

WORLD NEWS

TERROR & TERRORISM

9/11

Part 1

**MP3 AUDIO TEXT**

THE 11th of September 2001 was a bright, sunny morning on America's east coast. Late summer and early autumn is a beautiful time of year in the eastern United States. But no one had any idea of the horror that was to come from those bright blue September skies.

Because 24-hour news channels already existed, reports from the US reached the world within minutes. Suddenly, a global audience was watching and listening. That morning reports came thick and fast, because one passenger aircraft after another had been hijacked. But no one knew why or by whom. Hijackers usually issue demands, they usually want something. However, on this occasion the hijackers switched off the radios on board each aircraft. They also deactivated the 'transponders'. These send an identifying signal from an aircraft. This meant that the hijacked planes became difficult to track.

However, what soon became clear was that the hijacked aircraft had changed course. They were not heading to their destinations. Some of the passengers on board had managed to contact their families via mobile phones. They spoke of young men taking over the planes through violence. They also reported that they were flying low and approaching New York and Washington. From the confusing jigsaw of news reports it quickly became clear what was happening. A passenger aircraft was seen flying towards the Twin Towers of the World



The Twin Towers of the World Trade Center photographed in March 2001. Six months later both Towers were destroyed and thousands of people lay dead in the ruins. The attack on the Towers was carried out by a group of 19 hijackers — most of whom came from Saudi Arabia (Photo by Jeff Mock)

Trade Center. These two massive buildings were modern landmarks on the New York skyline. They were also home to thousands of businesses and workers.

The first aircraft to smash into the World Trade Center was thought to have done so by accident. After all, if hijackers had taken control of a plane, it was possible that they might not know how to fly it properly. Firemen rushed to the scene as people were evacuated from the building. It was clear that no one on the plane could have survived, but how many people in the World Trade Center had also lost their lives? Rescue was now the most important task. And those with the best view of events were those in Tower 2 of the World Trade Center. As people watched from this second Tower news reports said that another hijacked aircraft was heading for New York.

continued on page 9

WORLD NEWS

By now, TV channels were sending live images of the events. And as the world watched in shock, a passenger aircraft flew directly into Tower 2 of the World Trade Center. Both Towers were now on fire and the scene was one of complete chaos. News organizations played and replayed the moment the planes had hit the towers. It looked unreal, like a Hollywood special effect. However, this was all too real.

New reports of other hijacked planes continued to come in. A plane crashed into the Pentagon, America's military nerve centre in Washington. And over the state of Pennsylvania there were reports of an aircraft whose passengers were fighting back against the hijackers.

By the end of the 11th of September 2001 (or '9/11' as it came to be known), four hijacked planes had crashed. The Twin Towers of the World Trade Center had collapsed and lay in ruins. Thousands of people had been killed and injured. The people of the United States were told that they were at war. The question was, with whom?

You can read and listen to Part 2 of our article '9/11' in the September 2011 issue.



➤ 568 words
2,722 characters
(2 DK normalsider)

For more on 9/11 see The School Times, August 2006 (United 93). For more on terrorism see The School Times, April 2004 (Terrorists Among Us), August 2005 (The IRA: No More War), and pages 3 and 4 of this issue

WORDS

centre / center – no, it's not a mistake, the word 'centre' is spelt differently in America. The US spelling of the word is 'center'
chaos – confusion; total disorder
destination – final stop or goal of a journey
evacuated from – taken out of (in a great hurry)
global audience – viewers worldwide
horror – something terrible or awful
landmarks – familiar sights or attractions
nerve centre – headquarters
on this occasion – this time

