

RELEASE IN PART B6

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Subject: A Clinton-Obama love fest at State

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A Clinton-Obama love fest at State

By DONOVAN SLACK |

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Consider the hatchet buried.

Four years after their campaign trail troubles, first lady Michelle Obama said Thursday that she considers Hillary Clinton “a role model” to whom she owes a debt.

“She has been an outstanding — should I say that again? She has been an outstanding secretary of state, and she has been an inspiration to women and girls around the world,” Obama said in an appearance at the State Department to mark International Women’s Day.

“She is a role model for me in so many ways,” Obama added as Clinton sat behind her, smiling. “I don’t think she realizes that what she has done has made what I do partially possible. So with all the respect and admiration that I can give to her, I will be wherever she needs me to be, whenever she needs me to be there.”

That’s a big change from when Clinton was locked in a bitter nomination fight with Obama’s husband. At one point in 2007, Obama noted that she and her husband belong in the White House because they would serve as role models, a barb widely interpreted as a hit on the Clintons and their marital woes.

On Thursday, Obama and Clinton presented International Women of Courage awards to 10 women from around the world “who have shown exceptional courage and leadership in advocating for women’s rights and empowerment, often at great personal risk,” a State Department release said. Clinton and Obama also joined forces last year on International Women’s Day to present the awards at a State Department ceremony.

Clinton noted in her remarks Thursday that the first lady had joined her before and said she also thinks of Obama as a role model.

“Now, I do take a point of personal privilege in talking about the First Lady, because I have just an inkling of what her life is like every day,” Clinton said. “And I want to publicly thank her for being an inspiration for women and girls and families and communities here in the United States and around the world.”