

tion for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). President Snegur described recent progress in negotiations to reestablish economic links between the communities on both sides of the Dniester River, and to formulate a special status for the Transdniester region within a unified Moldovan state. President Clinton lauded President Snegur for Moldova's exemplary approach toward peaceful resolution of this internal political dispute. He reaffirmed the United States' support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova and applauded its positive human rights record, particularly its treatment of national minorities. President Clinton reiterated that the United States would continue to promote a settlement of the Transdniester dispute, including through its cooperation with the OSCE.

President Snegur reviewed the status of negotiations between Moldova and Russia concerning the withdrawal of the Russian 14th Army, noting the importance of the October 1994 framework agreement establishing a three-year withdrawal timetable. President Clinton expressed his expectation that Russia and Moldova would implement the terms of the agreement expeditiously and comprehensively, paying particular attention to the withdrawal of military equipment. The two presidents welcomed the OSCE's constructive role in following the implementation of the withdrawal agreement and searching for a lasting political solution of the problems in the eastern part of Moldova, as called for in last month's OSCE Budapest Summit.

President Clinton and President Snegur noted the great strides made in recent years toward overcoming the division of the European continent and opening the way for closer cooperation among the European states. During President Snegur's visit to the Pentagon, he and Defense Secretary William Perry signed a Joint Statement on Future U.S.-Moldovan Defense and Military Relations. President Clinton welcomed Moldova's decision to participate in the Partnership for Peace, an important component in an emerging new security concept for Europe. Under the Warsaw Initiative, the United States will seek to provide Moldova assistance in the next fiscal year to complement Moldova's own resource commitments for Partnership

activities. The two leaders reaffirmed their support for coordinated international efforts, through such structures as the OSCE and the United Nations, to promote peaceful solutions to regional conflicts.

President Clinton and President Snegur expressed the belief that the visit by President Snegur contributed greatly to further strengthening bilateral relations. President Snegur expressed his warm appreciation to President Clinton and the people of the United States for the opportunity to visit.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Remarks to the National Association of Home Builders

January 30, 1995

Thank you very much. Thank you, Tommy, for your introduction, and thank you for all of the hard work you've done as president and the work you've done with us. I also want to send my best wishes to your new president, Jim Irvine. I look forward to working closely with you, Jim, and with your entire association.

Let me begin by doing something I wasn't supposed to do. You know, my staff told me I didn't have time to stay and answer questions, and then the gentleman who preceded me didn't get a chance to answer the question. So I'll answer it the best I can here off the top of my head with regard to the deficit, because it will set up what I want to talk about in a moment.

When you make your income tax check out in April about—well, over a third of it will go to pay interest on the national debt, and about 28 cents of it will go to pay interest on the debt accumulated between 1981 and 1993 in January when I took office, in just that 12 years alone.

To give you some idea of the contrast: only about a nickel of your income tax check would be required to pay for welfare and foreign aid put together. So it is a very serious problem. We estimate within a couple of years interest on the debt will be more costly than national defense every year, which is why I've worked so hard on it.

I thought I'd start by answering a question to see if I could get your attention. I was thinking that, as I was being introduced, of a joke I was told by a college president over the Christmas holidays, when she said that she identified with me when someone said that being a President was a lot like running a cemetery: There are a lot of people under you, but nobody's listening. So I thought I could answer your question and maybe you would.

Let me thank each and every one of you in the National Association of Home Builders for the support you've given to our administration's efforts to get this economy going and to bring the deficit down. Working together, we have made a real difference in the lives of the American people, and I want you to know I appreciate all your hard work to make sure we're a stronger nation as we move into the 21st century and to preserve the American dream, including home ownership for all of our people.

I know Secretary Cisneros spoke with you on Saturday, and I'm especially glad you had a chance to hear from him on my behalf. The efforts he's made at the Department of Housing and Urban Development have been a crucial part of what we've all done together to build up America. Our work is a prime example of the kind of partnership I've tried to build between the public and the private sectors throughout our country. Together, our job is to build a foundation upon which American families can build up their own futures, share in economic prosperity, and keep the American dream alive for another generation.

