

Richardson touts plan for Iraq withdrawal

by UPI

WASHINGTON - New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson says his rivals for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination lack a plan to bring American troops home from Iraq.

Richardson told a liberal activist group Tuesday he is the only candidate for his party's presidential nomination who is committed to bringing all of the troops home, The Albuquerque Journal reported Wednesday.

"I would withdraw all of our forces without any residual troops by the end of this calendar year," Richardson said in a speech to the Campaign for America's Future.

Democratic rivals -- Sens. Hillary Clinton of New York, Barack Obama of Illinois, Chris Dodd of Connecticut, Joe Biden of Delaware and former North Carolina Sen. John Edwards -- have voted for, or voiced support for, plans to keep American soldiers in Iraq indefinitely, Richardson said.

Richardson, a former ambassador to the United Nations, praised the military's effort in Iraq, saying it removed Saddam Hussein from power and planted the seeds of democracy. Now, Richardson said, it is time for the Iraqis to take control.

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