

grace their chests: for their sustained heroism, 37 Army Commendation Medals; for their wounds, 27 Purple Hearts; for their valor, 18 Bronze Stars; for their gallantry, 9 Silver Stars.

These men were outnumbered, outgunned, and almost overrun. Looking back, one of them said, "I'm surprised any of us made it out." But they are here today, and I would ask these soldiers, this band of brothers, to stand and accept the gratitude of our entire Nation.

There were many lessons from COP Keating. One of them is that our troops should never, ever, be put in a position where they have to defend the indefensible. But that's what these soldiers did for each other, in sacrifice, driven by pure love. And because they did, eight grieving families were at least able to welcome their soldiers home one last time. And more than 40 American soldiers are alive today to carry on, to keep alive the memory of their fallen brothers, to help make sure that this country that we love so much remains strong and free.

What was it that turned the tide that day? How was it that so few Americans prevailed against so many? As we prepare for the reading of the citation, I leave you with the words of Clint himself, because they say something about our Army and they say something about America. They say something about our spirit, which will never be broken. "We weren't going to be beat that day," Clint said. "You're not going to back down in the face of adversity like

that. We were just going to win, plain and simple."

God bless you, Clint Romesha, and all of your team. God bless all who serve. And God bless the United States of America.

With that, I'd like the citation to be read.

[*At this point, Maj. Gary Marlowe, USAF, Air Force Aide to the President, read the citation. The President then presented the medal, assisted by Lt. Col. Owen G. Ray, USA, Army Aide to the President. Following the presentation of the medal, Maj. Gen. Donald L. Rutherford, USA, Army Chief of Chaplains, said a prayer.*]

The President. Well, thank you, everybody. Most of all, thank you for Clint and the entire team for their extraordinary service and devotion to our country.

We're going to have an opportunity to celebrate, and there's going to be a wonderful reception. I hear the food around here is pretty good; I know the band is good; and Colin really needs to get down. [*Laughter*]

So enjoy, everybody. Give our newest recipient of the Medal of Honor a big round of applause once again.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Martishia Rogers and Gary Romesha, parents of S. Sgt. Romesha. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the reading of the citation.

Statement on the Resignation of Karen G. Mills as Administrator of the Small Business Administration *February 11, 2013*

I want to thank Administrator Mills for her outstanding work on behalf of America's small-business owners and entrepreneurs. I asked Karen to lead the Small Business Administration because I knew she had the skills and experience to help America's small businesses recover from the worst economic crisis in generations, and that's exactly what she's done. Over

the last 4 years, Karen has made it easier for small businesses to interact with the Federal Government by reducing paperwork and cutting through redtape. She has played a leading role in my administration's efforts to support startups and entrepreneurs. And she was instrumental in the passage of the Small Business Jobs Act. Because of Karen's hard work

and dedication, our small businesses are better positioned to create jobs and our entire econo-

my is stronger. I want to thank Karen and am grateful for her service.

Statement on the Resignation of Pope Benedict XVI *February 11, 2013*

On behalf of Americans everywhere, Michelle and I wish to extend our appreciation and prayers to His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI. Michelle and I warmly remember our meeting with the Holy Father in 2009, and I

have appreciated our work together over these last 4 years. The Church plays a critical role in the United States and the world, and I wish the best to those who will soon gather to choose His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI's successor.

Statement on the Situation in North Korea *February 12, 2013*

North Korea announced today that it conducted a third nuclear test. This is a highly provocative act that, following its December 12 ballistic missile launch, undermines regional stability, violates North Korea's obligations under numerous United Nations Security Council resolutions, contravenes its commitments under the September 19, 2005, Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks and increases the risk of proliferation. North Korea's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs constitute a threat to U.S. national security and to international peace and security. The United States remains vigilant in the face of North Korean provocations and steadfast in our defense commitments to allies in the region.

These provocations do not make North Korea more secure. Far from achieving its stated goal of becoming a strong and prosperous nation, North Korea has instead increasingly isolated and impoverished its people through its ill-advised pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

The danger posed by North Korea's threatening activities warrants further swift and credible action by the international community. The United States will also continue to take steps necessary to defend ourselves and our allies. We will strengthen close coordination with allies and partners and work with our six-party partners, the United Nations Security Council, and other U.N. member states to pursue firm action.

Statement on Senate Passage of Legislation To Prevent Violence Against Women *February 12, 2013*

Today the Senate passed a strong bipartisan bill to reauthorize and strengthen the Violence Against Women Act. This important step shows what we can do when we come together across party lines to take up a just cause. The bill passed by the Senate will help reduce homicides that occur from domestic violence, improve the criminal justice response to rape and sexual assault, address the high rates of dating violence experienced by

young women, and provide justice to the most vulnerable among us. I want to thank Senator Leahy and his colleagues from both sides of the aisle for the leadership they have shown on behalf of victims of abuse. It's now time for the House to follow suit and send this bill to my desk so that I can sign it into law.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 47.