Subject: Re: 9/11
Posted by NukeIt15 on Wed, 02 Sep 2009 01:42:57 GMT
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I love that argument. It's funny to look at, because it means the person writing it hasn't got a clue how buildings are constructed. Specifically, it means that they haven't got a clue how skyscrapers are constructed. The possibility of a catastrophic failure is part of any architect's design if they're worth two shits; those towers fell more or less straight down because they were designed to do exactly that in the event that they were so compromised.

Actually, they were quite an inspired design for the time they were built; the outer structure (the steel beams running down the sides of the buildings that gave them their iconic look) actually supported a fairly large percentage of the total weight of the building while remaining flexible enough to deal with high winds. Had the planes been low on fuel, the towers would likely still stand today; collisions were a consideration in the design... it's just that nobody in the 1960s thought anyone would plow a fully-fueled airliner into a building deliberately.

Also, do you have any notion of just how much something that big weighs? Once the structural members were weakened by heat, the kinetic energy of the falling upper levels even across an extremely short distance (say a single story) would have been (and was) sufficient to cause cascading failures all the way down. It wouldn't have toppled in any case; toppling requires that the building retain structural integrity in at least one place- but the fire from the jet fuel weakened the steel all the way around the buildings (and in case you were wondering, steel loses much of its strength well below its melting point). Buildings don't just arbitrarily fall over; more often than not they have to be made to fall over by the conditions of the collapse (as when the foundation is knocked out on one side but not on the other).

Anybody who's had basic high school physics should be able to work that much out; look up the overall mass of each tower (which is likely public record on a trivia page somewhere) and work out a rough estimate on how heavy the portions above the impact sites were (1/3? 1/4?). With that, you can work out more or less how much force was exerted on the lower floors when the impact sites gave way. Momentum = Mass * Velocity. Here's a hint: it's gonna be a really, really big number. Then think about whether or not you can really imagine those buildings falling in any other direction than straight down.