and the White House shelter... We found no evidence that video teleconference participants had any prior information that American 77 had been hijacked and was heading directly toward Washington. Indeed, it is not clear to us that the video teleconference was fully under way before 9:37, when the Pentagon was struck. (p. 36)</p>
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			<p>While this was being discussed by executives at FAA headquarters, the Command Center ordered one at 9:25. (p. 25)</p> <p>Herndon Command Center orders nationwide ground stop. (p. 33)</p>		
After 0925				<p>Ted Olson calls the Justice Department's control center to tell about his wife's call from AA77. Accounts vary whether the Justice Department already knows of the hijack or not. Olson merely says, "They just absorbed the information. And they promised to send someone down right away." He assumes they then "pass the information on to the appropriate people." (cr)</p> <p>The records available for the phone calls from American 77 do not allow for a determination of which of four "connected calls to unknown numbers" represent the two between Barbara and Ted Olson, although the FBI and DOJ believe that all four represent communications between Barbara</p>	

				Olson and her husband's office...9:25:48 for 2 minutes, 34 seconds. (p. 455)		
0927				<p>Cheney and Rice, in their bunker below the White House, are told by an aide that an airplane is 50 miles outside Washington and headed toward it. The plane is AA 77. Federal Aviation Deputy Chief Monty Belger says, "Well we're watching this target on the radar, but the transponder's been turned off. So we, have no identification." They are given further notices when the plane is 30 miles away, then 10 miles away, until it disappears from radar (time unknown, but the plane is said to be traveling about 500 mph and was 30 miles away at 9:30, so 50 miles would be about 3 minutes before that).</p> <p>Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta gives virtually the same account before the 9/11 Commission. However, the 9/11 Commission later claims the plane heading toward Washington is only discovered at 9:32. (cr)</p>		
0928						Richard Clarke via videoconferencing asks Joint Chiefs of Staff Vice Chairman Richard Myers, "I assume NORAD has

						<p>scrambled fighters and AWACS. How many? Where?" Myers replies, "Not a pretty picture. We are in the middle of Vigilant Warrior, a NORAD exercise, but ... Otis has launched two birds toward New York. Langley is trying to get two up now [toward Washington]. The AWACS are at Tinker and not on alert." This may be a mistaken reference to the on-going war game Vigilant Guardian. The Otis base is in Massachusetts, 188 miles east of New York City. Langley is in Virginia, 129 miles south of Washington. Tinker Air Force Base is in Oklahoma. Clarke asks, "Okay, how long to CAP over DC?" CAP means combat air patrol. Myers replies, "Fast as we can. Fifteen minutes?"(cr)</p>
0929	<p>At 9:29, the autopilot on American 77 was disengaged; the aircraft was at 7,000 feet and approximately 38 miles west of the Pentagon. (p. 9)</p>			<p>The FAA and White House Teleconferences. The FAA, the White House, and the Defense Department each initiated a multiagency teleconference before 9:30. Because none of these teleconferences—at least before 10:00—included the right officials from both the FAA and Defense Department, none</p>		

				succeeded in meaningfully coordinating the military and FAA response to the hijackings. (p. 36)		
0930	<p>The hijackers make an announcement to the passengers on Flight 77, telling them to phone their families as they are “all going to die”. They also tell the passengers that they are going to hit the White House. (cr)</p> <p>Barbara Olson call to Ted Olson 9:30:56 for 4 minutes, 20 seconds. (p. 455)</p>	Radar tracks Flight 77 as it closes within 30 miles of Washington, but controllers have yet to identify it as such. (cr)	<p>Chris Stephenson, the flight controller in charge of the Washington airport tower, says that he is called by the Secret Service around this time. He is told an unidentified aircraft is speeding toward Washington. Stephenson looks at the radarscope and sees Flight 77 about five miles to the west. He looks out the tower window and sees the plane turning to the right and descending. He follows it until it disappears behind a building in nearby Crystal City, Virginia. However, according to another account, just before 9:30 a.m., a controller in the same tower has an unidentified plane on radar, “heading toward Washington and without a</p>			<p>The three F-16s at Langley, Virginia get airborne. The pilots' names are Major Brad Derrig, Captain Craig Borgstrom, and Major Dean Eckmann, all from the North Dakota Air National Guard's 119th Fighter Wing but stationed at Langley. (cr)</p> <p>Fighters airborne (nt)</p> <p>Radar data show the Langley fighters airborne at 9:30. NEADS decided to keep the Otis fighters over New York. The heading of the Langley fighters was adjusted to send them to the Baltimore area. The mission crew commander explained to us that the purpose was to position the Langley fighters between the reported southbound American 11 and the nation’s capital. (p. 26)</p>

			transponder signal to identify it. It's flying fast, she says: almost 500 mph. And it's heading straight for the heart of the city. Could it be American Flight 77? The FAA warns the Secret Service.” (cr)			
0932		<p>According to the 9/11 Commission, the Dulles Airport terminal control facility in Washington has been looking for unidentified primary radar blips and now finds one. Several Dulles flight controllers “observed a primary radar target tracking eastbound at a high rate of speed” and notify Reagan Airport (cr)</p> <p>At 9:32, controllers at the Dulles Terminal Radar Approach Control “observed a primary radar target tracking eastbound at a high rate of speed.” This was later determined to have been Flight 77. (p. 9)</p> <p>Dulles tower</p>	<p>FAA personnel at both Reagan and Dulles airports notify the Secret Service. The identity or aircraft type is unknown. But other accounts place the discovery of this plane by Dulles earlier (see <u>9:24 a.m.</u>) and <u>9:30 a.m.</u>), and Vice President Cheney is told radar is tracking Flight 77 at 9:27. (cr)</p>			

