number three, if you want us all to go forward together, if you believe in hate crimes legislation, equal pay for equal work, if you think that all of us count and nobody should be left out or left behind, you better stick with the Democrats. Those are the three big issues in this election, and don't you mistake it.

And just tell people—you know, this is not rocket science. We tried it both ways. Our way works better. We did try it both ways. We've had a test run here.

Now, let me just close with this. When Al Gore says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," when a person running for office says that, it may sound like a campaign slogan. I'm not running for anything, and I believe that. I believe that. I believe with all my heart. I believe we can bring economic opportunity to the people and places that have been left behind. I believe we can give every child in this country excellence in education. I believe we can create a system in which there is affordable access to health care for every working family. I believe we can open the doors to college—4 years of it, like we have already for 2—for 100 percent of the people who are willing to work hard enough to go. I believe we can do this. And I know we can do this and get this country out of debt.

And I know we can do it and still continue to be involved in the world, as a leading source of peace and freedom. And I'm thinking of that today, you know, because we have a lot to celebrate. The dictator in Belgrade has finally been deposed, who caused so much trouble in Bosnia and Kosovo. We've made a lot of progress towards peace in Northern Ireland. And we have worked hard in Latin America to turn back the drug warriors that want to overtake democracy in Colombia. We've worked hard in Africa. And today, of course, we're keeping our fingers crossed that we can restore calm and end violence in the Middle East and resume the process towards peace there. And I hope you'll all pray for that.

That's the last thing I'd like to tell you. My wife has been to more countries and touched more people around the world, sticking up for the rights of children and women, talking about the need of America not only to have a strong defense but to be a strong partner in educating people and giving them a better future, and working on challenges together, than any person, clearly, since Eleanor Roosevelt, who has been in the White House as First Lady.

So I will say again, I just want you to use every day between now and the election—not only here, but if you have any friends in other States—to try to get them to understand why it's so important not only for Hillary to win, but for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman to win. Keep the prosperity going. Keep the progress going. Build one America. We'll have a big celebration on election night.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:52 p.m. in the Hall of Stars Room at the Bonnie Castle Resort. In his remarks, he referred to Michael W. Schell, executive chair, New York State Democratic Party executive committee; and former President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks at a Dinner for Hillary Clinton in Hempstead, New York

October 22, 2000

Thank you very much. You know, I have been on a tour of New York today. I've been to Binghamton and Watertown—actually, to Alex Bay—and here I am with you at Hofstra. And I hear the sound of victory everywhere I go. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I want to thank Carolyn McCarthy for representing you and representing everyone in America who wants to build a sane, safe society. She is a brave and good woman, and I am honored to serve with her. I want to thank Congressman Gary Ackerman for being with us today. He has been my friend and ally for 8 years, and he represents all of you so well. But what all of you should know is, he has quite a global reach. I took him with me on my trip to India, and all these people kept coming up to him in India saying, "Gary, who is that tall, gray-headed fellow with you?" [*Laughter*] It was amazing. India has 900 million people. Strangers were walking up to him on the street saying, "Hello, Gary. How are you?" [*Laughter*] I loved it.

I want to thank Carl McCall, who has been a great leader for New York and a great friend of ours. Thank you. And thank you, Judith Hope, for being a great chair of the State Democratic Party. Some of you may know that Judith Hope, like me, was also born in Arkansas, proving that we can be accepted in New York. [*Laughter*] That makes me feel good.

I want to thank the Nassau County chair, Tom DiNapoli, for being such a wonderful leader and for sticking with Hillary and helping us to win. And I think one of our congressional candidates, Steve Israel, is here tonight. I thank the president of Hofstra University, Dr. James Shuart, and all the people from Hofstra who have made us feel so welcome.

