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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

September 26, 2001

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The Honorable Donald H. Rumsfeld  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to call your attention to the current tactical situation inside of Afghanistan. As you are aware, my National Security Advisor Al Santoli has been in daily contact with Afghan Northern Alliance Commander. The news he received this morning was troubling and demonstrates the need for the U.S. to send in ammunition and other supplies, as well as begin providing air cover for the Afghan resistance forces.

The command staff of General Dostum in the mountains 20 miles south of the strategic town of Mazar-i-Sharif near the Uzbekistan border reports that during the past 24 hours, while the resistance forces are running out of ammunition, the Taliban have been resupplied and are pressing a counter-attack. In addition, they are now using more jet aircraft to provide close-air support to their fighters on the ground.

The resistance claims the Taliban's morale is up, now that they have heard statements by officials in the Bush Administration that the goal may not be to remove the Taliban and an accommodation may be worked out.

U.S. assistance to the Northern Alliance should not be perceived "nation building." Instead, it is the Afghans who are best able to clear the Taliban/bin Laden forces out of the rugged mountains of Afghanistan. They will prevent American casualties. We should support a moderate government that will prevent terrorists from using Afghanistan as a base. If the United States does not assist the Northern Alliance and we leave the Taliban in power, we do so at our own peril.

Enclosed is a list of satellite telephone numbers of Northern Alliance commanders. It is imperative that our military people get in touch with them ASAP.

Sincerely,

Dana Rohrabacher

Member of Congress

