HONORING LEELA DE SOUZA AS A WHITE HOUSE FELLOW

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH
OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure today that I rise to commend Leela de Souza of Chicago, Illinois in recognition of her achievements this year as a distinguished White House Fellow.

A native of Chicago, Ms. de Souza graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Chicago, earning an AB in biopsychology. She received her MBA degree from Stanford University Graduate School of Business. After college, she moved to Spain and became a volunteer teacher at the American School of Madrid. Prior to college, at the age of 18, she became a professional ballet dancer. By age 23, she was the prima ballerina for the Hubbard Street Dance Company, one of America's premier contemporary dance troupes. Ms. de Souza is a management consultant with McKinsey & Co. In San Francisco, where she works with clients in the packaged goods, energy and health care industries. In addition to her professional career, she has done extensive pro bono work with two national symphonies. Ms. de Souza has also been involved as a mentor and tutor in the I Have a Dream Program in East Palo Alto, California, and serves on the Business Arts Council of San Francisco.

Established in 1965, the White House Fellowship program honors outstanding citizens across the United States who demonstrate excellence in community service, leadership, academic and professional endeavors. The nearly 500 alumni of the program have gone on to become leaders in all fields of endeavor, fulfilling the fellowship's mission to encourage active citizenship and service to the nation. It is the nation's most prestigious fellowship for public service and leadership development.

As a White House Fellow, Ms. de Souza serves in a position with the Office of the First Lady. She works at the White House Millennium Council to help create national projects and initiatives to celebrate the promise of the new millennium. In this capacity, Ms. de Souza assists with various initiatives such as Millennium Evenings at the White House and Save America's Treasures. She is also the acting liaison with several of the First Lady's millennium projects, including speech writing, federal agency millennium initiatives, and with non-governmental organizations seeking to partner with the White House on national millennium projects.

Mr. Speaker and fellow colleagues, it is an honor to pay tribute to Leela de Souza for her outstanding service as a White House Fellow.
I want to thank the Chairman for conducting these hearings, both as regards the subject matter, which is acutely important for our country, and for the format in which you have presented us with the issues and challenges today. I find this mixture of views to be very useful. I am much more used to the atmosphere in the UN where the NGOs are permitted to come in for 5 minutes to address the delegates from a distance. This is a great device for encouraging dialogue, particularly on this important subject. I have learned a great deal from the two insights that I have heard today.

As we think of a negotiated outcome for the Kosovo crisis, which is what we should be working for hard, we can't forget that the removal of Serbian forces, the return of the Kosovars, continuation of Kosovo as an autonomous part of Serbia (at least for the time being), and establishment of a functioning national force. As the Bonn group meeting earlier today showed, the main issue in what now is a three-cornered dialogue—between Milosevic, Chervomyrdin, and the Western NATO countries—is the nature of that force, its armament and its composition. All three parties agree that the force should be legitimated by a mandate from the Security Council and that is important. Milosevic has been holding out for a lightly armed UN force. The NATO countries for a heavily armed NATO force. But this question of the level of armaments is secondary to the issue of the nature of the force itself. President Clinton and other NATO leaders have been insisting that the core of the force be a NATO force, directed by NATO in effect with some Russians and others added. It's very clear that the Administration has in mind the poor performance of the UNIFOR force in Bosnia, and the mobile UNIFOR force with NATO plus forces from Russia and other partners for peace. Moreover, the Administration is clearly worried that good Security guidance on a lightly armed force may not be forthcoming. The position of Russia, China and France in the Security Council is uncertain. Beyond that, a UN force may not be capable of handling possible Serbian resistance.

There are other factors here that we have to bear in mind. The resistance of the Clinton Administration to acceptance of a UN-directed force in Kosovo. The United States would by implication face a certain implied humiliation if it has to accept a UN force for Kosovo and drop NATO. There is no doubt that the Congressional majority would make life hard for the Administration. And beyond that, the United States would end up having to pay its peacekeeping dues to the UN.

For his part, Milosevic wants a UN force, over a NATO force. Accepting outright a NATO involvement would be a severe domestic defeat for him, possibly his political end. NATO is his enemy. A NATO force in Kosovo could enter and at some point cut off the road of Serbia, and it could accelerate the secession of Kosovo from Serbia. Both sides are being obstinate on this point and that's the closing point in negotiations that we have heard today.

I believe that the Clinton Administration should accept a UN force because a refusal to do so confronts NATO with the grim prospect of a long war. That would then go on with ground forces, a long and even more bloody and expensive process. We can improve the past performance of UN peace-keeping forces and the composition of that force. We can work with the Security Council more carefully and that is the big crime of omission if there is one in this picture for the Clinton Administration.

As regards the Security Council, the warning last August on Iraq when France, Russia and China voted against the United States in the Security Council on the issue of continuing UNOSCOM, the special commission for Iraq. Although it was ready engaged in negotiation with Serbia, the Administration failed to use the time between then and the Holbrooke mission to Milosevic in October, to improve the situation of the Security Council. That was a great omission, in my opinion, because we could have gotten a Security Council legitimation for the actions undertaken by NATO, or possibly even a wider agreement. As the future we must act to prevent the Security Council from degenerating into cold war paralysis because this would definitely not be in the international interest. I am arguing precisely on this point because it is very relevant to whether or not we should have a UN force in Kosovo.

Among the methods: better diplomacy. One can think of an informal agreement among the five permanent members of the Security Council to limit the veto on certain specified occasions. This is something that is often proposed, i.e., an amendment of the charter, but an informal understanding. In particular, Russia, Britain and France would be interested in preventing a degeneration, a deterioration, of the Security Council, which is one of their major claims to international status. They would be interested in talking about some kind of understanding. There is, and has long existed, an informal coordinating committee, of the permanent member of the Security Council.

Another possibility that could be done very rapidly, is to establish a General Assembly conflict prevention panel or committee which could act to head off matters of this kind, and then if necessary to give legitimation. There is the Uniting For Peace procedure, which could have given General Assembly authority for the present action in Kosovo even in the face of Russian veto in the Security Council.

We all know there is going to be a very intense and quite painful review of humanitarian intervention by bombing, an experiment that it not likely to be repeated. There will also be a review, certainly by NATO, of how it should conduct humanitarian intervention. I personally consider NATO intervention justified, and does represent the implementation of a national interest of the United States in two senses: (1) Stewardship of human rights, or accountability of governments for their performance in this field, is very clearly emerging as an international norm justifying humanitarian intervention. (2) As another example of Bosnia showed, it is not politically feasible for a country of eminence of the US to stay outside of the conflict, and stay on the sidelines. The Clinton Administration, from a position on the sidelines, was forced step by step into intervention in Bosnia, and intervention with considerable delay, to the intervention in Kosovo.