

high school kids and the teachers for being out there, as well.

I'm working my way through the Midwest, through the heartland, because I want to send a couple of messages to the American people. One message is, food is really important for the economy of this country—that in the year 2000, \$1.3 trillion of the GDP came from food and fiber, 24 million Americans were employed as a result of work in food and fiber; that if we're talking about the economic health of the country, we've got to always understand it begins with a healthy farm economy. And if we're worried about creating jobs—which I am—then we've got to think—we use some common sense principles in order to expand the job base so people can find work.

I'm also glad to be in the heartland because it's a place that understands values, the values of family and faith, of personal responsibility and hard work.

I started my day in Moline, Illinois, at the John Deere plant where they're making harvesters, and then here, of course, in Aurora and Springfield, Missouri. And then I'm on my way to New Orleans, where they sell the product. It's a good message for America, to understand how the farmer works in relationship to the equipment manufacturer, in relationship to the exporter.

I'm so happy that people in my administration understand the importance of the farmer to our country, starting with our Secretary of Agriculture, Ann Veneman, and the Secretary of Commerce, Don Evans. Thank you both for being here.

I want to thank Senator Kit Bond for traveling with me today. He was giving me a good lesson on Missouri politics, as was Jim Talent, when we drove over. Thank you for coming, Jim. And I'm traveling with two members from the Missouri congressional delegation, Kenny Hulshof and Todd Akin. Thank you all for coming. Now, my friend Roy Blunt isn't here. He's evidently on a mission somewhere else, but he sent

his better half. And I want to thank very much—I want to thank sweet Roseann Blunt for coming, as well. Thank you for coming.

I want to thank the Missouri Farmers Association. I want to thank the people who run this outfit. And I want to thank my fellow citizens for coming today.

One of the things I strongly believe is that the role of Government is not to create wealth. The role of Government is to create an environment in which people are willing to take risk, an environment in which people are willing to risk capital, an environment that heralds the entrepreneur and the small-business person. That's the role of Government.

If the role of Government is to create an environment in which people are willing to take risk, one of the things Government must do is to work hard to create confidence in the people. And at this moment in history, the best thing I can do, along with my administration, in order to build the confidence of the American people, is to prevent the evil ones from hitting us again.

The best way to make sure this economy recovers and people can find work is to have a homeland security system that runs down every hint that somebody might harm us, runs down every lead that we find. I want to assure you all that I spend a lot of time, as did my administration, on this top priority, that we're working with intelligence-gathering services from around the world to sniff out, to listen to, to find out who might be trying to harm us again, that we've got our law enforcement officers around our country—at the Federal, State, and local level—now understand that they must remain on alert, that there's still an enemy and we've got to stop them. The FBI's primary mission is homeland security, and we're working closely with folks in your communities to make sure that if there's any hint that somebody may try to harm America, that we're going to act and act now and bring them to justice.