And now, here's what I want to say. Thank you. Look, we're all having a good time tonight, but the truth is that this is Sunday, and so if you'll forgive me a little religious reference, I'm quite well aware that in the terms, the words of my tradition, I'm here preaching to the saved. [*Laughter*] And so I want to ask you, just for a moment, amidst all the good time and all the cheering we're doing, to let me say a few things seriously, because every one of you know lots and lots of people, your friends, your family members, your co-students, your co-workers, people in this State, and people in other States who will never come to an event like this, don't you? You know people who have never been to an event like this, never heard a President speak, a First Lady speak, a Member of Congress speak, but who will show up on election day if they understand what the stakes are because they're good citizens.

And what bothers me about this election is that I keep reading that there are all these sort of undecided voters who don't think there is much difference between the two candidates for President, aren't sure there is much difference between the two parties, may not show up, or may show up and make the wrong decision because they don't know. So before I introduce Hillary, I just want to say a few things that I hope you will say to somebody every single day between now and the election.

I want to begin by saying thank you. New York has been wonderful to me and to Al Gore for 8 years. In 1996 we won a great victory in New York. Even in Nassau County we won and won big, and I thank you for that. But I'm concerned, and here's why. If people know what is at stake, if they understand the differences, the nature of the choice, and the impact on you, your families, your community, and your Nation, we'll do fine. So what we want is clarity.

Now, what the other guys want—because we win if you understand—is cloudiness. And it's easier to be cloudy than clear, so you've got to be Hillary and Al and Joe's weather patrol between now and the election, to make it clear.

There are three great questions in this election, nationally and as they affect New York, and I'll come back to New York when I introduce Hillary. But there are three great questions that affect every American and, therefore, that affect the people of New York. Let me begin by some of the questions that have been raised in the debate and in the statics around the campaign that this election is not about.

This election is not about a choice between change and the status quo. America is changing too fast. Look around here. And we're going to be rapidly changing every year for at least 10 years, probably 20, in dramatic ways we can't even perceive. The question is not whether we're going to change. It is how. What will the direction of change be? Are we going to build on the success of the last 8 years or take a U-turn and go back? That is the question. But it's not change versus the status quo.

The other thing I heard from the debates from the other side is that this election is supposed to be about whether you're for big Government making all your decisions or whether you trust the people. Let me tell you something—and the implication is, of course, that the Democrats are the big Government, and the Republicans are the people. That's just not so. And if anybody asks you that, let me just point out a couple of things.

Number one, our Democratic administration has reduced the size of the Federal civil Government to the lowest level since 1960, when John Kennedy sought the Presidency and Dwight Eisenhower was President.

Don't put up with that. That's not true. Number two, we got rid of 16,000 pages of Federal regulations that were on the books when they were in. Number three, I heard them talking about all the burdens we put on the school districts. Have you heard that in all the debates now? The Federal Government just wants to burden the school district. Number three, under the leadership of our Secretary of Education, Dick Riley, States and school districts have had their paperwork burden from the Federal Government cut by two-thirds below what it was when they were in office.

So this is not about big Government versus the people. We have reduced the burden of Government. We've just increased the ability of Government to help ordinary people live better lives. That's what the real truth is.

Another thing I heard is how we needed somebody to swoop in from outside Washington to end the partisan atmosphere so we could have bipartisan solutions. [*Laughter*] In other words, they would like to be rewarded for the problem they created. [*Laughter*]

Now, let's look at the facts here. We had a bipartisan welfare reform bill, a bipartisan Balanced Budget Act of '97, a bipartisan Children's Health Insurance Program. Yes, we initiated it, but we got the Republicans to vote for it, and we worked with them. We had a bipartisan telecommunications law that has created thousands of businesses and hundreds of thousands of jobs, a bipartisan vote to create 100,000 teachers and 100,000 police—a bipartisan vote. The partisanship has come from the other side.

Don't you worry about Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary being willing to work in a bipartisan fashion. We are willing to work in a bipartisan fashion. We're just not willing to be run over. And that's what the issue is.

