

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. in the gymnasium at Lansing Community College. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor David C. Hollister of Lansing; James F. Anderton IV, president, Lansing Community College; Judith Lee, assistant executive director, Older Women's League; and John D'Agistino, president, Michigan State Council of Senior Citizens.

Remarks to the Overflow Crowd at Lansing Community College

July 22, 1999

Thank you for coming today. I wish we'd had room for everybody at the other place, but you are much cooler than we were. [*Laughter*] And I hope you enjoyed the event, even long distance.

I was very impressed with the people who spoke, and I think it will be very effective in trying to make the point we're trying to make. And I'm not going to make another speech, but I'm curious—how many students are here? [*Applause*] One of the things that I'm proudest of that we've accomplished in this Congress is, after the Balanced Budget Act, we've passed this HOPE scholarship which gives a \$1,500 tax credit for—and I hope you're all using it.

The only other point I want to hammer home that I made today is, it is very important when we debate how much should go to a tax cut—should we save Social Security and Medicare; should we pay off the debt; that we not adopt a budget—as some are up there saying. They're saying, "Okay, well, we'll do it your way on Social Security and Medicare, but give us a bigger tax cut," which would mean we'd actually have to cut Federal support for education, which I think would be a terrible mistake, because if, for no other reason, the financing of higher education—it's absolutely critical.

But there are a lot of important things we're doing in our elementary and secondary schools, too, to try to lower class sizes and put more teachers out there and do things like that. So I hope all of you will also respond to what I asked the audience over there, which is, if you agree with the position we're taking—save Social Security and Medicare, invest in education and defense and the environment, have a modest tax cut, and pay

the debt off—if you agree with that, I hope you will communicate that to the Members of the Senate and Congress from Michigan. Write them a letter, send them an E-mail, send them a fax, do something. It will make a difference.

I really hope that we can conduct this discussion and bring it to a successful conclusion. I don't think that we need to have a 2-year-long protracted political battle over this. I think this is a relatively easy decision to make if the Congress can be convinced that that's where the American people are. And I believe people of all ages think that now we have this moment which is once in a lifetime, maybe once in a generation opportunity, and we ought to take it and go with it.

So I thank you for coming, and I'm going to start down here and go over here and shake hands with anybody who wants to come by and say hello.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. in the Dart Auditorium. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on House Action on a Republican Tax Plan

July 22, 1999

Last night the Republicans went behind closed doors, not to strengthen Medicare and Social Security, but to provide political cover for their exploding tax cut. Today the Republicans charged ahead and passed a plan that threatens our ability to pay off the debt and strengthen Social Security and Medicare. The plain fact is that their tax plan is designed to explode to a \$3 trillion cost at the very time that Medicare and Social Security come under strain. It would also force deep and devastating cuts in a broad range of domestic programs, including education, the environment, and law enforcement. If the Republicans send me a plan that undermines our ability to reform Social Security and Medicare and abandons the fiscal discipline that has helped to fuel our economic growth, I will send it straight back with a veto.

Statement on Senate Action on Hate Crimes Legislation

July 22, 1999

I am gratified that the Senate has unanimously passed the strong legislation I proposed to combat hate crimes.

All Americans deserve protection from hate crimes, and that requires us to stand together against intolerance, prejudice, and bigotry. The "Hate Crimes Prevention Act" gives power to those values and will help make our country more safe and secure.

Senate approval of this legislation gives it real momentum, and I call on the House of Representatives to meet its responsibility in combating violence that is fueled by hate. We have some distance to go before the "Hate Crimes Prevention Act" is the law of the land, but tonight's action by the Senate is a big step forward in the journey toward greater protection for all Americans.

Executive Order 13131—Further Amendments to Executive Order 12757, Implementation of the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative

July 22, 1999

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Agriculture Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 ("ATDA Act"), as amended, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA), as amended, the Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1996 (Public Law 104-107), and the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-214), it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Amendment of Executive Order 12757.* Executive Order 12757, "Implementation of the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative," as amended by Executive Orders

12823 and 13028, is further amended as follows:

- (a) The Title is amended by adding at the end thereof "and the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998".
- (b) The Preamble is amended:
 - (1) by striking the comma (",") after Public Law 101-624, and inserting instead "and"; and
 - (2) by inserting "and Public Law 105-214" after "Public Law 102-549".
- (c) Section 1 is amended:
 - (1) by striking "and" after "sections 703", and inserting instead a comma (",");
 - (2) by inserting " , 805(b), 806(a), 807(a), 808(a)(1)(A), 808(a)(2), 812 and 813" after "704";
 - (3) by inserting "and the corresponding determinations required by section 805(b) of the FAA," after "FAA" the second time it appears; and
 - (4) by inserting "sections 808(a)(1)(B) and (C), and 808(a)(4) of the FAA, and by" after "The functions vested in the President by" the second time it appears.
- (d) Section 3(b) is amended:
 - (1) by buy striking "also" after "Enterprise for the Americas Board shall"; and
 - (2) by inserting at the end of the section "The Enterprise for the Americas Board, as constituted pursuant to section 811 of the FAA, shall also advise the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development on the Secretary's negotiation of Tropical Forest Agreements."
- (e) Section 3(c) is amended:
 - (1) by striking "section 708(c)" after "the ATDA Act and", and inserting instead "sections 708(c) and 809(c)";
 - (2) by striking "and" after "environmental framework agreements" and