

THE IRAQ WAR
and a
PROPOSAL TO BRING THE TROOPS HOME
AT A PRESET TIMETABLE

By Jesus Hurtado

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INTRODUCTION

IN DEFENSE OF THE HUMAN BEING AND HIS DIGNITY

The war waged against Iraq has been the consequence of An energy policy devised by oil company's executives, and based on the oil-based dependency that United States has with the Middle East. The manipulation from hidden interests that besides making war inevitable (violating international laws), desperately pushing for the invasion of Iraq. The honest or dishonest excuse of weapons of mass destruction. The certain or uncertain objective of liberate the Iraqi people from oppression, and to establish democracy in the country, among others. That if some or all political-strategic-tactical goals were achieved or not (even today it is not known what those were) to justify or not the cost of this war, not just in terms of dollars, but also in cost of human lives and other destruction of property not only in Iraq but also in the U.S. and the world. Whatever the reasons, interest or policy there was, and any success or failure obtained, today does not mean much.

Today, it is clear that we are facing a war and its aftermath, here and now. All human beings and institutions striving for world peace, and specifically those government officials (with no exception) not only in Iraq but also in the U.S., have a great responsibility, the same one that in addition of watching and caring for the dignity and to defend the core rights of all human beings, is to end one of the most tragic wars of the past few years, such as the war in Iraq. Therefore we can not bear to be part of it, or close our eyes to this reality or to be accomplices of so much human tragedy and suffering.

In meeting with my responsibility as a human being, and with the strong resolution to contribute to the solution of the Iraq war, the pacification of the region and to world peace, I am submitting to the people of the United States of America and its elected officials my thoughts and a proposal to bring the troops home from Iraq at a preset timetable.

ABOUT THE EFFORTS MADE TO BRING BACK THE TROOPS AT A PRESET TIMETABLE, AND TO END THE WAR IN IRAQ

Well informed individuals and experts on these matters, popular demonstrations, vigils by untiring advocates for peace, Iraq war veterans, senators, representatives, have voiced, and continue to do so today, their desire to bring the troops home and to end the Iraq war. In all honesty, we have to recognize that tremendous efforts have been made, and continue today to this end. It deserves to recognize the responsibility and efforts of senators John Kerry, Russell Feingold, Carl Levin, Jack Reed and all those who participated and voted in favor of two bills proposed by them in the US Senate. However, despite all efforts made till now, it has not been possible to set a timetable to bring the troops home and to end this senseless war.

We may ask ourselves: What are the reasons for this? In my opinion, it is because the correlation of forces particularly in the US Congress, for many causes, it has leaned more towards continuing rather than to end the war. Among those causes we can mention the following:

- i) The confusion and uncertainty of the American people (including elected officials) about what has been happening and continue to happen in Iraq (in great part because of lack of good data, understanding, knowledge, secrecy.) about the war, about the troops, about the situation in Iraq and the region.
- ii) The self-serving use, manipulation, distortions, blackmailing from the Bush Administration, the Republican Party and its allies, of a string of fears, events, arguments, patriotic sentiments, etc.
- iii) The political belligerency of the Bush Administration, the Republican Party and its allies, and the political frailty of the opposition, specially the Democratic Party, due in part, of having the disadvantage of being in the minority, but above all due to the inconsistency and lack of unity in Congress as well as in the core of the party.
- iv) The lack of initiative of the Democratic Party (as the only opposition) in many ways, such as:
 - a) To present a united and realistic strategy to the Senate and to the American people in order to show its unity, its confidence, -its determination and a real option to end the war.
 - b) To uncover the maneuverings, pseudo arguments, and blackmailing, and to defend themselves against false accusations.
 - c) To demonstrate the lack of a true strategy to benefit the country from President Bush, his Republican Party and its allies to continue the war.
 - d) To focus the debate between continuing or to end the war, so, using true arguments, to win the debate and thus to set a timetable to bring the troops home and to end the war.

SOME PSEUDO ARGUMENTS USED IN THE DEBATES

We are fully aware that everywhere in the world, and specifically the American public, their institutions, authorities, and government officials there is a lot of debate and many arguments used about the Iraq war. Without a doubt, all those arguments are legitimate because they stem from different points of view either from the involved authorities as from the public as a whole in favor or against, and concerned about the war.

However, it is important to highlight, that as legitimate those arguments are, it doesn't mean that all of them are true and/or have a solid base to treat them as valid. Many of them are "sound good but they are not true". Some of those arguments, which I believe fall in this category, have been used deftly, either selfishly or unselfishly to continue the war are as follows:

1) *...Senate Republicans said troop deployment decisions must be left to military leaders. (Star Tribune 6/23/06)*

"We want American troops to be out of the center of action in Iraq as soon as possible. But those decisions have to be made by commanders on the ground, "(Senator Norm Coleman, from Minnesota, Star Tribune 6/23/06).

