

In Brussels, I met with European leaders about ways to strengthen all our nations by expanding trade and economic growth. I also attended a summit to adapt NATO, history's greatest military alliance, to this new era. Our NATO partners approved my proposal for a Partnership For Peace, a Partnership which invites Europe's Eastern nations to participate in military cooperation with NATO's forces.

In Prague I met with the leaders of the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia. These countries have been at the forefront of communism's collapse and democracy's rebirth. As I met with such famous democratic heroes as President Lech Walesa of Poland and President Václav Havel of the Czech Republic, I assured them that the security of their countries is important to our security, and I outlined new ways to help their economic reform succeed.

Then I flew to Kiev in the Ukraine. I met with Ukraine's President Kravchuk to nail down an agreement to eliminate over 1,800 nuclear warheads that were left in Ukraine when the Soviet Union broke apart. Most of those warheads have been targeted at the United States, and their elimination will make all of us safer, not only from nuclear accidents but from nuclear terrorism.

And now I'm in Moscow. The weather's cold, but our work has brought us to a new season of partnership, warm partnership, with Russia's reformers. President Yeltsin and I reached a series of agreements to expand our trade ties, protect human rights, and reduce the threat of nuclear accidents of proliferation.

One of the experiences I enjoyed most here in Moscow was speaking to an audience of Russians, many of them young people. In many ways their concerns reminded me of those voiced by our own young people, especially as they spoke about their educations and their careers, their hopes and their fears about the future. But their comments also suggested that their hopes for a new Russia, despite all the problems that they have today, a new Russia, proud and free, outweigh their fears. I tried to convince them that their peaceful transition to a more open society is important not only to them but to all the rest of us in the world as well. And I urged

them to stay the course of economic and political reform.

In the end, the next generation is what this entire trip is about, the young people in America, the young people in Europe and throughout the rest of the world. The kind of efforts we're pursuing this week, the kind of efforts that will increase democracy, provide for military cooperation instead of conflict, and provide for more open markets, for more jobs for our people and other people, these are the things which will make our young people's future more promising, more prosperous, and more secure.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:01 p.m. on January 14 at the Kremlin in Moscow for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 15. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this address.

Remarks to Future Leaders of Belarus in Minsk

January 15, 1994

Thank you very much. Sergei Gaponenko, the president of the National Academy of Sciences, and to my friend Chairman Shushkevich, ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for coming here. I hope the translation is working well. *[Laughter]* Does the laughing mean yes or no? Yes, I think.

I'm delighted to be here at your National Academy of Sciences with many representatives of my Government and representatives of yours. But most of all, I'm glad to see so many young people here, because it is your future I wish to talk about today. I want to thank Chairman Shushkevich for inviting me and for suggesting that I meet with you. The Chairman is a leader of real courage, in recording the terrible toll of Chernobyl and in leading your nation's reforms. And I'm delighted to be with him here today.

I wanted to come to Belarus because I am impressed with much of what you have done and because I believe you can and will do even more. Your generation has been given an opportunity to build a strong and free nation. While you face hard times today, you have much with which to build a better future. You stand at the crossroads of con-

tinents. You have a highly educated people and great institutions of higher learning. You have good, strong high-technology industries. Above all, you have reclaimed your freedom, and your destiny is now in your own hands. And so now you must decide what to do with your nation and your future.

You are, I assure you, not alone in facing that question, for this is a time of profound change all across the world. Nations everywhere face the challenge of shaping their future amid all the technological, economic, and political changes sweeping the globe. Nations everywhere must now grapple with the question of how to compete in a global economy; how to reward and support hard-working families and their children; how to make their governments more effective and more responsive; how to address social problems such as unemployment and inequality and crime; how to combine cultural and spiritual traditions with the demands of modern life; how to define, indeed, a nation's security and greatness in a modern era in which money and information and technological changes fly across the globe in a millisecond, in which we will be judged, I believe, more on whether we can develop the full capacities of every man and woman within each nation's border than on whether we can tell other people beyond our borders what to do and how they must live.

I have not come here to tell you what I think the solutions should be to these questions for your nation and your future. That is for you alone to decide. But I do come here as a friend and supporter of the democratic and economic reforms you are beginning in your nation. I've come to show my support for those reforms and for your determination to build a better and safer and stronger future for your nation and for this entire region.

The work of reform before you today also has a larger significance, for what you do here might encourage other nations facing the same challenges. It can help to build a broader Europe that is no longer divided but integrated, integrated by democratic governments, market economies, and peaceful coexistence and respect for national borders. If we can accomplish this kind of integration all across Europe, East and West, then we

can make both Europe and America safer and more prosperous.

This nation, which lost one in four of its citizens in the Second World War, must surely know better than any other on the face of the Earth the terrible price Europeans have paid for their constant divisions, not only in the two World Wars of the 20th century but indeed throughout the entire history of nations in Europe. Now, for the first time, we have a chance to build a Europe without divisions, where all countries respect each other's borders, all countries observe democratic traditions of majority rule and individual and minority rights, all countries trade freely with each other and help each other to achieve the true measure of greatness, developing the capacities of their people.