Let me say one other thing. Now, I might get in some trouble for saying this, but I'm going to say it, anyway. I hear that on Long Island and all across the country in the Middle West, there are people taking off work to go to work for the NRA, to work against our candidates because they say we're trying to take their guns away. And they're spending a fortune doing that.

Now why in the wide world would they do that? One possibility is, it's true. But it isn't. It's a lie. I want every hunter and sportsman within the sound of my voice who missed a day of any hunting season, because of any proposal I made, to vote for the other guy. But if you didn't, they're lying to you, and you should get even. [*Laughter*]

Now, what did we do? What did we do? Let me tell you what I plead guilty to doing. We did pass the Brady law. We did that. And we asked people to undergo a background check before they got a handgun, to prove they weren't a felon, a fugitive, or a stalker. We did that. And you know, a half million felons, fugitives, and stalkers didn't get handguns. Gun crime is down by 35 percent. The crime rate is at a 26-year low. The murder rate is at a 33-year low. I think we were right. Who can defend the other side of that? And we banned assault weapons, and I think we were right. And God knows, as the experience of Carolyn McCarthy's life shows, we were right.

Now, listen, what is it that we really want to do? Well, we think that the background check law worked well, but there are a lot of gun show sales that it doesn't apply to, and we think it should. We think that child trigger locks should be mandatory when new handguns are sold. And we think that large-scale ammunition clips should not be able to be imported in America, because if you allowed that, then you can just rejigger the guns that are already here and turn them into assault weapons.

And most of us believe that you ought to get a license when you buy a handgun, like you do when you buy a car, showing you're not a crook and you know how to use it safely. Now, will that cause anybody to miss a day in the deer woods? Will it cause anybody to miss a sport shooting contest? Does it confiscate weapons—constitute weapons confiscation? No. That is not what this election is about. So if you hear somebody on Long Island say that, you just tell them it's not true.

You know, it is a crying shame, as hard as we have worked to get this crime rate down, to run the risk of turning it right around and sending it up again by people who not only want to control the criminal policy in this country as it relates to this but

have also promised—listen to this—promised to repeal the law we passed putting now 150,000 police on the street. They're wrong. We're right. You've got to fight. Don't take this laying down, and don't put this stuff out there. Don't do it. Don't put up with people saying things that aren't true.

Now, what is the election really about? Number one, it's about whether we're going to keep the prosperity going and extend it to people and places left behind. That's the first thing. How are we going to do that? How are we going to do that? We're going to do that by giving people a tax cut we can afford, not one we can't afford, a tax cut that benefits more middle class families than theirs does—even though it's much smaller; a deduction for college tuition; a credit for long-term care for the elderly and disabled; extra help for child care; extra help for lower income workers with lots of kids; help to save for retirement; and extra incentives to invest in people and places that have been left behind.

Now, why do we have a tax cut that is smaller than theirs? Because we save money to invest in education and health care and the environment and national defense and to get this country out of debt over the next 12 years so we can keep interest rates down and the economy growing.

What is their deal? What's the difference? Their tax cut is at least 3 times as big as ours. I admit it is. And a few of you might do better under it, but it's 3 times bigger. What's the problem with that? Well, that's 75 percent of the surplus. And then they've got a trillion dollar cost on their partial privatization of Social Security and then several hundred billion dollars of spending they've promised. And the problem with that is, it doesn't add up. By the time you spend all that money, you're back in deficits, which means higher interest rates and slower growth.

I had some people analyze this for me, and they say that if the Gore/Lieberman/Hillary tax cut is adopted, we'll probably have—and we stay on the path to pay the debt off—we could leave interest rates a percent lower every year for a decade. Do you know what that's worth to you? Listen to this, lower interest rates: $390 billion in lower home mortgages; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments; lower credit card payments; and lower business loans, which means more businesses, more jobs, more raises, a higher stock market.

Look, we tried it our way; we tried it their way. Our way is better. You want to keep the prosperity going, you've got to vote for the Democrats.