		<p>observes radar of fast-moving aircraft (later identified as AA77). (p. 33)</p> <p>The Command Center kept looking for American 77. Dulles terminal control facility... urged its controllers to look for primary targets. At 9:32, they found one. Several of the Dulles controllers “observed a primary radar target tracking eastbound at a high rate of speed” and notified Reagan National Airport. FAA personnel at both Reagan National and Dulles airports notified the Secret Service. The aircraft’s identity or type was unknown. (p. 12)</p> <p>At 9:32, controllers at the Dulles Terminal Radar Approach Control “observed a primary radar target tracking eastbound at a high rate of speed.” This was later determined to have been Flight 77. (p.9)</p>				
0933		Chris Stephenson, the				The BBC reports that at this time,

		<p>flight controller in charge of the Reagan National Airport tower, also in Washington, says that he is called by the Secret Service. He is told an unidentified aircraft is speeding toward Washington. Stephenson looks at the radarscope and sees Flight 77 about five miles to the west. He looks out the tower window and sees the plane turning to the right and descending. He follows it until it disappears behind a building in nearby Crystal City, Virginia. (cr)</p>				<p>pilot Major Dean Eckmann gets a message as he's flying north from Langley, Virginia. "They said— all airplanes, if you come within (I believe it was) 30 miles of Washington DC, you will be shot down." (cr)</p>
0933-0938		<p>Radar data shows Flight 77 crossing the Capitol Beltway and headed toward the Pentagon. But the plane, flying more than 400 mph, is too high when it nears the Pentagon at 9:35, crossing the Pentagon at about 7,000 feet up. The plane then makes a difficult high-speed descending turn. It makes a "downward spiral, turning almost a</p>				

		<p>complete circle and dropping the last 7,000 feet in two-and-a-half minutes. The steep turn is so smooth, the sources say, it's clear there [is] no fight for control going on.” It gets very near the White House during this turn. “Sources say the hijacked jet ... [flies] several miles south of the restricted airspace around the White House.” The Telegraph later writes, “If the airliner had approached much nearer to the White House it might have been shot down by the Secret Service, who are believed to have a battery of ground-to-air Stinger missiles ready to defend the president's home. The Pentagon is not similarly defended.” Ari Fleischer suggests the plane goes even closer to the White House, saying, “That is not the radar data that we have seen. The plane was headed toward the White House.” (cr)</p>				
0934		FAA advises			According to	

		NEADS that AA 77 is missing. (p. 33)			the 9/11 Commission, NEADS contacts the FAA's Washington Center to ask about Flight 11. A manager there happens to mention, "We're looking—we also lost American 77." The Commission claims, "No one at FAA Command Center or headquarters ever asked for military assistance with American 77." Yet, 38 minutes earlier, flight controllers determined Flight 77 was off course, out of radio contact, and had no transponder signal. They'd warned American Airlines headquarters within minutes. (cr)	
0936						Reagan Airport flight control instructs a military C-130 (Golfer 06) that has just departed Andrews Air Force Base to intercept Flight 77 and identify it. Remarkably, this

						<p>C-130 is the same C-130 that is 17 miles from Flight 93 when it later crashes into the Pennsylvania countryside. The pilot, Lt. Col. Steve O'Brien, claims he took off around 9:30, planning to return to Minnesota after dropping supplies off in the Caribbean. He later describes his close encounter: "When air traffic control asked me if we had him [Flight 77] in sight, I told him that was an understatement—by then, he had pretty much filled our windscreen. Then he made a pretty aggressive turn so he was moving right in front of us, a mile and a half, two miles away. I said we had him in sight, then the controller asked me what kind of plane it was. That caught us up, because normally they have all that information. The controller didn't seem to know anything." O'Brien reports that the plane is either a 757 or 767 and its silver fuselage means it</p>
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						is probably an American Airlines plane. "They told us to turn and follow that aircraft—in 20-plus years of flying, I've never been asked to do something like that."The 9/11 Commission reports that it is a C-130H and the pilot specifically identifies the hijacked plane as a 757. Seconds after impact, he reports, "Looks like that aircraft crashed into the Pentagon sir." (cr)
0937 9:37:46	Airline impact time (Pentagon) estimated. (nt) 9:37 western face of Pentagon (Exec. Summ. p. 1) AA 77 crashes into the Pentagon (p. 33)	The blip representing Flight 77 that radar technicians have been watching on their screens disappears. Its last known position is six miles from the Pentagon and four miles from the White House. Supposedly, just before radar contact is lost, FAA headquarters is told, "The aircraft is circling. It's turning away from the White House." The plane is said to be traveling 500 mph, or a mile every seven seconds. (cr)		In response to an emergency 911 telephone call, the Arlington County Emergency Communications Center dispatches several units to deal with an apartment fire in Rosslyn, Virginia—within the vicinity of the Pentagon. Due to this fire being in a high-rise building, nine different fire and medical service units are dispatched. However, the first engine to arrive radios to the others that the fire has gone out. Consequently, by "sheer coincidence," at the time when the Pentagon is hit there are a significant number of available fire and medical service		Fighters are 105 miles from Pentagon at time of impact, 12 minutes away (nt)

				<p>units already on the road nearby. Additionally, Secret Service personnel are concentrated around the heliport a short distance from where Flight 77 will hit: "President Bush was scheduled to fly from Florida that afternoon, and his helicopter, Marine One, would carry him to the Pentagon. That meant Secret Service everywhere and their cars blocking the driveway." (cr)</p>	
0938	<p>Flight 77 crashes into the Pentagon. Approximately 125 on the ground are later determined killed or missing. Fireman Alan Wallace is busy with a safety crew at the Pentagon's heliport pad. As Wallace is walking in front of the Pentagon, he looks up and sees Flight 77 coming straight at him. It is about 25 feet off the ground, no landing wheels visible, a few hundred yards away, and closing fast. He runs about 30 feet and dives under a nearby van. The plane is traveling at about 460 mph, and flying so low that it clips the tops of street lights. Using the radio in the van, he calls his fire chief at nearby Fort Myer and says, "We have had a</p>				<p>A C-130 transport plane that has been sent to follow Flight 77 flies a short distance from Flight 77 as it crashes. This curious C-130 is the same C-130 that is 17 miles from Flight 93 when it later crashes into the Pennsylvania countryside. A number of people see this plane fly remarkably close to Flight 77. (cr) NORAD states the fighters scrambled after Flight 77 took off from Langley at 9:30, 129 miles away, yet when Flight 77 crashes they are still 105 miles away. The F-16 pilot codenamed Honey later offers a different explanation of where the F-16s are at 9:38. He says they are flying toward New York, when they see a</p>

