

up the funding for the maintenance programs as well as the operations.

So I want to say to the public:

Do not be afraid. The parks will be open if they are managed well for all of America to enjoy.

IN TRIBUTE TO HIS ROYAL MAJESTY KING TAUFA'AHAU TUPOU OF THE KINGDOM OF TONGA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the outstanding leadership and distinguished service of one of the South Pacific's most honored heads of state, His Majesty King Taufa'Ahau Tupou IV of the Kingdom of Tonga.

His Majesty King Taufa'Ahau Tupou IV, the eldest son in the royal family, was born at the royal palace in Nuku'alofa on July 4, 1918. As crown prince, he studied in Australia at Newington College and the University of Sydney, where he received bachelor of arts and bachelor of law degrees.

His Majesty was the first Tongan ever to receive university degrees. In addition to academic accomplishments, he excelled in athletics, being a member of the university's championship rugby and rowing teams.

Upon concluding academic studies, His Majesty was appointed to the cabinet of the Tongan Government with the portfolio of Minister of Education, and later as Minister of Health. In 1949, he became the premier of Tonga, thus acquiring additional portfolios in foreign affairs, education, and agriculture. From early on, His Majesty has carried the major burden of the kingdom of Tonga's administration as well as development.

During His Majesty's 16 year term as premier, Tonga benefited tremendously from his guiding hand, resulting in steady development and economic advancement of the kingdom. Due to his efforts, education standards were dramatically improved in Tonga with the establishment and expansion of public high school and college systems. In the business sector, His Majesty pushed for the creation of the Tongan copra board, the Tongan produce board, the agricultural council and the government fishing fleet—the backbone of the kingdom's economy. Under his able leadership, public communications and the media were also facilitated, with the establishment of the Tongan broadcasting commission and the local newspaper, the Tonga chronicle, now in its 31st year on publication.

In 1965, with the passage of her late Majesty Queen Salote Tupou III, the crown prince was proclaimed King Taufa'Ahau Tupou IV and coronation ceremonies were held in 1967. The remarkable progress achieved in the kingdom of Tonga during His Majesty's years of leadership has gained the re-

spect of overseas nations and contributed to positive relations with international neighbors. His Majesty, in particular, has fostered close relations with the United Kingdom, which provides substantial financial support for Tonga's continued economic improvement.

Mr. Speaker, this Friday in Utah, His Majesty King Taufa'Ahau Tupou IV will be honored again—this time by the Seacology Foundation for His Majesty's efforts in protection of the environment.

The Seacology Foundation is a non-profit foundation founded to help protect island ecosystems and island cultures. Seacology scientists include experts in endangered species, island flora and fauna, and island ecosystems. One hundred percent of the money donated to seacology goes directly to building schools, hospitals, installing safe water supplies, and meeting the other needs of the indigenous people who live near the rain forests so that these people will not have to sell off the rain forest to survive. Seacology scientists donate their time as well.

His Majesty King Taufa'Ahau Tupou IV has been selected to receive this year's Seacology Foundation award as "indigenous conservationist of the year" for providing royal protection for the peka, or flying fox, colony in Kolovai village in Tongatapu, and for his protection of the primary forests of 'Eua island, and or supporting the establishment of a system of nature preserves throughout the kingdom of Tonga. His Majesty has also spent lifelong service as an interpreter and custodian of Tongan culture, both ancient and modern. The history and culture of the Tongan people are among the most ancient and historical among the Polynesian people. As a letter from the Seacology Foundation to His Majesty notifying him of the award explains, none of these achievements would have occurred without his strong leadership and support.

Mr. Speaker, I deeply congratulate His Majesty King Taufa'Ahau Tupou IV and the Seacology Foundation for all their efforts and I would submit for the RECORD a copy of a letter from Dr. Paul Alan Cox, PH.D., chairman of the board of Seacology Foundation to His Majesty. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honor to call on my colleagues and our great Nation to join me in recognizing the outstanding and exemplary service of His Majesty King Taufa'Ahau Tupou IV on behalf of the good people of Tonga, the Pacific region, and our global community.

Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD a copy of the letter to His Majesty from Dr. Paul Cox of the Seacology Foundation.

DECEMBER 15, 1995.

His Majesty King Taufa'Ahau Tupou IV,
The Kingdom of Tonga.

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS: It is with deepest respect that I inform your royal highness that you have been selected as the 1996 Indig-

enous Conservationist of the Year by the Seacology Foundation. This annual award is made to honor those indigenous people who have performed heroic service in preserving their own ecosystems and cultures.

