

Pensky; this is her last event. And I thank Steve. They took the helm of a party that was troubled and made it far from troubled in 2 years.

I want to thank all the staff members who have been here. I have in some ways the most sympathy for this group of people because they have to hear me give the same speech over and over and over again. [Laughter] And I want to thank the members of the administration who are here, and Congressman Dingell and Debbie, thank you for being here; Governor Ann Richards, who made some of my campaign stops in the '98 campaign even more memorable than normal. [Laughter]

I want to say a special word of thanks, as Hillary did, to Sheryl Crow, who is a good friend, a good Democrat, and an unbelievable artist. And she's getting better every single year—unbelievable.

Hillary said that we met Robert and Lynda in 1983, actually just before they got married, at the Kentucky Derby. It was an amazing event. I'd never been before and actually have never gotten a chance to go back since. But it was the last year in office of Governor John Y. Brown; all of you will remember how sort of staid and laid back John Y. Brown is. [Laughter] He had Al Hirt playing at the breakfast before the—"My Old Kentucky Home." And all I remember about the Kentucky Derby is that I was perfectly sure what horse would win, and the only person in this vast party John Y. Brown had assembled who would bet on the horse I recommended was Lynda Carter. And I have been for them ever since, whatever the issue is. [Laughter] Oh, and the horse won by three lengths.

I really admire them both for so many reasons. It's not easy to do this—to sort of get out front, get your friends here. Some of you came all the way across the country to be here because they asked you. And I appreciate that and hope the weather is not so bad you can't get back. Those of us who are in Washington don't want anybody to be trapped here who doesn't want to be. [Laughter] We all came here voluntarily, but we want you to be able to leave and come, to go as you please. [Laughter]

Finally, let me say, you can't imagine—you know, Al and Tipper and Hillary and I, we've done a lot of campaigning together. We did in '92; we did in '96; we do a few events together now, even though our lives are consider-

ably busier, and often with conflicting schedules. But I think that one of the real secrets of whatever success that we've had for the American people has been that we have really tried to be a team; we've tried to be friends; we've tried to be family; and we've tried to be frank with each other. And each person has made a unique contribution. And then we've tried to model that in dealing with the Democratic Party and the House and the Senate groups and all of our friends around the country that are involved in whatever initiative we're involved in. It seems to me that's the way people ought to live, but it turns out it's a fairly effective way to do business.

And I think it's fair to say that Tipper Gore has given the mental health issue more visibility than it's ever had on the national stage, and it will have an enduring, positive impact. I think it's clear to anybody who has looked at it that whatever even my harshest critics would have to say, that the Vice President has been far and away—not even close—the most influential person in his position over more issues, achieving more for the American people than anyone who has ever held his position in the entire history of the Republic. Not only that, as you will hear me say increasingly in the months ahead, and any mistakes we made were my fault. [Laughter]

Of course, I don't even know how to talk about what I believe Hillary has meant to the success of our endeavors. She's been on every continent. She's gone to places most people in her position don't go, both in America and beyond our borders, into little villages in Africa and Asia and Latin America and the Indian subcontinent, to talk to women and their children, especially their daughters, about what their lives can be and what we should do to help them. She's gone all over America to save the Star-Spangled Banner and Thomas Edison's lab and Harriet Tubman's home and the national treasures that we believe we should hold close to our hearts as we move toward the millennium. And just a thousand other things. And she has done it under circumstances I think are probably more difficult than anyone who has ever done it before. I love her for it, but our country should love her for it as well. It's been remarkable.

You know, I keep hearing that books and books and books will be written on how we won seats in the midterm election in 1998. Since