Point number two: If you want to keep building on the progress of the last 8 years in the non-economic areas, you've got to vote with us. The crime rate is down. I already talked about that. We reversed the increase in the number of uninsured. The number of people with health insurance is going down for the first time in a dozen years. The environment is cleaner—cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food, safer drinking water, more land set aside in permanent protection than any administration since that of Theodore Roosevelt 100 years ago. And the economy has gotten better.

So we've got a better crime policy, a better health policy, a better environmental policy, welfare rolls cut in half. And we have a better education policy. Listen to this. In the last 8 years, we've gone from 14 States to 49 States with standards for a core curriculum. We have seen a decline in the dropout rate, an increase in the graduation rate. College-going is at an all-time high. We have a 50 percent increase in the number of kids taking advanced placement in high school, a 300 percent increase in Latino kids doing it, a 500 percent increase in African-American kids doing it. We've already opened the doors of college completely for the first 2 years, and if we pass this college tax deduction that Senator Schumer and Hillary are pushing so hard, we'll open the doors of college for 4 years for every young person in the entire United States of America.

In every single one of these areas you've got to decide whether you're going to build on the progress or go back to another policy. In crime, it's not just about guns. They want to repeal our commitment to putting 150,000 police on the street. In education, everybody can be for accountability. We think we've got to help the States meet it. We're for doubling the number of kids in preschool and after-school programs. They're not. We're for funds to help local school districts build or

modernize schools, because they're overcrowded or broken down, and we know that the property tax can't carry the whole burden. They're not. We're for 100,000 teachers qualified in smaller classes. They don't want to do that—huge difference.

In the environment, they say our clean air rules are too tough. They say that my order setting aside tens of millions of acres in the national forest as roadless acres is wrong. They say they ought to revisit all these areas I've protected in perpetuity. They say it's too burdensome on the economy. If I were trying to hurt the economy, I didn't do a very good job. [*Laughter*] You have to decide.

But you've got to tell people. If you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years, you've got to vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary. You don't have an option here. It's clear.

And the third thing I want to say—the third thing I want to say—and maybe most important of all—is that we have got to keep working to build one America across all the lines that divide us, across all the racial and ethnic and religious and gender and sexual orientation lines that divide us. We've got to do it.

Now, this is a big deal. And I can only tell you what it means to me. And I'll only take the issues where there is a difference. We believe a big part of building one America is equal pay for equal work. We want to strengthen the equal pay laws for women, and they're against it. We believe a big part of building one America is a strong and comprehensive hate crimes law, and they're not for it.

And I really regret that in the debate we didn't get into the details of this as much. You got a feeling that we were for it, and they weren't. But they're not for it because they're conservative wing does not want to vote for a national hate crimes bill that protects gays against hate crimes. Now, that's the truth. I've been there trying to pass this for 2 years. I know what's going on. And I'm telling you, we need it.

I wish you could all hear the police commissioner from Wyoming that had to supervise the Matthew Shepard murder case. He was always against hate crimes. He had mixed feelings. He didn't know how he felt about gays. And then he saw that little boy stretched out on a rack to die. And he needed the Federal Government to come in and help him deal with the cost of dealing with that crime. And he has become perhaps our most articulate advocate for hate crimes. This is a big deal, going way beyond the number of people that will be victimized by hate crimes. It talks about what kind of people we are and whether we're committed to one America.

We have big differences on what kind of court system we ought to have and whether we will preserve a woman's right to choose or get rid of it and throw it back to the States, the way it used to be. It only takes one vote, and the next President will get to appoint at least two judges to the Supreme Court. And then there will be all these other appointments.

And everybody who studies this knows that there is the most radical reassessment since the 1930's of the ability of the National Government to protect the American people, not just the right to choose, going way beyond that into all kinds of health and safety and education and other areas, or whether the courts will start to say the Congress can't do this anymore. They even threw out a provision of the Violence Against Women Act.

