Clinton, Bush was a stickler about being on time to meetings and wearing business clothing in the White House. He kept a strict schedule and preferred to wake up early and leave the office at the end of the workday. Clinton, on the other hand, had often worked long into the night but kept a more casual atmosphere in the White House.

Bush also delegated more responsibility to advisors and staff members. Rather than focus on the tiny details of his administration’s policies, Bush preferred to take a broader view, acting as a manager for his Cabinet. In addition, he gave his Vice President, Dick Cheney of Wyoming, an unprecedented role in setting policy.

**Bush on Domestic Policy** Early in his presidency, Bush focused on a few central issues. In particular, he succeeded in gaining congressional approval of a tax cut based on his campaign proposal. Under this plan, most taxpayers received rebates of $300. Bush argued that by returning money to the taxpayers, he would jumpstart a faltering economy.

Bush also pushed for the passage of a major education reform bill. The President’s plan called for increased accountability for student performance, flexible funding at the state and local levels, and targeted funds for improving schools and teacher quality through research-based programs and practices. It also proposed to give parents more information about the quality of their children’s schools.

**Attack on America**

On September 11, 2001, Americans reacted with horror when terrorists struck at targets in New York City and just outside Washington, D.C. Using hijacked commercial airplanes as their weapons, the terrorists crashed into both towers of New York’s World Trade Center and plowed into part of the Pentagon. A fourth plane crashed in a field near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. A total of 266 passengers and crew on the four planes lost their lives.

The attack on the Pentagon took place less than an hour after the first plane hit New York. Damage was contained to a recently renovated section of the building, but fires raged for hours, preventing emergency workers from entering the wreckage. More than 100 people working in the Pentagon were killed.

In New York, the impact of the fully fueled jets caused both towers to burst into flames. Debris rained down on employees evacuating the buildings and on emergency workers rushing to respond to the scene. The fires led to the catastrophic collapse of both 110-story buildings as well as other buildings in the World Trade Center complex. Emergency workers battled fires and began a search-and-rescue operation. Tragically, the speedy response to the disaster led to the deaths of hundreds of firefighters and police officers who were in and around the buildings when they collapsed. The official number of people missing and presumed dead after the assault was estimated to be around 3,000.

Americans responded to the tragedy with an outpouring of support for the victims, their families, and the rescue workers at all three sites. Many gave blood or donated money and supplies to relief agencies. As American citizens struggled to make sense of the terrible events and mourned the losses, a new sense of patriotism and unity swept the nation.

While no groups or individuals claimed responsibility for the attacks, law enforcement officials immediately began an investigation into those suspected of carrying out the assaults and the network that supported them. Countries around the world pledged their support in the efforts to hunt down the criminals. Within days of the attack, government officials named Osama bin Laden as “a prime suspect” for masterminding the plot. Bin Laden was believed to be hiding in...