Our partnership is part of what I have called the New Covenant. When I ran for President, the New Covenant was at the center of my campaign. It's a call for more opportunity and more responsibility, recognizing that you can't really have one without the other, and that unless we have more of both, we can't hope to stay strong at home and remain the strongest force for peace and freedom throughout the world.

To build that New Covenant, I've focused on three things that are critical to making sure we succeed in the new global economy: first, empowering our own people to make the most of their own lives; second, expand-

ing opportunity and shrinking and redirecting the Federal bureaucracy to meet the needs of our people today and tomorrow; and finally, shifting more authority to the State and local levels and to the private sector over those things that they can do better than the Federal Government.

The National Association of Home Builders has been a strong partner in many of these efforts. Throughout the life of our Nation, nothing has been more important as a building block of the American dream than home ownership. And that's been especially true in the second half of this century.

Together, we've worked hard to reinforce that foundation and provide new building blocks, and the results show that our partnership is working. Think about your industry first. America had nearly 1.5 million housing starts last year, the best since 1988. Single-family starts totaled nearly 1.2 million; that's a 13 percent increase over the previous year, the best year of performance since 1979.

Beyond the homebuilding industry, we see strong evidence that our partnership is working as well. In contrast to the 4 years before I took office, we've had almost 6 million new jobs in this economy in just 2 years. Nineteen eighty-four gave us the fastest growth in 10 years and the lowest combined rate of unemployment and inflation in 25 years. And for the first time in nearly a decade, America was rated as having the world's most productive and competitive economy.

We're doing all of this because, first and foremost, we've worked to put our economic house in order. Just 2 years ago, it was an open question whether we would find the strength to cut the deficit that had exploded out of control during the previous 12 years and had driven our interest rates up and our economy down.

Together, thanks to people like you, we were able to change that course. We passed an economic package that's bringing the deficit down by more than \$600 billion. That's about \$10,000 for every family in America. And it's going down 3 years in a row for the first time since Truman was President.

You were one of our biggest supporters in deficit reduction because you knew it would bring down our interest rates and you knew it would get our economy going again,

and I'll always be grateful for your help on that.

Getting the deficit under control was only a beginning. We've also cut the size of Government and focused its efforts where it can really make a difference in meeting today's and tomorrow's challenges.

We've already cut the bureaucracy by more than 100,000, and we're on our way to cutting 272,000 positions over a 5-year period without regard to anything else that happens in this Congress. So the Federal Government is already going to be at its smallest size in 30 years.

Look at HUD. We closed all the regional offices, eliminating an entire layer of bureaucracy. We cut the Department's work force by 10 percent to make their work, and we hope your work, more efficient. And HUD wasn't the only Department. We're closing 1,100 Agricultural Department offices and doing a lot of other things that I think all of you would approve of. But cutting the Government is only part of the job. We're also making the Government we have work better for our people. We've streamlined many, many programs and given local communities more flexibility to solve problems at the grassroots where they can get the job done most effectively.

In the area of welfare reform alone, for example, we have given two dozen States permission to get around cumbersome Federal regulations, to try new and exciting ways to move people from welfare to work.

In the housing field, under the leadership of Secretary Cisneros, the Federal Housing Administration has already lowered costs and changed rules to help home buyers. After the reforms FHA has made, today it takes just 3 to 5 days, not 4 to 6 weeks as it used to, to get an FHA single-family loan endorsement. That's why FHA insured 1.3 million new loans last year, including 450,000 for first-time buyers. That's the second best year in its 60-year history.

Now we're moving to strengthen our efforts. We propose to consolidate 60 different narrowly focused housing programs into three flexible funds. We want to transform the Federal Housing Authority into an entrepreneurial, Government-owned corporation. And we propose phasing out direct subsidies

to housing authorities and to end public housing as we know it.

