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National Realtors chief blasts housing policies

"Pervasive anti-housing philosophy in this nation" may prevent a whole generation of Americans from owning their own homes, warns the president of the National Association of Realtors.

Donald I. Hovde, president of the 680,000-member real-tors group, charged "no growth slow growth ordinances" and governmental "regulation extremists" have "eliminated the basic house in this country."

"Over the next 10 years, we will have 16 million more Americans reaching the prime home buying age of 25 to 44. We are not going to be able to house them in a home of their own," he predicts.

Hovde said market opinion research shows that in the next five years the issue of home ownership will be one of the most critical problems facing Americans.

"More than 20 million new housing units must be built in the 1980s to satisfy the nation's housing demands."

Citing the group's recently released "Annual Real Es-

tate Market Outlook for 1979," Hovde noted that projected new single-family housing starts will dip 13 percent for the year and groundbreaking on multifamily housing will decline 14 percent.

Hovde pointed to Chicago as an example of where "government regulations" and "legislation limiting housing " have had an "effect."

The realtor chief said single-family housing permits declined 11 percent in the city and nine percent in the suburbs of Chicago last year. Quoting a Bell Federal Savings January study, Hovde noted that permits for new single-family and multifamily housing units in metropolitan Chicago slid eight percent from 1977 to 1978.

HOVDE BLAMED "excessive government regulation" for adding 20 percent to the cost of a new home. But he said it is a "demonstrable fact that providing adequate housing and protecting the environment are not mutually exclusive goals.

"We must achieve a mentality, a philosophy among our citizens and governments that sensible, manageable growth can be ached if we work to balance our communities' housing and economic needs against their ecological and environmental needs."

Instead, we have become victims of "regulation extremists," Hovde stated.

"The irony of all these well-intentioned codes and regulations promulgated in the name of safety and comfort is that fewer families can afford to buy homes built in compliance with these codes.

"We are no longer free to

"We are no longer free to choose where we want to live." Hovde asserted. "Our governments, our nation's towns and villages are killing the American dream through over-regulation and no-growth legislation. The American dream is becoming unaffordable for the people for whom this dream burns brightest." Hovde concluded.



