

These are some of the ways we can, must, and will honor the service of our troops and the sacrifices of their families. But we must also do our part, not only as a nation, but as individuals, for those Americans who are bearing the burden of wars being fought on our behalf. That can mean sending a letter or a care package to our troops overseas. It can mean volunteering at a clinic where a wounded warrior is being treated or bringing supplies to a homeless veterans' center. Or it can mean something as simple as saying thank you to a veteran you pass on the street.

That's what Memorial Day is all about. It's about doing all we can to repay the debt we owe to those men and women who have answered our Nation's call by fighting under its flag. It's about recognizing that we, as a people, did not get here by accident or good fortune alone. It's about remembering the hard winter of 1776, when our fragile American experiment seemed doomed to fail, and the early battles of 1861, when a union victory was anything but certain, and the summer of 1944, when the fate of a

world rested on a perilous landing unlike any ever attempted.

It's about remembering each and every one of those moments when our survival as a nation came down not simply to the wisdom of our leaders or the resilience of our people, but to the courage and valor of our fighting men and women. For it's only by remembering these moments that we can truly appreciate a simple lesson of American life: That what makes all we are and all we aspire to be possible are the sacrifices of an unbroken line of Americans that stretches back to our Nation's founding.

That's the meaning of this holiday. That's a truth at the heart of our history. And that is a lesson I hope all Americans will carry with them this Memorial Day weekend and beyond.

Thank you.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 2:15 p.m. on May 22 in the Green Room at the White House for broadcast on May 23. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 22 but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on May 23.

## **Statement on the Death of Former President Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea** *May 23, 2009*

I was saddened by the news of the death of former President Roh Moo-hyun of the Republic of Korea. During his tenure, President Roh contributed to the strong and vital relationship

between the United States and the Republic of Korea. On behalf of Government of the United States, I offer my condolences to his family and to the Korean people.

## **Remarks on the Situation in North Korea** *May 25, 2009*

Good morning, everybody. We are on our way to Arlington to remember the fallen and those who have served America with extraordinary valor. But before I go there, I wanted to say a few words about North Korea's announcement that it has conducted a nuclear test, as well as its decision to attempt a short-range missile launch.

North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs pose a great threat to the peace and security of the world, and I strongly condemn their reckless action. North Korea's actions en-

danger the people of Northeast Asia, they are a blatant violation of international law, and they contradict North Korea's own prior commitments.

Now, the United States and the international community must take action in response. The record is clear. North Korea has previously committed to abandoning its nuclear program. Instead of following through on that commitment, it has chosen to ignore that commitment. Its actions have also flown in the face of United Nations resolutions. As a result, North Korea is