	<p>commercial carrier crash into the west side of the Pentagon at the heliport, Washington Boulevard side. The crew is OK. The airplane was a 757 Boeing or a 320 Airbus.” (cr)</p>				<p>black column of smoke coming from Washington, about 30 or 40 miles to the west. He is then asked over the radio by the North East Air Defense Sector of NORAD if he can confirm the Pentagon is burning. He confirms it. The F-16s are then ordered to set up a defensive perimeter above Washington. [Among the Heroes, by Jere Longman, 8/02, p. 76] One of the three pilots, Major Brad Derrig later claims their target destination all along is Reagan National Airport, in Washington near the Pentagon. Another pilot, Major Dean Eckmann, also later claims their destination all along was Washington. NORAD officer Major James Fox says he dispatches the jets without targets. “That would come later.” (cr)</p>
<p>After 0938</p>				<p>Having learned that the Pentagon had been hit, Vice President Cheney telephones President Bush on his way to the airport and tells him that the White House had been “targeted.” Bush says he wants to return to Washington, but Cheney advises him not to “until we could find out what the hell was going on.” According to</p>	<p>Accounts differ as to how far the F-16 fighters scrambled from Langley are when Flight 77 crashes. The Langley, Virginia base is 129 miles from Washington. NORAD originally claimed that at the time of the crash the fighters are 105 miles away, despite having taken off seven minutes earlier. The 9/11 Commission claims that at 9:36,</p>

				<p>Newsweek, this call takes place in a tunnel on the way to the PEOC (Presidential Emergency Operations Center) underground bunker. Cheney is said to not reach the bunker until “shortly before 10 a.m.” Yet other accounts, including those of counterterrorism “tsar” Richard Clarke and Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta, place Cheney in the bunker before the Flight 77 crash at 9:38. (cr)</p>		<p>NEADS discovers that Flight 77 is only a few miles from the White House and are discovered to find the fighters have headed east over the ocean. They are ordered to Washington immediately, but are still about 150 miles away. This is farther away than the base where they took off. The F-16 pilot codenamed Honey (who is apparently Captain Craig Borgstrom offers a different explanation. He says they are flying toward New York, when they see a black column of smoke coming from Washington, about 30 or 40 miles to the west. He is then asked over the radio by NEADS if he can confirm the Pentagon is burning. He confirms it. The F-16s are then ordered to set up a defensive perimeter above Washington. The maximum speed of an F-16 is 1500 mph. [Had the fighters traveled straight to Washington at 1300 mph, they would have reached Washington at least one minute before Flight 77. (cr)</p>
0945		<p>United Airlines headquarters receives a report that an aircraft has crashed into the Pentagon.</p>				

		They learn it is Flight 77. (cr)				
0955-1010						The three F-16s scrambled after Flight 77 from Langley, Virginia finally reach Washington and the burning Pentagon. The 129 mile distance could theoretically be covered by the fighters in six minutes, but they've taken a large, mistaken detour over the ocean. The exact time they arrive is very unclear. NORAD originally claimed they arrive as soon as 9:49, but the 9/11 Commission implies they don't arrive until shortly after 10:00, though no exact time is specified. (cr)
1015	The section of the Pentagon reportedly hit by the crash of Flight 77 collapses. (cr)					
1030	AA headquarters confirms AA 77 crashes into Pentagon (p. 33)					

UNITED AIRLINES FLIGHT 93 TIMELINE

cr = www.cooperativeresearch.org ; (nt) = NORAD Timeline released 9/17/01; (p. #) = 9/11 Commission Report

TIME	SUSPECTS/ WITNESSES	ATC	FAA	NMCC/ OFFICIALS	NORAD	SCRAMBLERS
Between 0703 and 0739	Saeed al Ghamdi, Ahmed al Nami, Ahmad al Haznawi, and Ziad Jarrah checked in at the UA ticket counter for UA 93. Two checked bags; two did not. (p. 4)					
0739 – 0748	The four men board UA 93, all in first class: Jarrah in 1B, Nami in 3C, Ghamdi in 3D, and Haznawi in 6B. (p. 4)					
0801	On the morning of 9/11, there were only 37 passengers on United 93—33 in addition to the 4 hijackers. This was below the norm for Tuesday mornings during the summer of 2001. But there is no evidence that the hijackers manipulated passenger levels or purchased additional seats to facilitate their operation. (p. 11)	UA93 has to wait in a line of about a dozen planes before it can take off. (cr)				
0842		UA93 takes off from Newark International Airport, bound for San Francisco. (cr)				

		Scheduled to depart the gate at 8:00, the Boeing 757's takeoff was delayed because of the airport's typically heavy morning traffic. (p.10, 33)				
0842 to 0928	By all accounts, the first 46 minutes of Flight 93's cross-country trip proceeded routinely. Radio communications from the plane were normal. Heading, speed, and altitude ran according to plan. (p, 11)					
0843					NORAD is notified that Flight 175 has been hijacked. (cr)	
0900 or shortly thereafter		Ed Ballinger, flight dispatcher for United Airlines, sends the same warning to all United flights: "Beware of cockpit intrusion." Flight 93 replies, "Hi Ed. Confirmed." (cr)				
0907		At 9:07, Boston Air Traffic Control Center recommended to the FAA Command Center that a cockpit warning be sent to the pilots of all commercial aircraft to				