Questions on the text

1 What kind of morning was the 11th of September 2001 in the eastern United States?

2 How did the news about 9/11 travel so fast around the world? What made this possible?

3 There are eye-witness reports of what happened on the hijacked planes. Where did these come from?

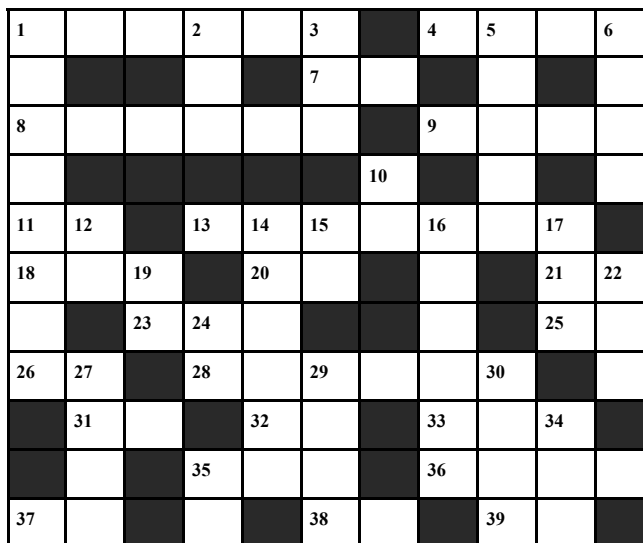
4 Which other large building was attacked on 9/11?

5 What were the passengers on the fourth hijacked plane doing?

6 Is there anyone in your class old enough to remember 9/11? If so, ask them to describe what they remember about that day.

7 What is terror, and what is a terrorist? Is it always individuals who are involved? Or can 'states' be terrorists?

The Terrorism Puzzle



Across

- 1 Four ... were taken over by terrorists on the morning of September 11, 2001
- 4 The events happened so fast that nothing could be done to ... them
- 7 There were ... many ... five terrorists on the planes (although one had four)
- 8 Another country that recently suffered a violent terror attack
- 9 It was a mystery because the men who took over the aircraft did not seem to ... anything!
- 11 The first aircraft hit the North Tower of the World Trade Center ... 08.46am
- 13 Some time a later an aircraft ... in Pennsylvania
- 18 Past tense of 'get'
- 20 In English we say 'a' pilot but '...' aircraft
- 21 As the world watched ... shock another passenger aircraft flew into Tower 2
- 23 Past tense of 'have'
- 25 It's hard to imagine why anyone would ... such a thing
- 26 Apart from shooting down the aircraft there was ... way to stop them
- 28 A transponder sends an identifying ... from an aircraft
- 31 There were ... women among the groups who took control of the aircraft
- 32 No one knew why ... by whom the aircraft had been taken over
- 33 A pet animal
- 35 Short for 'United States of America'
- 36 Present tense of 'knew'
- 37 Some people thought the first aircraft hit the Tower by accident
- 38 Short for 'New York'
- 39 Present tense of 'did'

Down

- 1 America's 'military nerve centre'
- 2 The military nerve centre is not in ... York, it's in Washington
- 3 Present tense of 'said'
- 5 WTC stood for 'World ... Center'
- 6 I put, you put, he/she/it ...
- 10 Late summer ... a beautiful time on America's east coast
- 12 The Twin Towers were home ... thousands of businesses and workers
- 14 On board the aircraft the ... had been switched off
- 15 In English we say 'a' battle but '...' attack
- 16 To take over an aircraft by force
- 17 What the terrorists ... is condemned by all religions
- 19 Add these two letters to '... is' and '...at' to make two very useful words!
- 22 The aircraft had changed course and were ... heading towards their destinations
- 24 Firemen rushed to the scene ... people were evacuated from the building
- 27 New York was not the ... city to be attacked on 9/11
- 29 Short word for 'grandmother' (used mostly in Britain)
- 30 Another word for 'country'
- 34 These three words all sound the same: to, two, ...
- 35 Short for 'United Nations'



