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in the Congress about how to save Social Security. Why? Because the number of people over 65 are going to double between now and the year 2030. And the Trust Fund runs out of money in 35 years.

And for it to be stable, it needs to last for 75 years, but in addition to that, we need to lift the earnings limit for people who work when they're over 65, I think, so they can still draw their Social Security, number one. And number two, we need to have a remedial program to deal with the fact that the poverty rate among single elderly women is twice, almost twice the general poverty rate among seniors in this country.

Why? A lot of it is because of stories like this. So you've either got people like this remarkable lady who is healthy enough and, as you can see, more than quite alert and on top of things and energetic, who continue to work on and on, or you have people who can't do that, and they are twice as likely to be living in poverty even when they draw Social Security.

This is another of the consequences of this. And so the rest of you are going to have to pay to fix this unless you just want to let it go on, and I don't think since we have some money to fix it now, I presume none of us want to let it go on, and we'd like to fix it.

But we should understand that none of this—this kind of discrimination is not free to the rest of us, as well. Just because you haven't felt it directly doesn't mean that you're not weakened and lessened because of the quality of life, the strength of your society, the fabric of it is not eroded by this. And that's the point I wanted—I didn't want to embarrass her about her age, but I think it's important that you understand that this is a cost imposed on the whole society. And one of the big efforts we're going to make this year in this saving Social Security is to do something about this dramatic difference in the poverty rate. And it would be much, much lower if no one had ever had the experiences you just heard described.

[*Secretary Herman continued the discussion saying the pension gap was even greater than the 75-cents-to-every-dollar gap for regular wages. She pointed out that only 40 percent of women have pension coverage. The First Lady then introduced Patricia Higgins, a nurse who also encountered wage discrimination in her field, who discussed the problem and explained how medical advances presented increasingly complex issues for nurses. As her career advanced, she realized that retirement savings were not sufficient. She noted her daughter was planning to be a nurse, and she wanted things to be better for her. Secretary Herman stated that there are policies in place in many institutions but practices inside these institutions often failed to support the policies and procedures. She said the administration was supporting legislation to share salary information without fear of reprisal and asked Ms. Tyler if she thought that would be helpful. Ms. Tyler stated that, in her case, pursuing the issue in court had been very successful and, in the end, yielded solid results.*]

The President. Thank you very much. Let me say on behalf of all of us, we're delighted that you're here. We especially thank Senator Harkin and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton for their leadership, and we thank our panelists. They were all terrific.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The roundtable began at 1:53 p.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, the President referred to Title IX—Prohibition of Sex Discrimination, part of Public Law 92–318, the Education Amendments of 1972. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the full text of remarks of the First Lady and the roundtable participants.

Proclamation 7179—National Equal Pay Day, 1999

April 7, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

We live in a time of remarkable promise. Our Nation's economy is the strongest we have experienced in a generation, creating more than 18 million new jobs since 1993 and the fastest growth in real wages in more than two decades. American women have contributed greatly to this record of success; unfortunately, they have not enjoyed an

equal share in the prosperity they have helped to create.

The typical woman who works full-time year-round earns approximately 75 cents for every dollar the typical man earns. An African American woman earns just 65 cents and a Hispanic woman earns 55 cents for each dollar that a white man earns. In the course of a week, this pay gap can mean one less bag of groceries, skipping a trip to the doctor, missing a rent payment, or not being able to pay for day care. Over the course of a working lifetime, it can mean thousands of dollars, a smaller pension, and fewer savings to provide for a comfortable retirement. And when a working woman is denied equal pay, it doesn't just hurt her; it also hurts her family. In more than 10 million American households today, the mother is the only breadwinner.

Americans have always believed in justice and equality. We have always believed that those who work hard should be able to provide a decent living for themselves and their children. If we are to live up to those ideals, we must ensure that women do not suffer wage discrimination. We must continue vigorous enforcement of existing laws, such as the Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, so that no employer under-values or underpays the work performed by women. To strengthen Department of Labor and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission efforts to end wage discrimination and expand opportunities in the workplace for women, my Administration has included a $14 million Equal Pay Initiative in my proposed balanced budget for fiscal year 2000. This initiative will provide more resources to identify wage discrimination, to educate workers and employers about their rights and responsibilities, and to bring more women into better-paying jobs. We will also work with the Congress to pass the proposed Paycheck Fairness Act—legislation designed to strengthen laws that prohibit wage discrimination.

As we observe National Equal Pay Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to justice and equality in the workplace, and let us build a Nation for the 21st century where the talents, efforts, and hard work of American women will be rightly appreciated and fairly rewarded.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim April 8, 1999, as National Equal Pay Day. I call upon Government officials, law enforcement agencies, business leaders, educators, and the American people to recognize the full value of the skills and contributions of women in the labor force. I urge all employers to review their wage practices and to ensure that all their employees are paid equitably for their work.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventh day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., April 8, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 9.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Airstrikes Against Serbian Targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

April 7, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I reported to the Congress on March 26, 1999, on the participation of U.S. military forces in the series of air strikes conducted by NATO in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) in response to the FRY government's campaign of violence and repression against the ethnic Albanian population in Kosovo. Since my report on March 26, there have been dramatic and very serious developments in the FRY. Belgrade's sustained and accelerating repression is creating a humanitarian disaster of staggering dimensions. Estimates now are that well over one million Kosovars have been displaced from their homes and villages. At this time, more than