		<p>secure their cockpits. While Boston Center sent out such warnings to the commercial flights in its sector, we could find no evidence that a nationwide warning was issued by the ATC system. (p. 455)</p> <p>FAA controllers at Boston Center, which had tracked the first two hijackings, requested at 9:07 that Herndon Command Center “get messages to airborne aircraft to increase security for the cockpit.” There is no evidence that Herndon took such action. Boston Center immediately began speculating about other aircraft that might be in danger, leading them to worry about a transcontinental flight—Delta 1989—that in fact was not hijacked. (p. 10)</p>				
0912						At 9:12:54, the Otis fighters told their Boston Center controller that they needed to establish a combat air patrol over New York, and

						they immediately headed for New York City. This series of communications explains why the Otis fighters briefly entered and then soon departed the holding pattern, as the radar reconstruction of their flight shows. (p. 459)
0913						The FAA cleared the airspace. Radar data show that at 9:13, when the Otis fighters were about 115 miles away from the city, the fighters exited their holding pattern and set a course direct for Manhattan. (p.24)
0916					<p>According to a NORAD timeline from a week after 9/11, NORAD claims that Flight 93 may have been hijacked at this time. (cr)</p> <p>In public testimony before this Commission in May 2003, NORAD officials stated that at 9:16, NEADS received hijack notification of United 93 from the FAA. This statement was incorrect. There was no hijack to report at 9:16. United 93 was proceeding</p>	

					<p>normally at that time.(p. 34)</p> <p>Nor did the military have 47 minutes to respond to United 93, as would be implied by the account that it received notice of the flight's hijacking at 9:16. By the time the military learned about the flight, it had crashed. (p. 34)</p>	
0919	<p>United's first decisive action to notify its airborne aircraft to take defensive action did not come until 9:19, when a United flight dispatcher, Ed Ballinger, took the initiative to begin transmitting warnings to his 16 transcontinental flights: "Beware any cockpit intrusion— Two a/c [aircraft] hit World Trade Center." One of the flights that received the warning was United 93. (p. 11)</p>		<p>At 9:19, the FAA's New England regional office called Herndon and asked that Cleveland Center advise Delta 1989 to use extra cockpit security. (p. 10)</p>			
0920			<p>At about 9:20, security personnel at FAA headquarters set up a hijacking teleconference with several agencies,</p>	<p>At about 9:20, security personnel at FAA headquarters set up a hijacking teleconference with several agencies,</p>		

			including the Defense Department. (p. 36)	including the Defense Department. The NMCC officer who participated told us that the call was monitored only periodically because the information was sporadic, it was of little value, and there were other important tasks. The FAA manager of the teleconference also remembered that the military participated only briefly before the Pentagon was hit. Both individuals agreed that the teleconference played no role in coordinating a response to the attacks of 9/11. Acting Deputy Administrator Belger was frustrated to learn later in the morning that the military had not been on the call. (p. 36)		
0921	A companywide order for dispatchers to warn cockpits was not issued until 9:21. (p. 455)					
0922	At 9:22, after learning of the events at the World Trade Center, Melody Homer, the wife					

	of co-pilot Leroy Homer, had an ACARS message sent to her husband in the cockpit asking if he was okay. (p. 456)					
0923	Because Ballinger was still responsible for his other flights as well as Flight 175, his warning message was not transmitted to Flight 93 until 9:23. (p. 11)					
0924	Text messages from FAA warning to secure cockpits were received by Flight 93 (p. 11).	At 9:21, United dispatchers are told to advise their flights to secure cockpit doors. At 9:24, a United dispatcher sends an electronic message to Flight 93 reading: "Beware of cockpit intrusion. Two aircraft in New York hit Trade Center buildings." Flight 93 acknowledges the message two minutes later. This is the last vocal contact from the cockpit of Flight 93. (cr)				
		Flight 93 receives warning from UA about possible cockpit intrusion (p.33)				
		Text messages				

		warning the cockpit of Flight 93 were sent [and received in] (p. 11) to the aircraft by Ed Ballinger at 9:24. (p. 456)				
0925		<p>By 9:25, FAA's Herndon Command Center and FAA headquarters knew two aircraft had crashed into the World Trade Center. They knew American 77 was lost. At least some FAA officials in Boston Center and the New England Region knew that a hijacker on board American 11 had said "we have some planes."</p> <p>Concerns over the safety of other aircraft began to mount. (p. 25)</p> <p>A manager at the Herndon Command Center asked FAA headquarters if they wanted to order a "nationwide ground stop." While this was being discussed by executives at FAA headquarters, the Command Center ordered one at 9:25.</p>				

		(p.25)				
0926		At 9:24, Ballinger's warning to United 93 was received in the cockpit. Within two minutes, at 9:26, the pilot, Jason Dahl, responded with a note of puzzlement: "Ed, confirm latest mssg plz—Jason." (p. 11)				
0927	Tom Burnett calls his wife Deena and says, "I'm on United Flight 93 from Newark to San Francisco. The plane has been hijacked. We are in the air. They've already knifed a guy. There is a bomb on board. Call the FBI." Deena connects to emergency 911. (cr)	Last routine radio transmission (p.33) United Airlines Flight 93. At 9:27, after having been in the air for 45 minutes, United 93 acknowledged a transmission from the Cleveland Center controller. This was the last normal contact the FAA had with the flight. (p. 28)				
0928	Likely takeover (p. 33) The hijackers attacked at 9:28. While traveling 35,000 feet above eastern Ohio, United 93 suddenly dropped 700 feet. Eleven seconds into the descent, the FAA's air traffic control center in Cleveland received the first	Flight 93 acknowledges a transmission from a Cleveland flight controller. This is the last normal contact with the plane. Less than a minute later, the controller and pilots of aircraft in the vicinity hear "a radio transmission of				

