

experiences emerge a belief in the very real possibility of future peace.

While at the dinner, I had the pleasure of listening to a speech by an extremely insightful, young woman, Saleela Salahuddin, on the ways of the Israeli people. Saleela Salahuddin was the 1995 Youth Ambassador to Israel. I was very moved by this speech, and I am honored to share it with you:

Tonight, I bring you greetings from Maya, who was my host sister in Netanya, Israel, and Roy, who was my host brother in Arad, Israel. As Sabras, proud natives of Israel, they are two bright youths of the admirable community of democracy which defines the nation. Thanks to AIFL, I was enriched by their modernism, patriotic idealism, and the optimism for the future.

"Everyone in Israel goes there," said Maya. "It's a life-changing experience." She was talking about the Wailing Wall. Less than two hours later, I was standing in front of it, remembering her words and realizing how true they were.

There was a combined quality of awe and appreciation when visiting the holy site on the holy day of Shabbat. I approached the wall slowly, briefly pausing by a small wicker basket that held many brightly colored scarves. I took one out and covered my hair, following the example of a few women who had gone ahead of me.

When I laid my hand on the Wailing Wall, I felt its coolness as well as its strength. The large stones sit atop one another with the assurity that defines millennia of heritage. I was experiencing one of the most transforming moments of my life. I realize that as an American Muslim, I was undoubtedly the first person in my family of many generations to be at this very sacred place. The universality of it all struck me. To my right, a young woman wearing blue jeans prayed; to my left, an old woman in a long black dress devotedly swayed in rhythm with her reading from the Torah. And there I was, standing in the middle, praying with them and understanding the "change" that Maya had spoken of. The diversity and unity of the situation, young and old, Jewish and Muslim, left a very strong impact on me. I added a prayer that I had written on a tiny piece of paper to the many that were inserted into cracks in the ancient wall. In it, I had written a message hoping for peace and democracy to prosper in our world.

This moment shall always be with me, and my message shall forever remain in the Wailing Wall.

On behalf of myself, Maya, and Roy, I bid you Shalom.

### AN ACT TO SAVE AMERICA'S FORESTS

HON. JOHN BRYANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 1996

Mr. BRYANT of Texas. Mr. Speaker, for years I have sought to protect native biodiversity in our forests by ending clearcutting and other forms of even-age logging, and allowing only selection management of Federal forest lands where logging is permitted. Since the 101st Congress, I have sponsored forest biodiversity legislation, and over the years, support for my legislation has grown steadily. In the 103d Congress, 107 Representatives co-sponsored my bill, and 142 voted for a version of it as a floor amendment.

Scientists, however, tell us that banning clearcutting alone is not enough to guarantee

the protection of forest biodiversity on our public lands. It is clear that core areas of pristine forests must be left unlogged altogether, and that these wellsprings of nature should be surrounded by areas where only the most environmentally responsible logging is permitted. In order to direct our forest management agencies to follow these scientific recommendations to protect core areas of biodiversity, I am adding a new title to my bill which will prohibit logging in three categories of Federal forest lands: Northwest ancient forests, roadless areas, and designated special areas.

By adding these new provisions, I believe that my legislation now represents the most complete solution to the deforestation crisis facing our public lands. With this in mind, I have retitled this measure the act to save America's forests.

The Forest Service and other Federal agencies are primarily using the logging techniques of clearcutting and other forms of even-age forestry, despite overwhelming evidence that selection management—cutting individual trees, leaving the canopy and undergrowth relatively undisturbed—is more cost-efficient and is more ecologically sound.

Selection logging is more labor intensive, and therefore creates more jobs for timber workers. It also avoids the high up-front costs of site preparation and replanting required by even-age timber management.

The result of selection logging is a permanent, sustainable supply of high quality timber, and the protection of native biodiversity in the forests. This contrasts with clearcutting's indiscriminate destruction of huge stands of trees, leaving only shrubs and bare ground, leading to erosion, the demineralization of the soil, and allowing the creation of artificial tree farms and extinction of the original native forest in its wake. Wherever we allow logging to occur on our Federal forests, only the selection logging technique should be permitted.

If current plans are followed, the remaining native biodiversity in the approximately 60 million acres available for commercial logging on Federal land will be eliminated and each of those acres transformed into monoculture timber plantations within the next 15 to 20 years.

The legacy of the Forest Service and other Federal agencies' unrestrained use of commercial logging based on even-age logging techniques has left our Federal forests devastated, and has brought countless plant and animal species to the brink of extinction.

The new logging prohibitions contained in my bill are a necessary response to the extraordinarily destructive antienvironmental laws passed by this 104th Congress, especially the timber salvage rider to the fiscal year 1995 rescissions legislation. Under this salvage rider, environmental protection has been suspended. Many northwest ancient forests with trees up to 1,000 years old are being logged, and pristine, roadless, and perfectly healthy forests are now fraudulently being logged as salvage. The salvage rider targeted for clearcutting the very forests that scientists tell us are most urgently in need of protection.

As long as northwest ancient forests and roadless areas remain in the timber base of the Forest Service, and other Federal agencies, these irreplaceable areas are perpetually at risk of being logged and destroyed. It is time to make these magnificent remnants of America's original untouched forests perma-

nently off-limits to logging, protecting them forever from the devastation of any future timber salvage rider, or similarly destructive legislation. My new bill would achieve this.

In the development of a plan for the northwest ancient forests, Forest Service experts and other Federal scientists mapped the ancient forests of the region. These scientists determined no logging should be allowed in many of these ancient forest areas in order to give the ancient forests and their dependent species the highest possibility of survival and recovery. My bill prohibits commercial logging in these northwest ancient forests.

The bill also prohibits commercial logging in roadless areas. Federal roadless areas contain many of the largest unfragmented forests in America and are important reservoirs of our Nation's remaining native biodiversity. I have used the Forest Service's definition of roadless areas in my revised legislation.

My bill also identifies certain Federal forests, call special areas, which may not be roadless areas or northwest ancient forests, but are deserving of protection from commercial logging because of important ecological reasons. Many of these areas also have important cultural, scenic, or recreational qualities, which deserve as much protection as trees and wildlife.

Passage of this legislation will usher in a new era of forest management on our Federal lands, with long-term ecological integrity as the guiding principle.

The public supports environmental protection as never before, and opinion polls express the public's demand that Congress prevent the permanent loss of our Nation's native forests.

I invite every Member to join me in seeking this badly needed forest reform.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 1996

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I was absent from the U.S. Congress on Wednesday, September 18, but I was attending a funeral in my home State of Florida.

THE 3.8 MILLION AMERICAN CITIZENS OF PUERTO RICO DESERVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME ECONOMICALLY SOLVENT AND SELF-SUFFICIENT

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 1996

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my concern for our fellow citizens in Puerto Rico, who have been greatly affected by our recent action to eliminate economic development incentives under section 936 of the Internal Revenue Code without providing them with an alternative program. In dealing with important national issues such as the increase on minimum wage we must not ignore the needs of the people of Puerto Rico, my homeland. The 3.8 million American citizens of