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Part 2

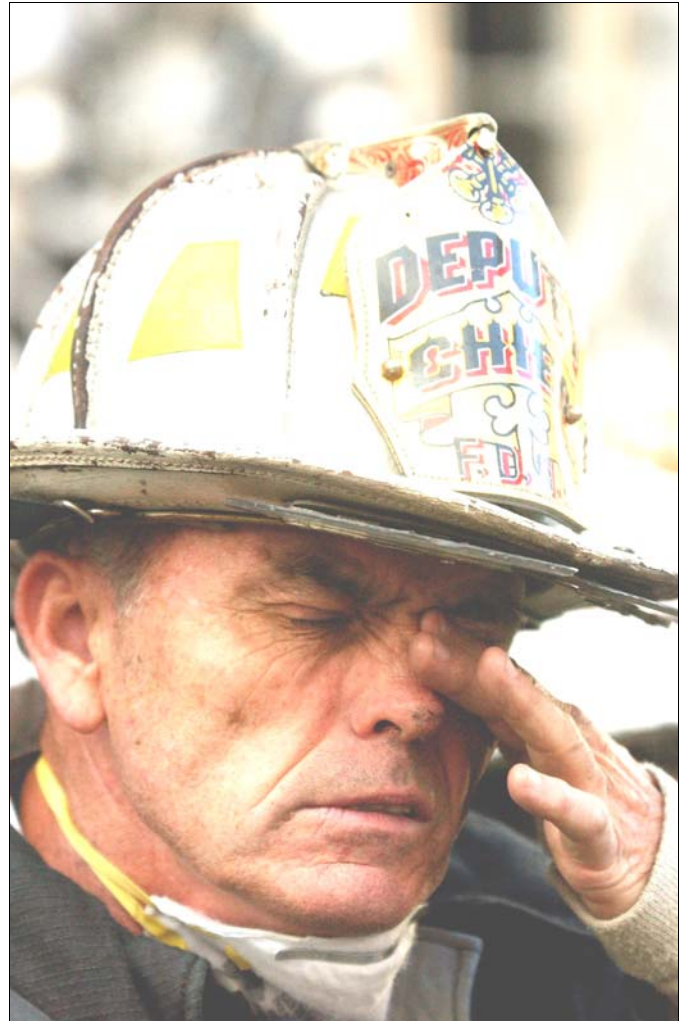


MP3 AUDIO TEXT

AFTER the attacks of the 11th of September 2001, sorrow and sadness turned to anger. The United States ordered its military to find and punish those who were behind the hijackings. And it soon became clear that the man responsible for this appalling crime was already known to the authorities. In fact, the US and Britain had once helped him fight the forces of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. He was Osama bin Laden.

The son of a very rich Saudi Arabian family, Osama bin Laden had become a follower of extreme religious ideas. These ideas were about a 'holy war'. He began to use his money to support and create terrorist networks. As already mentioned, bin Laden was well-known to the US because they had supported him and his group of fanatics when the Soviet Union invaded and occupied Afghanistan in the 1980s. However, believing that the 'enemy of your enemy is your friend' can be very dangerous. Osama bin Laden and his fanatical followers hated the United States as much as the Soviet Union. For him, there was only one path — a violent 'religious war' against the Western world.

The Western world has, of course, many faults. It has also been responsible for many injustices. Osama bin Laden was clever enough to use the Western world's failings, especially in the Middle East, as a way of creating more fanatical followers. Fanatics who were even willing to fly passenger aircraft into buildings. Bin Laden pointed to Western support for oppressive rulers throughout the Middle East. He also highlighted the



The face of pain and exhaustion: 346 police and firemen died on 9/11 as they tried to rescue the victims of the aircraft attacks on the Twin Towers. Most were trapped in the buildings of the World Trade Center as they collapsed

suffering of the Palestinian people, which he said was the result of Western support for Israel.

By the time of the 9/11 attacks Osama bin Laden was living in Afghanistan. This suited him rather well. After all, the Taliban, who ruled Afghanistan, were just as fanatical as bin Laden himself. For the people of that country, the Taliban meant no music, no television, no Internet, nothing Western, or even anything very modern. And women were not allowed a proper education. Everyone was meant to return to a simpler form of life. Everyone that is apart from the Taliban rulers and Osama bin Laden. They were happy to use the Internet, satellite phones, and even appear on television. And so, Osama bin Laden lived safely in his Afghan paradise — or so he thought.