	<p>of two radio transmissions from the aircraft. During the first broadcast, the captain or first officer could be heard declaring “Mayday” amid the sounds of a physical struggle in the cockpit. The second radio transmission, 35 seconds later, indicated that the fight was continuing. The captain or first officer could be heard shouting: “Hey get out of here—get out of here—get out of here.” (p. 11)</p>	<p>unintelligible sounds of possible screaming or a struggle” Seconds later, the controller asks: “Somebody call Cleveland?” There are more sounds of screaming and someone yelling, “Get out of here, get out of here.” Cleveland flight controller Stacey Taylor has been warned to watch transcontinental flights heading west for anything suspicious. (cr)</p> <p>Less than a minute later, the Cleveland controller and the pilots of aircraft in the vicinity heard “a radio transmission of unintelligible sounds of possible screaming or a struggle from an unknown origin.” The controller responded, seconds later: “Somebody call Cleveland?” This was followed by a second radio transmission, with sounds of screaming. The Cleveland Center controllers</p>				
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		<p>flight controllers notice the plane has descended about 700 feet. They try to contact the plane several times, but get no answer. (cr)</p> <p>At 9:30, the controller began to poll the other flights on his frequency to determine if they had heard the screaming; several said they had. (p. 28)</p>				
0930		<p>Flight controllers mistakenly suspect that Delta Flight 1989, flying west over Pennsylvania, has been hijacked. The controllers briefly suspect the sound of hijackers' voices in Flight 93 is coming from this plane..(cr)</p>				
0931		<p>At 9:31:48, ExecJet 56 also called in, reporting that "we're just answering your call. We did hear that, uh, yelling too." The FAA responded at 9:31:51, "Okay, thanks. We're just trying to figure out what's going on." (p. 461)</p>				
0931		<p>A few minutes</p>				

(after)		<p>after 9:31, a hijacker on board Flight 93 can be heard on the cockpit voice recording ordering a woman to sit down. A woman, presumably a flight attendant, implores, "Don't, don't." She pleads, "Please, I don't want to die." (cr)</p>				
0932		<p>A hijacker says over the radio to Flight 93's passengers: "Ladies and gentlemen, here it's the captain, please sit down. Keep remaining sitting. We have a bomb aboard." Apparently Cleveland flight controllers can understand about a minute of screams, then a voice again says something about a "bomb on board." A hijacker says in broken English that they are returning to the airport. (cr)</p> <p>At 9:32, a third radio transmission came over the frequency: "Keep remaining sitting. We have a bomb on board."The</p>				

		<p>controller understood, but chose to respond: "Calling Cleveland Center, you're unreadable. Say again, slowly." He notified his supervisor, who passed the notice up the chain of command. (p. 28)</p> <p>At 9:32, a hijacker, probably Jarrah, made or attempted to make the following announcement to the passengers of Flight 93: "Ladies and Gentlemen: Here the captain, please sit down keep remaining sitting. We have a bomb on board. So, sit." The flight data recorder (also recovered) indicates that Jarrah then instructed the plane's autopilot to turn the aircraft around and head east. (p. 12)</p>				
0932		<p>Like Atta on Flight 11, Jarrah apparently did not know how to operate the communication radios; thus his attempts to</p>	<p>We have reviewed all FAA documents, transcripts, and tape recordings related to American 77 and have found</p>			

		<p>communicate with the passengers were broadcast on the ATC channel. Also, by 9:32 FAA notified United's headquarters that the flight was not responding to radio calls. According to United, the flight's nonresponse and its turn to the east led the airline to believe by 9:36 that the plane was hijacked. (p. 456)</p>	<p>no evidence that FAA headquarters issued a directive to surrounding centers to search for primary radar targets. Review of the same materials also indicates that no one within FAA located American 77 until the aircraft was identified by Dulles controllers at 9:32. For much of that time, American 77 was traveling through Washington Center's airspace. The Washington Center's controllers were looking for the flight, but they were not told to look for primary radar returns. (p. 460)</p>			
0934	<p>Tom Burnett calls his wife Deena a second time. He says, "They're in the cockpit." She tells him about the WTC. He responds, "Oh my God, it's a suicide mission." As they continue to talk, he tells her the plane has turned back. By this time, Deena is in communication with the FBI and others, and a</p>		<p>According to the 9/11 Commission, word of Flight 93's hijacking reaches FAA's Washington headquarters. By this time, the headquarters has established an open line of communication with the FAA Command Center at Herndon, Virginia. The Command Center continually</p>			

	policeman is at her house. (cr)		<p>updates FAA headquarters on Flight 93 until it crashes. (cr)</p> <p>By 9:34, word of the hijacking had reached FAA headquarters.(p. 28)</p> <p>Herndon Command Center advises FAA headquarters that UA 93 is hijacked (p. 33)</p>			
0935	The San Francisco United Airlines maintenance center receives a call from an unnamed flight attendant on Flight 93 saying that the flight has been hijacked. Within ten minutes, “everyone” in the United Airlines crisis center knows about the hijacking. (cr)	When Flight 93 is over Youngstown, Ohio, Cleveland flight controllers see it rapidly climb up 6,000 feet above its assigned altitude at 35,000 feet and then descend rapidly. Controllers continue to try to contact the plane but still get no response. (cr)				
0936	Flight attendant notifies UA of hijacking. UA attempts to contact the cockpit (p. 33)	Flight 93 files a new flight plan with a final destination of Washington, reverses course and heads toward Washington. The new flight plan schedules the plane to arrive in Washington at 10:28. (cr)	Cleveland flight control asks the FAA Command Center whether someone has requested the military to launch fighters toward Flight 93. Cleveland offers to contact a nearby military base. The Command Center replies that FAA personnel well			

			above them in the chain of command have to make that decision and are working on the issue. (cr)			
0937	Jeremy Glick calls his wife Lyz from Flight 93. He describes the hijackers as Middle Eastern, Iranian looking. They claimed to have a bomb. Family members immediately call emergency 911 on another line. (cr)					
After 0938						<p>A few minutes after Flight 77 crashes, the Secret Service commands fighters from Andrews Air Force Base, 10 miles from Washington, to “Get in the air now!”</p> <p>Almost simultaneously, a call from someone else in the White House declares the Washington area “a free-fire zone.” Says one pilot, “That meant we were given authority to use force, if the situation required it, in defense of the nation's capital, its property and people.”</p> <p>After the Pentagon is hit, fighters at nearby Andrews Air Force Base are still preparing to launch. One officer at Andrews recalls, “After the Pentagon, we were told there were more coming. Calls from the Secret Service and</p>