Instead of subsidizing bureaucracies, we want to give money directly to residents so that they have the opportunity to take more responsibility for their own lives. This is progress all of us can be proud of. Our partnership is working. But as much progress as has been made, you and I know it's not enough.

Too many people are working harder for less. They have less security, less income, less certainty they can even afford a vacation, much less the downpayment on a new home. That's why I proposed a middle class bill of rights, which could be called, and probably should be called, the middle class bill of rights and responsibilities, because for every opportunity it offers, it requires responsibility in return.

The middle class bill of rights is about ensuring that the American dream stays alive for everyone willing to take responsibility for their future. It will help with your piece of the American dream and with a lot of others as well. To foster more savings and personal responsibility, the middle class bill of rights will enable people to establish individual retirement accounts and then to withdraw from them, tax free, for the cost of education, health care, the care of a parent, and to buy a first home.

Because of our work in the last 2 years, we've already seen the home ownership rates for young families actually go up for the first time in more than a decade. The middle class bill of rights will help even more Americans to buy a home. It says to our young couples in particular, owning a home is not out of your reach. There is a reason to save and real hope that your hard work and responsibility will pay off for your family.

Education is another critical building block in the strong foundation for our country. And the middle class bill of rights also includes a deduction for education and training costs after high school. That eases the burdens on families by helping them to educate themselves and their children. Furthermore, the middle class bill of rights offers a \$500 tax break for families with young children and collapses nearly 70 different Federal job training programs into a grant which

will provide for direct vouchers to unemployed workers or low-wage workers who are willing to go back to school and learn more skills so they can earn more money.

Now, all of this will be an important part of keeping the American dream alive. And I should emphasize that this middle class bill of rights is fully paid for by spending cuts and that I will send Congress more than twice as many cuts as are necessary to pay for the middle class bill of rights, so we can keep driving the deficit down.

In the housing field, we want to do even more. As you know, I set a national goal of boosting home ownership to an all-time high by the end of the century, to forge a national home ownership strategy. Secretary Cisneros has been doing a great job to put those goals into action, working with you, with mortgage lenders, with Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, with the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National League of Cities, and with national civic organizations and advocacy groups. The strategy will aim to lower regulatory barriers so we can step up construction of starter homes. It will give communities more power to rebuild themselves. And it will give citizens more information so they can take hold of their opportunities.

Secretary Cisneros will submit the strategy to me in March, and I look forward to working with you to act on it and to make the dream a reality for more Americans. The key to our success with this new strategy will be strengthening the same partnership that has served us so well, so far. We've shown how we can succeed for the American people when we work together to bring the deficit down and get the economy going again.

I was eager to talk with you today because I believe that we must recommit ourselves to building a stronger America and to giving our people even more opportunities in the years to come. That's what the new national home ownership strategy is all about. It's what the middle class bill of rights is all about. It's what the New Covenant is all about.

We have to keep the recovery going; we have to increase opportunity; we have to support more responsibility from all of our people. These building blocks will build a stronger future for our children. Together, we've

built a strong foundation. This country's in better shape than it was 2 years ago. Now, let's move forward to finish the job for America and for the American people.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke by satellite at 1:02 p.m. from Room 459 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Tommy Thompson, president, National Association of Home Builders.

**Executive Order 12948—
Amendment to Executive Order No.
12898**

January 30, 1995

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America and in order to amend Executive Order No. 12898, it is hereby ordered that section 1-103(e) of that order is amended by deleting the phrase "Within 12 months of the date of this order," and inserting the phrase "By March 24, 1995," in lieu thereof and by deleting, in the second sentence of section 1-103(e), the phrase "During the 12 month period from the date of this order," and inserting the phrase "From the date of this order through March 24, 1995," in lieu thereof.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
January 30, 1995.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register,
10:39 a.m., January 31, 1995]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on February 1.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting the Department of
Health and Human Services Report**

January 30, 1995

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 540 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 360qq) (previously section 360D of the Public Health Service Act), I am submitting the report of the Department of Health