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former Senator John Hilgert, who's with us today in the lobby. I want to thank them for all the help they gave me as a candidate and as a new senator. Now, I have, of course, repaid their kindness by joining the Republican Party, and so I'm sure they'll regret it for the rest of their lives, but I am nonetheless grateful to them for helping me put one foot in front of the other as I was getting launched on this adventure. By the way, the line for the revenge of the Democrats forms behind my father, Chuck Maxwell, the lifelong Democrat who ran my campaign in 2000. Dad, thank you for overcoming our partisan differences and coming down here today. I appreciate it. To my mom, the lifelong Republican, I say, remember your promise, no gloating, at least not in front of the Democrats. When I just passed through the lobby there was a motion made out there to let my mother give the speech instead of me, but the family is often her material and I've already taken enough grief from Senator Raikes, so motion denied. Jim Jensen, it has been an honor to serve on the Health and Human Services Committee under your leadership. Some of the most important work we did during my years here was produced by the Health and Human Services Committee. I played a small role in some of the major legislation we moved, but it produced some of the most rewarding and satisfying moments for me in my service here, perhaps capped by the press conference yesterday on the mental health reform legislation. I thank you. And I think over your shoulder I see Joan back there. Joan, I want to thank you. Pam, my wife, was just mentioning last night how you have gone out of your way to make her feel included in the spouses group. Being in Omaha and with young children at home, she didn't have a lot of time to participate in your activities, but you always went out of your way and she's very grateful for it and so am I. I will always have a special place in my heart for my classmates, the senators who came in with me as fellow rookies in 2001: my office mate for two years, Carroll Burling; Doug Cunningham, who keeps me supplied in candy; Phil Erdman; Mike Foley; Lowen Kruse; and please indulge me for just a moment while I also remember our other classmate, Rick McDonald. Rick was in the hospital in Omaha about a mile from my house one night and my boys and I went over to check on him, and we got there and the room was full of family and Vickie was there, and we chatted for awhile. And Rick was Rick, his usual ebullient self. He was in bed, but