						local FAA flight control centers pour in to Andrews, as the fighter response is coordinated. However, the loading of missiles onto the fighters is time-consuming, and when they finally take off nearly an hour later, they launch without the missiles installed. (cr)
0939		The hijackers transmit over the radio: "Hi, this is the captain. We'd like you all to remain seated. There is a bomb on board. And we are going to turn back to the airport. And they had our demands, so please remain quiet." The controller responds, "United 93, understand you have a bomb on board. Go ahead," but there is no response. (cr)				
0940		The transponder signal from Flight 93 ceases but the plane is tracked by Cleveland flight controllers and at United headquarters. Altitude can no longer be determined, except by visual sightings from other aircraft. The				

		plane's speed begins to vary wildly, moving between 600 and 400 mph before eventually settling around 400 mph. (cr)				
0941	From Flight 93, Marion Birtton calls a friend. She tells him two people have been killed and the plane has been turned around. (cr)	Newark, New Jersey flight controller Greg Callahan calls an FBI agent to tell them that UA93 had been hijacked and was heading for Wash, DC. (cr) Transponder is turned off (p. 33)				
0942	From Flight 93 Mark Bingham calls his mother and says, "I'm on a flight from Newark to San Francisco and there are three guys who have taken over the plane and they say they have a bomb." (cr)					
0944					NORAD briefs NMCC on the possible hijacking of Delta 1989. Four minutes later, a representative from the White House bunker containing Vice President Cheney asks if there are any indications of other hijacked planes. Captain Charles Leidig, temporarily in charge of the	

					NMCC, mentions the Delta flight and comments, "that would be the fourth possible hijack." Flight 1989 is in the same general Ohio region as Flight 93, but NORAD doesn't scramble fighters toward either at this time. (cr)	
0945	<p>Passenger Todd Beamer is able to speak to Verizon phone representative Lisa Jefferson, with the FBI listening in. He talks for about 15 minutes. One passenger and both pilots are dead. (cr)</p> <p>Tom Burnett calls his wife a third time. She tells him about the Pentagon. Tom speaks about the bomb saying, "I don't think they have one. He says the hijackers are talking about crashing the plane into the ground. "We have to do something." He says that he and others are making a plan. "A group of us." The FBI was listening in. (cr)</p>					
0946	According to the Flight 93 voice recording,					

	<p>around this time one hijacker in the cockpit says to another, "Let the guys in now." A vague instruction is given to bring the pilot back in. It's not clear if this is a reference to an original pilot or a hijacker pilot. Investigators aren't sure if the original pilots were killed or allowed to live. (cr)</p>					
0947	<p>On Flight 93, Jeremy Glick is still on the phone with his wife Lyz. He tells her that the passengers are taking a vote if they should try to take over the plane or not. He later says that all the men on the plane have voted to attack the hijackers, who have knives but no guns. (cr)</p>					
0949		<p>The FAA orders the Pittsburgh control tower evacuated. Shortly before, Cleveland flight controllers called Pittsburgh flight control and said a plane was heading toward Pittsburgh and refusing to communicate. (cr)</p>	<p>According to the 9/11 Commission, the FAA Command Center has just twice warned FAA headquarters that United 93 is now "29 minutes out of Washington, DC." They're pulling Jeff [last name unknown] away to go talk about United 93." Command</p>		<p>NORAD (General Ralph Eberhart) directs "all air sovereignty aircraft to battle stations fully armed." This means all fighters with air defense missions are to get armed and be ready to scramble. Richard Clarke claims that after the Pentagon is hit, he ordered</p>	

			Center replies, "Uh, do we want to think about, uh, scrambling aircraft?" FAA headquarters replies, "Uh, God, I don't know." Command Center says, "Uh, that's a decision somebody's gonna have to make probably in the next ten minutes." FAA headquarters answers, "Uh, ya know everybody just left the room." (cr)		to an aide, "Find out where the fighter planes are. I want Combat Air Patrol over every major city in this country. Now"(cr)	
0950	Sandra Bradshaw calls her husband from Flight 93. She says, "Have you heard what's going on? My flight has been hijacked. My flight has been hijacked with three guys with knives." She tells him that they are in the rear galley filling pitchers with hot water to use against the hijackers. (cr)					
0953	The hijackers in the cockpit of Flight 93 grow concerned that the passengers might retaliate. One urges that the plane's fire ax be held up to the door's peephole to scare the passengers. (cr)		According to the 9/11 Commission, FAA headquarters informs the FAA Command Center that the Deputy Director for Air Traffic Services is talking to Deputy	The National Security Agency (NSA) reportedly intercepts a phone call from one of bin Laden's operatives in Afghanistan to a phone number in the Republic of Georgia. The caller says he		

			Administrator Monte Belger about scrambling aircraft after Flight 93. Headquarters is informed that the flight is 20 miles northwest of Johnstown, Pennsylvania. (cr)	has “heard good news” and that another target is still to come (presumably, Flight 93) Rumsfeld hears about it just after noon. (cr)		
0954	Tom Burnett calls his wife Deena for the fourth and last time. He specifically mentions they plan to regain control of the airplane over a rural area. (cr)					
After 0955						The Langley F-16s over Washington are told that all planes in the US have been ordered to land. At some point after this, someone from the Secret Service gets on the radio and tells the pilots, “I want you to protect the White House at all costs.” Lou and Honey (pilots) state they are never given clear and direct orders to shoot down any plane that day. (cr)
After 0956-1006				Inside his White House bunker, a military aide asks Vice President Cheney, “There is a plane 80 miles out. There is a fighter in the area. Should we engage?” Cheney immediately		Flight 93 is still in the air, and fighters are given orders to intercept it and possibly shoot it down Yet Major Gen. Paul Weaver, director of the Air National Guard, had previously claimed that no military planes were sent after Flight 93. The pilots flying over Washington say

