

RESISTANCE RABBLE- ROUSER ROHRABACHER REFUSED ENTRY TO AFGHANISTAN



Rohrabacher playing dress-up in Afghanistan. (Rohrabacher photo via Mother Jones)

Representative Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA) tried to pull a fast one over the weekend and sneak in as a “last minute replacement” on a Congressional delegation to Afghanistan. The problem was that, as BBC reported, the rest of the delegation had visas for entry but Rohrabacher did not. Afghanistan’s President Hamid Karzai learned that Rohrabacher had joined the group prior to it leaving Dubai for Kabul, and he instructed US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to ground the flight until Rohrabacher was removed.

I find it really hard to believe that Rohrabacher did not plan to be a part of the trip from the start, but wanted to avoid advance publication of his plans. Back in January, Rohrabacher, along with his usual co-conspirators Louie Gohmert (R-TX) and Steve King (R-IA), somehow managed to get Representative Loretta Sanchez (D-CA) to lend a patina of “bipartisanship” to a meeting held in Berlin that many viewed as a call to partition Afghanistan and to arm opposition groups such as

the Northern Alliance. This meeting made Karzai "incredibly angry", giving Rohrabacher good reason to try to stay below Karzai's radar. Further, Rohrabacher also held a Congressional hearing on establishing an independent Balochistan, which, if drawn according to cultural lines, would take territory from Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan.

The full list of Congressmembers on the weekend trip to Afghanistan has not been disclosed, but the fact Politico reports that it was headed by Gohmert supports my suspicion that Rohrabacher planned to attend all along. The timing for additional meddling in US-Afghanistan relations could not have been worse, because Sunday was when it was announced that the US and Afghanistan had finally reached agreement on the outlines of a long term agreement for US support after the withdrawal of fighting forces. Rohrabacher seems to be quite entertained by Karzai's response. Returning to the Politico article:

"Apparently, [Afghanistan President Hamid] Karzai just goes bananas every time he hears that I might be, in some way, coming into his country," Rohrabacher said in a phone interview with POLITICO on Monday while he waited in Qatar for a flight back to the U.S.

That bragging pretty much confirms that Rohrabacher knew he couldn't give Karzai advance warning that he was coming. In their article on Rohrabacher being turned back, the Los Angeles Times appears to have been coached by Rohrabacher's team, as they tried to soften issue of not having a visa:

Afghan officials say Rohrabacher lacked a visa. But State Department officials said no other members of Congress have been barred from Afghanistan, and members usually aren't required to get visas because they fly into military bases.

The Washington Post reports that Gohmert led the remaining members of the delegation on to more talks with the Northern Alliance, further suggesting to me that Rohrabacher had planned all along to join the trip.

In addition to his current meddling that has called for two different routes to carving up Afghanistan, the BBC article reminds us that, as seen in a photo Rohrabacher provided to Mother Jones a couple of years ago and reproduced above, he actually took up arms in Afghanistan in the 1980's to fight alongside the mujahideen:

The US embassy in Kabul has been quick to distance the US government from Mr Rohrabacher, whose involvement in Afghanistan goes back to the 1980s during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, our correspondent reports.

At the time he often accompanied mujahideen forces fighting the Russians.

Rohrabacher's freedom-fighting then gave us a wonderful "hero" by the name of Osama bin Laden. Who will his latest adventures bring us?