Discussions took place between the Taliban and the US about handing over Osama bin Laden and closing down
continued on page 7

WORLD NEWS

his terrorist camps. But nothing came of the discussions. Looking back, perhaps more could have been done to convince the Taliban. But special forces soon landed in secret. Terrorist hideouts were targeted and bombs started falling. It was the beginning of the invasion of Afghanistan. No one knows how far the discussions with the Taliban actually went. Would they have handed over bin Laden and his terrorists? Or just kicked them out? Although British and American forces came very close to capturing Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan, they never succeeded. It's a pity they didn't, because 10 years on British and American forces are still in Afghanistan, and no one seems to know why.

Many of bin Laden's top people were captured or killed. And finally this year the man responsible for so much death and destruction was discovered in Pakistan. In the end, justice for bin Laden was swift. He was hunted down and shot dead by US special forces.

However, 10 years on from 9/11 the fight to capture Osama bin Laden and destroy his organization has only been partly successful. The invasion of Afghanistan and then Iraq by Western forces has caused much anger throughout the world, especially among Muslims. And the secret kidnapping and torture of terrorists has, in one sense, brought the West down to the level of the terrorists they are fighting against. In fact, the death and destruction in Afghanistan has caused many Muslims and many in the West to ask who the real terrorists are.

The greatest leaders of the past hundred years have not used the methods of Osama bin Laden. Mahatma Gandhi in India, Dr Martin Luther King in the United States, and Nelson Mandela in South Africa all brought about great change through non-violence. And as we've seen in recent months changes have taken place in the Arab world as a result of mostly peaceful protests and revolutions. Even the Palestinian people, after years of violent resistance, have turned to the United Nations to gain international support for their cause. More has been achieved by ordinary people going into the streets and protesting peacefully than bin Laden ever achieved with his gang of murderers. In fact, Osama bin Laden's violent religious war has done nothing to stop the world's injustices. He failed miserably. He also harmed Islam and caused many people to view Muslims everywhere with suspicion and mistrust.

Ten years on from 9/11 the families of the victims of those horrible attacks will relive their pain once again. The world will share their sadness with them because 9/11 was a global event. But thankfully, the world is now looking at the causes of terrorism. It has taken a long time, but better late than never. The people of the United States have also realized that their own nation



has been no shining example of justice. From the invasion of Iraq to the support of violent dictators in South America and across the world — the sad truth is that the US has a dreadful record of bringing misery and suffering to other nations. Instead of a 'War on Terror', perhaps what we really need is a 'War on Injustice'. That would be a fitting memorial to those who died on 9/11. As a wise man once said, 'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere'.

□

Photo (above):
Rescue workers among the ruins of the Twin Towers
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➤ 966 words
4,661 characters
(3½ DK normalsider)

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WORDS

appalling – dreadful; awful
authorities – those in power (in this case, the police and other security organizations)
discussions – negotiations; talks
highlighted – pointed out; called attention to
hijackings – in the text, the violent takeover of aircraft
injustices – wrongs; unfair actions
mentioned – written or talked about
method – way of doing things; type of action
oppressive – cruel; unfair
partly – in part; in some way
responsible for – guilty of; to blame for
sorrow – deep sadness; grief
succeeded – been successful
swift – fast; speedy

Questions on the text

1 How did it come about that the United States and Britain knew the person behind the 9/11 attacks?

2 Osama bin Laden was the enemy of the Soviet Union in the 1980s, but did that make him a true friend of the Western world?

3 Where was bin Laden living at the time of the 9/11 attacks, and who ruled that country?

4 What finally happened to bin Laden and his top people?

5 What method did the great leaders of the 20th century use to bring about change?

6 What have the United States and other Western countries done in the past 10 years to anger Muslims?

7 What are some of the reasons why terrorists act? Are they all madmen? How can one man's 'terrorist' be another man's 'freedom fighter'?