				<p>answers “Yes.” as the fighter (or fighters) gets nearer to Flight 93, Cheney is asked twice more to confirm if the fighter should engage, and he responds yes both times. (cr)</p> <p>Montague Winfield, in charge of the Pentagon's command center, later says, “At some point, the closure time [between the fighter and Flight 93] came and went, and nothing happened, so you can imagine everything was very tense at the NMCC.” (cr)</p>		<p>they weren't told about Flight 93. An F-16 fighter near Washington heads in pursuit of Flight 93. A different explanation says, “The closest fighters are two F-16s on a training mission from Selfridge Air National Guard Base near Detroit.” These are ordered after UA93, even though but they supposedly aren't armed with any weapons. It is claimed they are supposed to crash into Flight 93 if they cannot persuade it to land.(cr)</p>
0957	<p>One of the hijackers in the cockpit asks if anything is going on, apparently meaning outside the cockpit. “Fighting,” the other one says. Officials later theorize that the Flight 93 passengers did actually reach the cockpit using a food cart as a battering ram and a shield. (cr)</p> <p>Passenger revolt begins (p. 33)</p>					
0957 and after	<p>“In the cockpit! In the cockpit!” is heard. Hijackers are</p>					

	<p>reportedly heard telling each other to hold the door. The sounds of the passengers get clearer, and in unaccented English “Give it to me!” is heard. “I’m injured,” someone says in English. Then something like “roll it up” and “lift it up” is heard. (cr)</p>					
0958	<p>CeeCee Lyles says to her husband, “Aah, it feels like the plane’s going down.” Her husband Lorne says, “What’s that?” She replies, “I think they’re going to do it. They’re forcing their way into the cockpit” Sandy Bradshaw tells her husband, “Everyone’s running to first class. I’ve got to go. Bye.” Todd Beamer ends his long phone call saying that they plan “to jump” the hijacker who has the bomb. In the background, the phone operator could hear an “awful commotion.” His famous last words are said to nearby passengers: “Are you ready guys? Let’s roll!” A man calls 911 from a bathroom on the plane, crying, “We’re</p>					

	<p>being hijacked, we're being hijacked!" then reports that "he heard some sort of explosion and saw white smoke coming from the plane and we lost contact with him One minute after the call began, the line goes dead. Investigators believe this was Edward Felt. (cr)</p>					
0959 (after)				<p>Some time after the first WTC tower collapsed, Richard Clarke orders all landmark buildings and all federal buildings in the US to be evacuated. He also orders all harbors and borders closed. While he is arranging this, and after at least 10:06, an aide tells him, "United 93 is down, crashed outside of Pittsburgh. (cr)</p>		
1000	<p>Elizabeth Wainio says to her stepmother, "Mom, they're rushing the cockpit. I've got to go. Bye," then hangs up. This may have been a delayed reaction to events, since her stepmother says that in their ten-minute call Elizabeth was in a trance-like state. (cr)</p>	<p>The transponder for Flight 93 briefly turns back on. The plane is at 7000 feet. The transponder stays on until about 10:03. It is unclear why the transponder signal briefly returned. (cr)</p>				

<p>Between 1000 and 1006</p>	<p>Richard Makely, listening to the Glick open phone line after Glick went to attack the hijackers. “The silence last[s] two minutes, then there [is] screaming. More silence, followed by more screams. Finally, there [is] a mechanical sound, followed by nothing.” Sources claim the last thing heard on the cockpit voice recorder is the sound of wind—suggesting the plane had been holed.” (cr)</p>					
<p>1001</p>			<p>According to the 9/11 Commission, the FAA Command Center tells FAA headquarters that a nearby plane had seen Flight 93 “waving his wings.” The Commission says, “The aircraft had witnessed the radical gyrations in what we believe was the hijackers' effort to defeat the passenger assault.” Bill Wright is apparently piloting this nearby plane. (cr)</p>			<p>The FAA orders F-16 fighters to scramble from Toledo, Ohio. Although the base has no fighters on standby alert status, it manages to put fighters in the air 16 minutes later, a “phenomenal” response time—but still 10 minutes after the last hijacked plane has crashed. The 9/11 Commission concludes these fighters, and fighters from Michigan are scrambled after Delta Flight 1989. Meanwhile, no fighters are scrambled after Flight 93 at all. (cr)</p>
<p>1002</p>	<p>The cockpit</p>			<p>The White</p>		

	<p>voice recording of UA 93 was recorded on a 30 minute reel, which means that as new tape was recorded the old tape was being erased. The government later lets relatives listen to this tape, which begins at 9:31 and runs for 31 minutes. at the peak of the struggle, the tape suddenly stops recording voices and all that is heard in the last 60 seconds or so is engine noise. (cr)</p>			<p>House bunker containing Vice President Cheney and other leaders begins receiving reports from the Secret Service of a presumably hijacked aircraft heading toward Washington. The Secret Service is getting this information about UA 93 through links to the FAA. But they are looking at a projected path, not an actual radar return, so they don't realize when the plane crashes. (cr)</p>	
1003	<p>Airline Impact Time (Pennsylvania) estimated. (nt)</p> <p>10:03 field in southern Pennsylvania (aimed at Capitol of White House, forced down by passengers) (Exec. Summ. p. 1)</p> <p>Flight 93 crashes into field in Shanksville, PA (p. 33)</p>			<p>According to the 9/11 Commission, the NMCC learns about the Flight 93 hijacking. The news comes from the White House. The White House learned about it from the Secret Service, and the Secret Service learned about it from the FAA. NORAD apparently is still unaware. (cr)</p>	<p>Fighters (DC F-16 CAP) were 100 miles away from UA 93 at time of crash, which is about 11 minutes away. (nt)</p>
1003-1010			<p>The FAA gives a crash time of 10:07 a.m. And The New York Times, drawing on flight controllers in more than one FAA facility, put the time at</p>	<p>A seismic study authorized by the US Army to concluded that UA93 crashed at 10:06:05. (cr)</p>	<p>According to NORAD, Flight 93 crashes at 10:03. The 9/11 Commission gives an exact time of 10:03:11. (cr)</p>

