

RELEASE IN PART  
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**From:** Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 25, 2012 7:15 PM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** FW: US News and World Report talk with Rohrabacher

[Redacted]

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**From:** Feldman, Daniel F  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 25, 2012 12:28 PM  
**To:** Grossman, Marc I; Crocker, Ryan C; Ruggiero, Frank J; Sullivan, Jacob J; Nides, Thomas R  
**Cc:** Drucker, Joy E; Jones, Beth E (S/SRAP); Frese, Lauren K  
**Subject:** FW: US News and World Report talk with Rohrabacher

Not even sure where to start with this one, [Redacted]

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[Redacted] But he

pledged again to hold hearings.

## Rep. Dana Rohrabacher: White House Wrong on the Taliban (US News and World Report)

Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight talks Afghan politics  
By Kira Zalan  
January 24, 2012

The Obama administration's plan for building peace in Afghanistan involves reconciliation talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban. But Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight, says a political resolution with the radical Islamist group, which ruled Afghanistan when U.S.-led forces invaded in 2001, would be a "betrayal." Last week, the 12-term Republican from California's 46th District led a bipartisan congressional delegation to Berlin to meet with a group of Afghan politicians opposed to involving the Taliban in a coalition government. He spoke with U.S. News about the meeting and what he thinks is driving the policy. Excerpts:

--What's wrong with the current strategy in Afghanistan?

People are talking about trying to include the Taliban in the coalition government. That's a declaration of failure for the policy we've had for the past 10 years.

--You've called the strategy a "betrayal." Of whom?

Those people who have given their lives in the last 10 years and the American people who have spent hundreds of billions of dollars to fight radical Islam and terrorism. For us to seriously consider taking the Taliban and making them part of a coalition government would be the worst betrayal of not only the Afghan people, but our own people.

--Why did you meet with members of the Afghan National Front, a coalition that opposes the current government in Kabul?

The National Front leaders that I met with represent the military and ethnic and tribal leaders that actually defeated the Taliban 10 years ago. They have a proven track record and these people have made it clear that they have a contribution to make. But the State Department is trying to superimpose their own game plan on Afghanistan and it's not working.

--What did the State Department have to say about your meeting?

The State Department did everything they could to prevent us from meeting with the members of the Northern Alliance. And that's because the State Department has set down the policy of pushing them aside and promoting a centralized government and a [Hamid] Karzai administration.

--What is driving this policy?

Our State Department is connected at the hip to Pakistan and especially to the Pashtun allies of the Taliban. And that's one of the reasons that we have not succeeded. And the State Department does not want people to think there's an option other than the Pashtuns because they are today, and they have been for the last 20 years, doing the bidding of the government of Pakistan. And I think not only do we need to be allying ourselves with the people who defeated the Taliban after 9/11, but we need to be reassessing our relationship with Pakistan and maybe easing into a coalition relationship with India, rather than Pakistan.

--Is there any political space for the Taliban?

If the Taliban want to give up terrorism and give up their fundamental beliefs that they should force their religion on everyone through a terrorist government, then they should be able to run in the elections. But that's not what's being talked about. What's being talked about is making them part of a coalition government.

--What are your plans from here?

We will continue to hold hearings on this. We will make sure that Congress understands the options. What we've got here is an arrogant foreign policy establishment that was unelected and believes they have the right rather than elected officials to dictate the foreign policy of the United States.