After careful consideration of the activities of your majesty in providing royal protection for the peka or flying fox colony in Kolovai Village in Tongatapu island (which is the oldest flying fox refuge in the world), for your protection of the primary forest of 'Eua island, for your support in establishing a system of nature preserves throughout the Kingdom of Tonga, and for your life-long service as an interpreter and custodian of Tongan culture, both ancient and modern, the Scientific Advisory Board of the Seacology Foundation has unanimously voted to honor your majesty with this award, which is the most prestigious conservation award for indigenous people in the world.

The Seacology Foundation invites you, at our expense, to attend an award dinner in your honor and a presentation ceremony in Salt Lake City, Utah to receive your award, which will consist of an engraved plaque and a cash award of \$1,000. Fine Nau and I will meet with you personally to arrange a convenient date for this event.

Because of your stellar service, both public and private to conservation, and because of the tremendous example of dedication and courage that you have set for your own people—the Polynesian Islanders—and for indigenous peoples throughout the world, the Seacology Foundation is pleased to bestow upon you the most distinguished award for indigenous conservation in the world by naming you 1996 Indigenous Conservationist of the Year. We offer you our sincere appreciation for your tremendous devotion to protecting this planet.

Warmest personal regards,

NAFANUS PAUL ALAN COX, PH.D.,

Chairman of the Board.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield at this time to my good friend from the State of Utah [Mr. HANSEN].

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend yielding in this very important assignment that you have brought up, and I concur with the gentleman from American Samoa and also would like to add the support of the people from my State who have—many, many of our people have gone to Tonga. In fact, at the school that you graduated from, BYU, there is a number of Tongans there who have shown exemplary type of performance both in athletics and academically, and it is a pleasure that we can give this tribute to His Majesty, and I join you and thank the gentleman for taking this time to bring up this, a very important thing for His Majesty from Tonga.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Utah.

It might be of interest, Mr. Speaker, that it was since 1844 that when the Mormon Church was founded that missionaries were first sent to the South Pacific in the South Seas. So the Polynesian people have had a very long and standing relationship with the Mormon Church since 1844, and because of this, even through His Majesty is not a member of the Mormon faith, but certainly most respectful throughout the region for his energy and certainly for his outstanding leadership as one of the great leaders in the Pacific region.

And for this, Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for this opportunity and want to wish His Majesty a very most welcomed visit here in our country.

NOBODY IN AMERICA WANTS TO CLOSE THE PARKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Utah [Mr. HANSEN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I was very interested in my friend from Ohio, Mr. REGULA talking about the national parks of America. The gentleman from Ohio is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Appropriations that handles those particular issues, and I am the chairman of the subcommittee that handles the authorization of the parks.

I think in America people should realize we have 368 units of the National Park Service. It costs an awful lot of money, and Mr. REGULA has that responsibility. I have the responsibility to make sure they are run correctly, managed correctly.

We find out, however, that we have a lot of parks that are in dire need of help. Yellowstone, for example, has 28 miles of impassable roads; Yosemite has problems, Everglades have problems. We have got problems in parking, sewer systems and culinary water systems.

We wonder why did we find ourselves in a position such as this. So we are doing everything in our power not only to appropriate money, but to come up with a better management procedure. We are trying to come up with ways to give the superintendent of the park a better way to do it.

The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. REGULA] talked about something is very interesting. We have a rec bill in now that will say: Superintendent of the park, if you will put somebody out at that gate, and they walk in, not only will you take that money and send it to the black hole in Congress, there is no incentive to do it.

So this rec bill we have got says this: You keep 70 percent of the money so the superintendent at Yellowstone can take care of the park without having to come to Mr. REGULA and having to spend the time. So there will be incentive for somebody to be in that park.

I find it interesting that the Secretary of the Interior, Mr. Babbitt, has chosen to take H.R. 260, which passed in the 103d session, 428 to nothing, and turn it into a park closing bill. He has gone around America time after time, literally dozens of places, saying Republicans want to close parks. That is absolutely false. Nothing is further from the truth. We do not want to close parks.

What we want to do is make parks that jewel in the crown Americans want. They want to go to the park and they want service. They want the concessionaire to take care. They want the roads to be right. They do not want to see the mess that we are seeing in parks today.

I cannot understand why he is doing that. In fact, the President of the United States, Mr. Clinton, stood on the Mall and thanked them for defeating this park closing bill, which there never was a park closing bill. In fact, I wrote President Clinton and asked him a question: Where is this park closing bill? Where do you want to perpetuate this myth?