Today I want to speak briefly about three opportunities I see before you: the renewal of your economy, the reform of your political system, and your work to define a new security for a new era.

First, let me say a word about economic transition. Of course, you inherited an economic system imposed from above. And it has left you with, frankly, a mixed legacy. On the one hand, clearly it helped to rebuild Belarus from the ruins of World War II. But that same centrally planned system is ill-suited for the fast-changing global economy. That is clear everywhere. Everywhere in the world and in every continent, the people that are doing well are people who live in economies where investment and a well-trained work force make it possible for people to produce high-quality goods and services which they sell to each other and beyond their borders.

So now you must face the challenge of taking what is best about your economy, your highly skilled people and your advanced industries, and adapting it to the rigors of this new global competition. It is a hard transition. Almost every place which has sought to do it has faced, as you have, among other things, very steep inflation, something you faced in this summer's increases in the prices of meat and butter. Many people are struggling to get by as a result of this inflation. In a cruel way, inflation hurts the people economies should reward the most, those who simply get up and go to work every day,

obeying the law and trying to make their contribution.

But there is cause for hope because, as you privatize more of your economy, as more of it works in a market system, people will have reason to invest more and generate more economic growth. The government's plan to privatize 20 percent of state property this year is, I believe, a step in the right direction.

The United States wishes to support this kind of change. Since you became independent, we have provided over \$150 million in food, medicine, and other forms of assistance. During this trip I announced additional steps to assist your movement to a market economy: the establishment of a business center here in your nation to help to coordinate business efforts both within the country and with other businesses, not only in my country but around the world; a new regional enterprise fund to help to start new businesses, which will include Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova; and a U.S.-Belarus investment treaty to encourage more private trade and investment between our two countries.

Ultimately, your economic success will depend upon your own efforts. But you must have good neighbors who wish to be good partners. The United States wants to be one of those. And I believe there is no reason that Belarus should be left behind in this march to a global economy. I urge you to press ahead with these economic reforms, to do it in as sensible and as clear-headed a way as possible, to learn from the experience of other nations, because I believe that it is the key to a better future.

You also face the challenge of political transition. Just as modern economies need the benefit of every individual's productive capacity, modern nations need the benefit, indeed cannot do well without the benefit of the diverse and informed views of all of their people. The world does not work very well from the top down anymore. It requires the active engagement of all individuals. When voices are silenced by authoritarianism, by closed political systems, or as in the case with too many democracies today, by the apathy of citizens themselves who stay home and stay out of political dialog, then wisdom is lost, debate becomes more hollow,

challenges are avoided instead of being faced, and in the end, tyrants find it easier to grab or to hold on to power. We know where that low road leads. It leads to economic stagnation and social intolerance.

You have learned from your own hard history that there is a better way. I applaud your democratic reforms. I hope you will follow through with the commitments that have been made to hold new elections in March of this year. I hope you will press ahead with plans to craft a new constitution. I hope you will, in short, create a foundation for your economic renewal by protecting and promoting the political and human rights of your people, without which, over the long run, it will be very difficult to have a strong economy.

One of the most encouraging signs of your economic renewal is the political ferment that is bubbling up from your people. You have new political movements such as the Belarusian Popular Front. I was pleased to meet some of their members earlier today. You have environment groups which formed after the Chernobyl disaster. Such groups, along with free labor unions, business associations, and others, can help to create a culture of participation, of debate, of personal investment in your nation's future. These private associations are important, just almost as important as the right to vote in the elections. It requires both a participation in the decisions of who will represent you at the state and who will be able to organize privately to make life more satisfactory. And they'll give views a wider range.

Finally, let me say a word about your efforts to build a new nation that defines its strength and greatness in new ways. There is no better example than your determination to live as a nuclear-free state. Since I became the President of the United States, I have been determined to work with the other nuclear nations, and especially with Russia, to try to help the other republics of the former Soviet Union become nuclear-free. And we have gone a long way to finance that. Belarus led the way, and you deserve the credit and thanks of citizens all over the world.

Seventy-six nuclear weapons were here when the Soviet Union dissolved. As a new nation, one of your first decisions was to do

away with them. It would have been easier to look backward and say, "Well, these 76 weapons somehow make us a great nation. They make us stronger. We will keep them; we will use them and rattle them around as threats if people don't help us or do what we want them to do." But you made a braver and a better choice, to live nuclear-free.

I am sure that your tragic experience with Chernobyl helped to shape that choice. But I also imagine that many, many of you had a clear understanding that these weapons, powerful and intimidating though they might be, offer you little in the way of real security. Real security lies in the integration with your neighbors, their political and economic values, and respect for their borders.

So you freely chose to eliminate these weapons. You became the first of the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union to ratify the START Treaty and to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. That is part of why I was so pleased to welcome Chairman Shushkevich to Washington last July, early in my administration. I wanted to express my admiration for the courage and the vision that he and that all of you have demonstrated by making the choice to be nuclear-free.