Now, I'm telling you, you've got to think about this. This is a big deal. And I believe it would be a mistake to return to the constitutional theory which existed in the 1930's that said, basically, the Federal Government can't do anything if the States don't like it. Now, think about this. If somebody asks you what the difference is, somebody says, "Oh, there's not much difference," or, "I don't like this, that or the other thing that Al Gore or Joe Lieberman or Hillary said," you say, "Wait a minute. You want to keep this prosperity going? Do you like the fact that we've got a cleaner environment, that the number of people without health insurance is going down, that the number of people going to college is going up, that the schools that were failing are turning around, that the crime rate is going down? Do you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years? And do you want to keep building one America?"

That's what I want you to do. I want you to promise yourself that every day, sometime

between now and the election, every day you're going to say to somebody, "Vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary to keep the prosperity going, to build on the social progress, and to build one America."

That brings me to my appointed duty—[*laughter*]—as the spouse and Cheerleader in Chief in America. [*Laughter*] I want to make a couple of points that I hope you will share with the voters, particularly on Long Island, in the days ahead before the election.

I met Hillary almost 30 years ago, and for 30 years I have watched her devote her heart and soul to the interests of children and families, education and health care. For more than 20 years, I have watched her work on bringing economic opportunity to people and places who were left behind, something that's very important to upstate New York.

For the last 8 years, since we've been in the White House, she has been the most active First Lady, if not in history, certainly since Eleanor Roosevelt. She was an advocate for the first bill I signed as President, the family and medical leave law. Over 22 million Americans have now taken some time off, when a baby is born or a parent is sick, without losing their job.

She held the first White House conference ever held on early childhood and brain development. She worked hard to get mammograms for women under Medicare and to do other things in the way of preventive care. She led an effort in the Federal Government to examine the problems that veterans of the Gulf war were having that might have been associated with their service in the Persian Gulf a decade ago.

She has represented our country all over the world, traveling to more countries than any other First Lady in history, talking about women's rights and children's rights, reminding people that the national security of the United States depends not just on our military strength but on our ability to help ordinary people with economic opportunity and education and health care.

She has helped me in our endless efforts to make peace in Northern Ireland. She has gone to the Balkans and in the Middle East, where we have worked so hard for the cause of peace. When Mrs. Barak asked her to come, she went again. She has been there—we've gone I don't know how many times to the Middle East or to Northern Ireland or to see our troops in the Balkans, to try to advance the cause of peace and stick up for our friends in Israel, in Bosnia, in Ireland.

And you will never know—because I don't have the words to say—how hard she has worked or how deeply she cares. But I want to tell you this, this is the first time in 26 years they're having an election and I'm not on the ballot. [*Laughter*] But I care more about this election than any one I've ever been involved in. I care about what happens in the Presidential race because everything we've worked for is on the line, and all the progress America has made is still out there.

And I care about this Senate race because of the hundreds and hundreds of people I've known in public life. And I can tell you, on balance, they're better than they get credit for being, the Republicans and the Democrats. On balance, they work harder; they're more honest, and they try harder to do what they believe in than most people know.

But I have never known anybody else in public life who had the combination of brains and heart and caring and tenacity and ability to imagine solutions and get people together to get things done than Hillary has. She would be a worthy successor to Daniel Patrick Moynihan, to Robert Kennedy, and a great partner for Chuck Schumer.

Please welcome the next United States Senator from New York.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:13 p.m. in Lowenfeld Hall at Hofstra University. In his remarks, he referred to Steve Israel, candidate for New York's Second Congressional District; New York State Comptroller H. Carl McCall; Thomas P. DiNapoli, chair, Nassau County Democratic Party; and Nava Barak, wife of Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in New York City

October 22, 2000

Thank you very much. I want to thank Susie who has been such a wonderful friend to Hillary and me for so many years now. And I want to thank Amy and Jeffrey and Harvey and all the others who spearheaded