

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:52 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. Frank G. Helmick, USA, commanding general, Maj. Gen. Rodney O. Anderson, USA, deputy commanding general, and CSM Earl L. Rice, USA, command sergeant major, XVIII Airborne Corps; Melissa Helmick, wife of Lt. Gen. Helmick; Linda Anderson, wife of Maj. Gen. Anderson; Gen. David M. Rodriguez, USA, commanding general, CSM Darrin J. Bohn, USA, command sergeant major, and CSM Roger Howard, USA, acting command sergeant major, U.S. Army Forces Command; Ginny Rodriguez, wife of Gen. Rodriguez; Gen. John

F. Mulholland, Jr., USA, commanding general, and CSM Parry L. Baer, USA, command sergeant major, U.S. Army Special Operations Command; Miriam Mulholland, wife of Gen. Mulholland; Lt. Gen. Joseph L. Votel, USA, commanding general, Joint Special Operations Command, and his wife Michelle; Philip and Maureen Miller, parents of posthumous Medal of Honor recipient S. Sgt. Robert J. Miller, USA; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; Deputy Governor Hikmat Jassim Zaidon of Anbar Province, Iraq; and Mayor Anthony G. Chavonne of Fayetteville, NC.

## Statement on the Legacy of Laura Pollan *December 14, 2011*

Today, as the National Endowment for Democracy awards the Democracy Service Medal posthumously to Laura Pollan, the founder of las Damas de Blanco, we honor and celebrate her life by recognizing her significant contributions to the struggle to defend human rights in Cuba.

Laura Pollan and the quiet dignity of the Ladies in White have courageously voiced the core desire of the Cuban people and of people everywhere to live in liberty. Taking to the streets in peaceful protest to draw attention to the plight of those unjustly held in Cuba's prisons, Laura Pollan and the Ladies in White have stood bravely against Cuban authorities who unleash mobs and resort to house arrest and temporary detention in a failed attempt to silence them. Through Laura Pollan's and the Damas' brave actions, the world bore witness to the repressive actions of Cuban authorities, eventually leading to the release of political prisoners wrongly jailed in the spring of 2003.

Though Laura is not with us today, her bravery in the face of repression and her selfless commitment to democracy and human rights in Cuba offer a living legacy that inspires us to keep moving forward. To las Damas de Blanco who will watch or listen to today's ceremony, you have our utmost respect for your efforts to stand up for the rights of the Cuban people, even in the face of this weekend's crackdown directed at you, and we honor each of you as well.

The United States is steadfast in supporting the simple desire of the Cuban people to freely determine their future and to enjoy the rights and freedoms that define the Americas and that should be universal to all human beings. I remain committed to supporting civil society in Cuba, including by protecting the ability of Cuban Americans to support their families in Cuba through unrestricted family visits and remittances.

## Remarks on Ensuring Fair Pay for Homecare Workers *December 15, 2011*

Hello, everybody. As I said in Kansas last week, the defining issue of our time is whether we can build an economy where hard work pays off and responsibility is re-

warded. It's whether this is going to be a country where working people can earn enough to raise a family and build a modest savings and own a home, secure their own