			10:10. (cr)			
Before 1006	Several witnesses report seeing and/or hearing UA93 crash. There are reports of hearing a "missile," seeing the plane turn end over end, spiral, and turn upside down, a sudden plunge, and loud "bangs" and "thumps." (cr)					CBS television reports at some point before the crash that two F-16 fighters are tailing Flight 93. Shortly after 9/11, a flight controller in New Hampshire claims "that an F-16 fighter closely pursued Flight 93... the F-16 made 360-degree turns to remain close to the commercial jet, the employee said. 'He must've seen the whole thing,' the employee said of the F-16 pilot's view of Flight 93's crash." (cr)
After 1006					At some point after Flight 93 crashes, NORAD diverts "unarmed Michigan Air National Guard fighter jets that happened to be flying a training mission in northern Michigan since the time of the first attack." (cr)	Just after Flight 93 crashes, "Up above, a fighter jet streak[s] by." The 9/11 Commission concludes these fighters [from Michigan], and fighters from Ohio are scrambled after Delta 1989, a flight that was never hijacked or out of contact. (cr)
1007		FAA Cleveland Center advises NEADS of UA 93 hijacking (p. 33)				According to the 9/11 Commission, NEADS receives a call from Cleveland flight control about Flight 93. Cleveland passes on the plane's last known latitude and longitude. NEADS is unable to

					locate it on radar because it has already crashed. (cr)	
1008		Cleveland flight controller Stacey Taylor has asked a nearby C-130 to look at Flight 93's last position and see if they can see anything. The pilot who witnesses this is the same C-130 pilot that had witnessed the Flight 77 crash. He tells Taylor that he saw smoke from the crash shortly after the hijacked plane went down. (cr)	According to the 9/11 Commission, the FAA Command Center reports to FAA headquarters at this time that Flight 93 has crashed in the Pennsylvania countryside. "It hit the ground. That's what they're speculating, that's speculation only." The Command Center confirms that Flight 93 crashed at 10:17 (cr)			
1010						According to the 9/11 Commission, The NEADS Mission Crew Commander is sorting out the orders Langley fighters have. Not knowing that Flight 93 had been heading toward Washington nor that it had crashed, he explicitly instructs the Langley fighters that they cannot shoot down aircraft—they have "negative clearance to shoot" aircraft over Washington. (cr)
1010-1015				The Secret Service is being given projected path information about UA 93, so they don't		

				<p>realize the flight has crashed. Based on this erroneous information, a military aide tells Vice President Cheney and others in the White House bunker that the plane is 80 miles away from Washington. Cheney is asked for authority to engage the plane. He quickly gives the authorization. The aide returns a few minutes later and says the plane is 60 miles out. Cheney again gives authorization to engage. Apparently Cheney calls Bush and obtains confirmation. However, there is controversy over whether Bush approved a shoot down before this incident or if Cheney gave himself the authority to make the decision on the spot. (cr)</p>		
1014				<p>According to the 9/11 Commission, beginning at this time, the White House repeatedly conveys to the</p>		

				NMCC that Vice President Cheney confirmed fighters were cleared to engage the inbound aircraft if they could verify that the aircraft was hijacked. (cr)		
1015	UA headquarters aware that Flight 93 has crashed in PA (p. 33)	FAA Washington Center advises NEADS that Flight 93 has crashed in PA (p. 33)			According to the 9/11 Commission, NEADS calls Washington flight control. Asked about Flight 93, flight control responds, "He's down." It is clarified that the plane crashed "somewhere up northeast of Camp David." (cr)	
1020		United Airlines headquarters receives confirmation from the airport manager in Johnstown, Pennsylvania that Flight 93 has crashed. (cr)				
1031					According to the 9/11 Commission, NORAD commander Major General Larry Arnold instructs his staff to broadcast the following message over a NORAD chat log: "10:31 [Cheney] has cleared to us to intercept tracks of interest and	NEADS doesn't pass the shoot down order to the fighter pilots in New York City and Washington. NEADS leaders later say they don't pass it on because they are unsure how to pilots should proceed with this guidance. The pilots flying over New York City claim they are never given a formal shoot down order that day. (cr)

					shoot them down if they do not respond.” NEADS first learns of the shoot down order from this message. (cr)	
Before 1036						<p>A Secret Service agent again contacts the Andrews Air Force Base and commands, “Get in the air now!”</p> <p>According to Sasseville, almost simultaneously, a call from someone else in the White House declares the Washington area “a free-fire zone.</p> <p>Apparently this second call is made to General David Wherley, flight commander of the Air National Guard at Andrews. He had contacted the Secret Service after hearing reports that it wanted fighters airborne. A Secret Service agent relays instructions to Wherley from a Secret Service agent in the White House who had been given instructions from Vice President Cheney. Wherley's fighters are to protect the White House and shoot down any planes that threaten Washington.</p> <p>Wherley interprets this to give the decision to the lead pilot, Lt. Col. Marc Sasseville. Bush and Cheney later claim they weren't aware that any</p>

						fighters had scrambled from Andrews at the request of the Secret Service. Sasseville and Lucky take off about six minutes after reaching their fighters. (cr)
1042						Two F-16s take off from Andrews Air Force Base lightly armed with nothing more than "hot" guns and non-explosive training rounds. Lead pilot Lt. Col. Marc Sasseville flies one; the other pilot is only known by the codename Lucky. (cr)
1400						F-15 fighter pilot Major Daniel Nash returns to base around this time, after chasing Flight 175 and patrolling the skies over New York City. He says that when he got out of the plane, "he was told that a military F-16 had shot down a fourth airliner in Pennsylvania, a report that turned out to be incorrect." (cr)

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