We are committed to helping you to prove to all the people of the world that that was the right choice, that you were building a new and a better security. We are helping you to remove these weapons safely and securely, with financial assistance and technical advice. You suffered through one nuclear tragedy. We are determined to see that you do not endure another. Today I informed the Chairman that the United States will make additional funds available to Belarus for this purpose, which will bring the total we have provided over the last 2 years in '93 and '94 to \$100 million.

As you move away from the weapons of the old security, we want to help you to build a new security by helping you to be a part of a new and democratic Europe. Earlier this week I joined our NATO allies in creating the Partnership For Peace. The Partnership For Peace invites all of the nations of the former Soviet Union and the former Warsaw Pact and all other non-NATO nations in Europe, all of them together, to join with NATO

in a partnership that will permit us together to provide for the common security. It will permit non-NATO members to do military planning and training and exercises with NATO members as long as they promise to respect the sovereignty, the independence, and the existing territorial boundaries of all of the nations which participate. I hope Belarus will give careful consideration to this Partnership. It is a part of our strategy to try to have a Europe that is undivided for the first time in its history, that uses the prospect of military cooperation genuinely to ensure the peace instead of simply to prepare for war.

You are a new nation with a long history. During this century you have endured as much or more hardship as any people we have ever known. And now you face difficult and challenging political and economic transitions. They are so challenging that they can even be disorienting. And if you move to elections, which I hope and pray that you will, you will find that when people are in trouble, they sometimes vote their frustrations as well as their hopes. That is still true in the United States, and we've been working at it for 200 years now.

But there is no substitute for putting the people of the nation in the driver's seat. And we must be aware of this, no matter how sophisticated a people are, no matter how much information is available to decision-makers. There is so much going on in this world today, economically, politically, culturally. The changes are so sweeping, there is no way that one group of people, sitting atop a society, can make decisions which suffice to guarantee the best possible life for all of the people who live in that society.

Therefore, I believe that free political systems and free economic systems also happen to be good economics for the world in which we are living and the world which we will live in the 21st century, for the foreseeable future. You face possibilities that are as sweeping as your land. The new freedom you are building has many difficulties, but it can also work miracles. It can make your cities thrive; it can help your land to blossom. Most important of all, it can give the wonderful children that I was shaking hands with just a few moments ago real hope.

As you undertake the hard work of harnessing this new freedom to your rich culture, to your deep history, to your bold dreams, I hope you will remember that the American people are with you. We wish to be your partners and your friends because we have faith in your courage and confidence in your future. I hope that partnership will come about, will last a long time, and will bring to you the peace and prosperity that I wish for this country and for all the world. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:17 p.m. at the Academy of Sciences. In his remarks, he referred to Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich of Belarus.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria in Geneva, Switzerland
January 16, 1994

Q. President Clinton, are you going to talk about terrorist issues at this meeting today?

President Clinton. We'll have a statement later when we finish. We just met. We haven't started the meeting yet.

Q. Are you happy to be here, and can you tell us what you expect from the meeting, sir?

President Asad. I'm delighted to be meeting with President Clinton and his assistants. We are at the table not to think about expectations but to do the work.

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:15 a.m. at the Intercontinental Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference With President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria in Geneva
January 16, 1994

President Asad. At the conclusion of the important and constructive talks which were conducted today between President Clinton and myself, I wish to express my deep satisfaction for what these talks have effected in terms of the United States determination to do all it can in order to bring the peace process to its desired objective, the objective of establishing the just and comprehensive peace in the region through the implementa-

tion of the U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, as well as the principle of land for peace. In this respect, I appreciate the fact that, notwithstanding the great importance that President Clinton attaches to the internal affairs of his country, he has attached a special importance as a full partner and honest intermediary to helping the parties reach a comprehensive peace that is in the interest not only of the peoples of the region but also the people of the world at large.

Today's meeting between President Clinton and myself came to crown a number of exchanges and telephone communications between us over the last year. I hope that our meeting today will contribute to the realization of the aspirations of the peoples in the region, mainly that this new year will be the year of achieving the just and comprehensive peace which puts an end to the tragedies of violence and wars endured by them for several decades.

During our meeting, I had the opportunity to stress to President Clinton Syria's firm commitment to the principles and bases of the peace process and our strong conviction that peace cannot be genuine and lasting unless it was comprehensive and based on the principles of international legitimacy and justice. This means endeavoring to reach a just solution on all tracks.

Historical evidence, both past and present, have proved that separate peace and partial solutions were not conducive to the establishment of real peace in the region. In this regard, I would like to express my satisfaction that President Clinton himself has committed to the objective of comprehensive peace.

On this basis, we have agreed to work together for the successful efforts aimed at putting an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict and at reaching a genuine and comprehensive peace that enables the peoples of the region to focus on the development, progress, and prosperity.

This meeting has also provided us with the opportunity to exchange views over a number of issues including those related to bilateral relations between our countries. We have agreed that the noble objective toward which we are working requires a qualitative move