I am still awaiting an answer from the President of the United States.

We find ourselves now working on a number of pieces of legislation, a concessionaire's bill that will bring more money into the Treasury, that will have more competition among concessionaires, a healthy thing for the parks. We found the rec bill that I have talked about, as the gentleman from Ohio mentioned, of Yosemite.

The oldest park is Yellowstone. In 1915, if you had gone into Yellowstone it was \$10. Today it is \$10 for an entire car. We just cannot afford that any more.

I must ask my friends who fall in the category of having the perpetual thing as they reach 62 they can go in free. I think it is interesting if Americans would go into the Yellowstone, and the Grand Canyons, and the Zions and the Bryces and the Yosemite and see these people going into the parks, and they are over 62, and they drive in with an \$80,000 Winnebago pulling behind it a \$30,000 Suburban, and they camp for 7 days. They hook up to the electricity, the sewer and the water, and they are free for that entire time.

I have made a time to stumble through those areas and talk to these folks, and I say as I talked to these CEO's and others, a lot of them want to give us money. And they sent us money saying this is the best deal in the world.

We are not in here to rip off the public, but we do want to take care of it.

Do folks in America realize how much we are in arrears in the infrastructure of the park? It is literally billions of dollars in inholdings in other areas.

Can we take care of it? Sure we can, but we have to come up with some of these recommendations that the gentleman from Ohio brought up, and those things we are trying to do.

I say to the administration, to Secretary Babbitt and others: Stop playing political games with this stuff. This is too big to be political. Do not try to ingratiate yourselves to this administration. What we want to do is we want to take care of the parks of America.

I am a little sick and tired as every day another report comes to me. They bring in a newspaper thing or radio ad. Well, all these Republicans are trying to close our park. That is nonsense. There is nobody in America who wants to close the parks.

In fact, I brought in—as chairman of the committee I brought in the man by the name of Roger Kennedy, Director of National Parks. I had him put his arm to the square.

Mr. Kennedy, do you solemnly swear to tell the whole truth, nothing but the truth, so help you God? As we have the right to do?

Mr. Kennedy said, yes.

My first question: Is there any bill that closes any parks?

One answer, one word: No.

Second question: Is there anything in H.R. 260 that privatizes any parks?

One answer: No.

The next question: Now, why is it that your Secretary, your boss, is going all over America saying we have parks to close, and he says, "that is above my pay grade."

So we find ourselves in a situation where these things are not happening. We put out the hand of fellowship to our friends on the other side of the aisle, to the administration saying let us work this out and take care of these 368 parks.

All right; the question comes up should we in any way close any parks? Again, let me refer to Mr. Kennedy, who I found to be an honorable man, and he was on C-SPAN with Brian Lamb, and the question came up should you close any? And he said maybe four or five.

Maybe there is four or five they should close. Let me give you an example of which I will not give you, Mr. Speaker, because I see my time is up.

Mr. Speaker, Secretary of the Interior, Bruce Babbitt has spent a great deal of time during his tenure traveling around the country trying to convince the public that our National Parks are doomed and that the Republicans are responsible for all the problems. The truth is that our park system is in trouble. Republicans inherited a park system just 2 years ago that was already in intensive care. While Republicans and Democrats have worked together in the last 2 years to address these problems, they have only been exacerbated through mismanagement by Bruce Babbitt and his inability to stay home and mind the store. Secretary Babbitt is directly responsible for our National Parks waste and misdirected priorities.

While Secretary Babbitt was taking fishing trips around the country, the GAO found that the National Park Service has no idea how it is spending its money, what its assets are and what its needs are. Perhaps, Secretary Babbitt should spend less time politicking and racking up frequent flyer miles and more time fixing the problems this Congress and the GAO pointed out to him over 2 years ago. Having spent 40 percent of his time traveling at taxpayer's expense, Secretary Babbitt has certainly seen the country but is doing very little to manage our national treasures.

Lets compare the records of the Resources Committee and Secretary Babbitt:

Secretary Babbitt has requested cuts in the funding allocation for park operating funds from 47 percent to 44 percent of the total NPS allocations in the past 2 years. While the Republican-controlled Resources Committee has never recommended cuts in basic park operating funds.

Secretary Babbitt has cut 525 Park Service personnel while the Resources Committee has never recommended any cuts in personnel.

Secretary Babbitt unilaterally sought or studied closure or termination of National Park