

by conserving better. And so we've got plans, an energy plan that passed the House, that's stuck in the Senate, that do provide incentives for better means to conserve.

Thirdly, technology will help lead us away from dependency. I notice our Department of Energy was talking about a new automobile research plan to help develop a new fuel cell system for automobiles. It's coming. And the fundamental question is, how do we get from here to the day when the new technologies become market-accepted? And it starts with getting a plan out of the United States Congress. It passed the House; it's stuck in the Senate. It's time to get the bill moving and get it to my desk.

Go ahead and yell it out. If I don't like the question, I'll just change it. [Laughter]

Prayer

Q. Mr. President, I'm a Navy chaplain, serving with the Marines in Twentynine Palms, California. I am also honored to have you as my Commander in Chief.

The President. Do you have a question?

Q. My question is very simple: How can we, as pastors, pray specifically for you and your family?

The President. Well, first—thank you. I have—first of all, I believe in the power of prayer. And I have felt the prayers of the American people for me and my family. I have. And I want to thank all of you who have prayed. People say, “Well, how do you know?” I say, “Well, I can just feel it.” I can't describe it very well, but I feel comforted by the prayer.

I think the thing that—the prayer that I would like America—is to ask for is to pray for God's protection for our land and our people, to pray against—that there's a shield of protection, so that if the evil ones try to hit us again, that we've done everything we can, physically, and that there is a spiritual shield that protects the country.

Do you have a question? Come on underneath. The man's got a question.

September 11

Q. First of all, I'm very impressed in how you handled the situation on September 11th.

The President. That's plenty. No. Thank you.

Q. What was the first thing that went through your head when you heard that a plane crashed into the first building?

The President. Yes. Well, I was sitting in a schoolhouse in Florida. I had gone down to tell my little brother what to do, and—just kidding, Jeb. [Laughter] And—it's the mother in me. [Laughter] Anyway, I was in the midst of learning about a reading program that works. I'm a big believer in basic education, and it starts with making sure every child learns to read. And therefore, we need to focus on the science of reading, not what may feel good or sound good when it comes to teaching children to read. I'm just getting a plug in for my reading initiative.

Anyway, I was sitting there, and my Chief of Staff—well, first of all, when we walked into the classroom, I had seen this plane fly into the first building. There was a TV set on. And you know, I thought it was pilot error, and I was amazed that anybody could make such a terrible mistake, and something was wrong with the plane, or—anyway, I'm sitting there, listening to the briefing, and Andy Card came and said, “America is under attack.”

And in the meantime, this teacher was going on about the curriculum, and I was thinking about what it meant for America to be under attack. It was an amazing thought. But I made up my mind that if America was under attack, we'd get them. I wasn't interested in lawyers; I wasn't interested in a bunch of debate. I was interested in finding out who did it and bringing them to justice. I also knew that they would try to hide, and anybody who provided haven, help, food, would be held accountable by the United States of America.

Anyway, it was an interesting day.