homes and office buildings. And we're getting very, very close in automobiles. We can get there.

But listen, this is your future; this is your life; this is the world your children and your grandchildren will have to live in, in the 21st century. This is crazy for us not to do this. We do not have to take the economy down; we will lift the economy up. And you have to take the lead in helping us meet this challenge.

Scientific research, universal access to university education, reforming Social Security for the 21st century, dealing with the challenge of climate change: those are just four of the things that are out there. Keep your eyes on the future. Believe in this country. Believe in yourself. Reach out across the lines that divide us. Do not let people—do not ever let people who are divisive or pessimistic convince you that there is anything this country can't do. I can look at you and tell you that this country can do anything we put our minds to.

Thank you, and God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:33 a.m. in Assembly Hall at the University of Illinois. In his remarks, he referred to Michael Aiken, chancellor, and James Stukel, president, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana; Mayor Dannel McCollum of Champaign; Mayor Tod Satterthwaite of Urbana; and Larry Smarr, director, National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA).

Remarks to an Overflow Crowd at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana

January 28, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you. Let me, first of all——

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. [*Laughter*] Thank you. Let me ask you a question. Did you see the event in the other place? [*Applause*] One fellow over here said, "Yeah, you don't have to say anything again. It was great." [*Laughter*] Well, I want to thank Secretary Riley and thank the Vice President, but mostly, let me tell you we are overwhelmed at the crowd that has come out today. Here—5,000 people here. There's another 3,500 people in another room. I'm overwhelmed, and I thank you very much.

Look, here's the bottom line. Here's the bottom line. For 5 years we have worked basically on two things: First of all, we tried to get the country in shape, in good shape, so that it just works in a good way for people; and secondly, we tried to get the American people to imagine the future, to think about the 21st century, to think about what kind of country we want this to be and how we're going to build it. Now that we have the lowest unemployment in 24 years, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the highest homeownership ever, record drops in welfare, 5 years of dropping crime, things are pretty well in shape; we need to be thinking about the future. And that's what I tried to talk about last night.

We need a future in which all these areas that have been left behind in the economic recovery have a chance to educate their children well, to have their kids on safe streets, to have jobs in places that have never been there. We need a future like that. And we need a future that you can help us with—younger people especially can help us with, a future where we understand that our future is tied to the rest of the world, that we have to work in cooperation with other countries and it doesn't make us weaker, it makes us stronger when we reach out a hand of friendship to Africa, to Latin America, to Asia, to all these other countries and we work together to go forward. We have to understand that.

We need a future in which we understand—we believe that America can lead the world in growing an economy and not only saving but actually improving our natural environment. We can cure this problem of global warming and grow the economy. Young people believe that. America has to believe that. And you have to make it happen.

And finally, we need a future in which we really believe that education is for everyone. We have worked so hard—you heard us talking about it in the other room—we worked so hard to make it possible for every young person in this country to go on to college. And you have to tell people who are coming along behind you, "You can do it. Don't be discouraged." That little baby in your arms

can go to college. Every baby in this country I want to be able to go to college.

We have to figure out a way when the Vice President and I—when our generation retires, the so-called baby boomers, we provide for a system that preserves our retirement, guarantees it for the 20 and 30-year-olds today, and doesn't bankrupt you. We can do that, if you'll help us do it, next year.

And the last thing I want to say is this, and in some ways this may be more important than anything else. America—look at this crowd here today. Look at you. Look at each other. Now, we've got people who are young and not so young. [*Laughter*] We have people who are in wheelchairs and people who may play varsity athletics. We have people from every conceivable racial and ethnic group here in what you used to think of as homogeneous Champaign-Urbana. Why is that? Because America is changing. We're becoming more and more and more diverse.

Now, a lot of the time that Al Gore and I spend working for you, we're out there worrying about these ethnic problems in Bosnia, or religious and ethnic differences in the Middle East, or old hatreds in Ireland, or tribal warfare in Africa. And we still see examples of horrible discrimination from time to time in America. But you know, just look around this room. This is our meal ticket to the future, our diversity and sharing values, believing in each other, believing in the fundamental unity of human nature. That's our meal ticket to the future. You can make one America. And I want you to help us make one America for a new century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:41 p.m. in Gymnasium 1 of the Intramural Physical Education Building.

Remarks to an Overflow Crowd at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana

January 28, 1998

Thank you. First of all, thank you for coming, and thank you for waiting. I'm sorry you had to wait so long. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I want to thank Secretary Riley and the Vice President, and I also want to thank your Congressman, Congressman Tom Ewing, for coming along with me. Let's give him a big hand. [*Applause*]

We have had an incredible day at the University of Illinois—an incredible day. You know, this is the third meeting we've been to. You had to sit through the other two, didn't you? Is that okay? [*Applause*]

This reminds me—I hate to give the same speech over, but once I went to a concert where Tina Turner sang—you all know who Tina Turner is—and at the end of the concert, after singing all her new songs, she started to sing her first hit, "Proud Mary." And the crowd started clapping, and she said, "I have been singing this song for 25 years, but it gets better every time I do it."

But I'm not going to give you the whole dose again. I want to just make two points very briefly. Number one, the Vice President and I and our administration, we've worked very hard these last 5 years to get America in good shape, to have this country work again for ordinary people. And I think you can see, from the condition of the economy and from the fact that we're making real progress on our social problems and from our work in the world at large, that we're making that kind of progress.

Now is the time we need to be thinking about what the 21st century will look like for all the young people here. And that means a commitment to education for everybody, all the way through college. It means a commitment to the idea that we can preserve and improve our environment while we grow the economy. It means a commitment to the idea that we can reform Social Security so that the big baby boom generation, that I'm the oldest member of, can retire without putting unfair burdens on those of you who are younger and your children.

And it means that we can find a way in our increasingly diverse country to come together, across all the lines that divide us, into one America, because in a global society, believe you me, a great democracy like ours that can accommodate people of every race, every background, every religion, and still be bound together by shared values is the most blessed place on Earth.

Our best days are ahead of us as a nation. And we are here today to ask you to stand