

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:47 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m., and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. WEBB).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### PALESTINIAN U.N. REQUEST

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I take this time to bring to the attention of my colleagues activities that will take place this week in New York at the United Nations and the request that has been made by the Palestinians that they seek status as an independent state with full membership in the United Nations.

It is clearly the position of the United States, it is clearly I think the position of the international community, that there needs to be two states, a Jewish State of Israel along with an independent Palestinian State, living side by side in peace. But the only way that will take place is through direct negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis. Prime Minister Netanyahu, the Prime Minister of Israel, was here in Washington and spoke before a joint session of Congress. He laid out very clearly how peace in the Middle East needs to evolve, through the recognition by the international community of the Jewish State of Israel and an independent Palestinian State through direct negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

Israel has been one of our strongest allies. They have been a loyal ally to the United States. We share common values. It is strategically critical to the United States, particularly in that part of the world. It is clear to all that the only way we will achieve the two states will be through direct negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis. The Palestinians have been reluctant to have these direct negotiations and tried to use intermediaries. They need to do it directly. Sit down with the Israelis. Negotiate the issues. That is the way to move forward to accomplish their goal.

The action they are seeking in the United Nations will be counterproductive. We have gone on record, every single one of us in the Senate of the United States, in S. Res. 185, a resolution I brought forward with my colleague from Maine, Senator COLLINS. It was passed unanimously by the Senate. It stated very clearly that if the Palestinians were to pursue this unilateral action through the United Nations, that would not advance the peace process, that it would be counterproductive to the objectives of the Palestinians to establish an independent state.

This past week, Senator COLLINS and I sent a letter to President Abbas, the President of the Palestinian group. We

told him that we believed trying to go directly to the United Nations, circumventing the peace process, would be a lack of good faith in peace negotiations and that it would have repercussions on United States foreign policy.

What we have been told by the Palestinians is they will seek full membership as a state in the United Nations, going to the Security Council. That is not going to succeed. We hope the Security Council will recognize the inappropriateness of such action and will not take it up or will not provide the necessary support to forward it to the General Assembly. In the unlikely case that it were to get the necessary support in the Security Council, the United States has made it clear that it would veto any such action, for good reason—because it would be counterproductive to achieving the objectives of two states living side by side in peace.

The Palestinians may go to the General Assembly. Although they cannot get full membership, they could try to advance a resolution within the General Assembly in the United Nations. We know the numbers. We know what could happen. But I must tell you, seeking some form of recognition through the General Assembly, circumventing the peace process and the Security Council, will be harmful to advancing the peace process and the objectives of the Palestinians for an independent state.

Let the parties negotiate directly, in good faith. Israel has indicated they are prepared to do that. We have been prepared to do that—negotiate in good faith through direct negotiations. There are no shortcuts to achieving this. Moving through the United Nations will not achieve those objectives.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Nevada.

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### NEVADA TRAGEDIES

Mr. HELLER. It is an honor serving the people of the great State of Nevada, and today I am speaking on their behalf for the first time in the Chamber of the Senate. Before I begin, I would like to take a moment to reflect on two tragic events that have taken place in Nevada recently.

In Carson City, our Nation lost three Nevada National Guard members at a local restaurant shooting. Those members were MAJ Heath Kelly, SFC Miranda McElhiney, and SFC Christian Riege.

The other was the horrific crash at the Reno air races this weekend. As with the shootings in Carson City, this

terrible event not only impacted the communities in northern Nevada but the entire State and the Nation. Having visited the scene where the crash occurred, it is difficult to describe the amount of damage that took place there.

Our State's first responders and medical personnel did an amazing job in a very difficult situation. My thoughts and prayers go out to all the victims and their families, and I wish the injured a quick recovery.

#### REENERGIZING AMERICA

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I am deeply humbled by the opportunity to stand here today and to address the body as Nevada's 25th Senator. Nevada is a small State, but it is one that has provided many with a great chance to succeed. Most people know that it was in Nevada where Samuel Clemens began to sign his writings as Mark Twain and reported on the territorial legislative sessions. However, the reason Samuel Clemens came to the Nevada territory was to follow his older brother, Orion Clemens, who served as the first and only secretary of the Nevada Territory. That position would later become secretary of state, a position which I held prior to my service in Congress.

Similar to the Clemens brothers who sought greater opportunities, it is in a State such as Nevada where a son of a mechanic can have the opportunity to interact with those who are responsible for governing the State. For instance, as a boy I delivered the newspaper to then-Gov. Mike O'Callaghan. For a time, I went to Sunday school with then-Lt. Gov. HARRY REID's sons, and I was educated at the same public high school as Senator Paul Laxalt. Our current Governor, Brian Sandoval, is someone whom I used to play organized basketball with. I wish to thank Senator Laxalt for his support and Senator REID for being here today. I also wish to thank Senator MCCONNELL for being here as well.

My father's automotive shop was across the street from the Nevada State legislature, so many of the legislators would come into my dad's business. I spent a lot of time there as a kid working in that garage, sweeping floors, repairing cars, fixing engines and transmissions. In that shop, I learned the value of hard work and responsibility and the importance of family.

I am proud of what I learned growing up in Nevada: values from two great parents, good teachers, and good neighbors. Nevada values such as faith in God, hard work, honesty, and commitment to family—these are the values I try to bring to Washington, DC, every day.

Although Nevada has changed over the years, in many ways it is very much the same place as when I grew up. I bring this up because I recall what it took for my father to keep his