"The reality is that until our military commanders in Iraq tell us that they believe that it's in our national security interests and the security of our troops' interests to begin withdrawing troops, I think it's premature for the United States Senate to begin initiating that action, even rhetorically, "
(Senator Mark Dayton, Star Tribune 6/23/06)

When President Bush, the Republican Congress and its allies, and many other people supporting or opposing the war in Iraq, argue that the military leaders and field commanders are who will decide and want to tell the President and the Congress what they believe and practically what they have to do or not to do about the war and the troops. Of course, their arguments are relative true, and can be accepted as valid; "but we can't forget that this is true only in the operational side, when one is at war". The high ranking military commanders are responsible to plan and manage military operations (strategic tactical) of the war. In this case, is even logical to think that the military commanders would make all the decisions for the troops and other operational matters of the war, not argument there, because they are conducting military-strategic-tactical operations, and since they know its needs they know how to manage the resources at their disposal, including the troops, in order to win the war.

Under those circumstances, it is understandable that the military commanders would oppose any transference of troops affecting their plans while conducting a war. But in the case of setting a dateline to bring the troops home and to end the war, I can affirm that this argument is essentially false, because the operational-military aspects of the war are not being debated, it is not about trying to re-deploy or withdraw troops in the midst of the war (in the hands of the High Military Command and Field Commanders), but the crux of the debate is political-strategic-tactical in nature, like to withdraw the troops from combat, and to end the war, and to set a timetable, and that decision, as well as sending troops and/or start a war in a constitutional and democratic country like the U. S., where it is the exclusive responsibility of the President (Executive branch), and the Congress (Legislative Power).

So, to use as an argument the prerogatives that military commanders have to decide about the troops, and other operational strategic-tactical aspects of the war, to decide or to influence decisions on political-strategic-tactical matters of war, that, as said above, it is constitutionally the exclusive responsibility of the President and the Congress, or to allow the military commanders to be the ones to decide certain political-strategic-tactical aspects of the war that pertain, as we all know it, to the President and the Congress, it has to be crystal clear, this would be not only a grave error or a dishonest manipulation of that argument and/or the prerogatives of the military commanders, but also a violation of the constitutional principles, and an assault to the trust of the American people, something not to be allowed.

That the leaders and/or military commanders may be consulted, give their opinions and/or points of view in regards to the war, and decision-making, not argument there, but it is fair to point out that they can not assume themselves and give themselves the power to make decisions and/or of the political strategic-tactical tasks of a war, which as we all know, are in the hands of the President and the Congress.

Therefore,

- i) It must not confuse the operational-strategic-tactical decisions of the military commanders, with the political-strategic-tactical decisions of the President and the Congress of the Republic.

- ii) Either should not be misinterpret, misuse, manipulate, twist and/or distort the operational-strategic-tactical decisions, opinions, suggestions of the military commanders (as the Bush Administration, the Republican Party, and its allies have done) for the purpose of achieving a political-strategic-tactical goal, in order to continue the war. This must not only be denounced, but also condemned due to the many implications involved.
- iii) The military commanders can not assume functions outside of their competence. They have to be careful that their opinions, suggestions, decisions are not going to serve the arguments or to be used, manipulated, for the benefit of partisan interests, against the image and interests of their military institution, and above all, in detriment of the constitutional order of the Republic.

It is worth to mention, that under certain circumstances, a war (at least as a political strategy geared to achieve political-strategic objectives), despite of being decided and conducted by the President and the Congress in their political strategic aspects, can fall, for several reasons, such as the lack of good political leadership and a clear political-strategic-military from the President and the Congress, of internal political divisions (as frequently happens), under the military leadership, who in reality are appointed, or self-appointed and feel that it is their responsibility, because the vacuum of leadership, to assume control of the situation, and end up making decisions outside the bounds of their authority and directing the President and the Congress, the country's political leaders (specially those with a militaristic frame of mind) instead of being the military the ones being directed. As I mentioned before, this should not be allowed to happen.

It is true that even many highly educated and informed people, and congressmen, they may not realize what I have just explained, and accept the argument and even think that the military commanders are the ones to decide when to end the war, when to bring the troops home, and tell the President and the Congress only to rubber-stamp their decisions. However, I am sure that if this is fully clarified, the American people is not going to accept this argument, nor this manner of decision-making, and would going to demand to the President and to the Congress to be the ones to assume their constitutional responsibility to decide when to end the war and when to bring the troops home. This would open the door to the possibility of a fresh debate in Congress, but this time with true arguments to win the necessary support and thus being able to set a timetable to bring the troops home and to end the war.

2) At a Pentagon briefing on 6/22/06, the top U.S. commander in Iraq said he expected reductions in U. S. forces but did not agree with the congressional efforts to set a timetable. "I don't like it; I feel it would limit my flexibility and give the enemy a schedule to focus on" General George Casey said. (Star Tribune 6/23/06).

Why the release of this Pentagon briefing precisely on Thursday, June 22, 2006, the day of Senate voting about the two Democrats' proposals to bring the troops home? Mighty suspicious!

In this paragraph, General George Casey, asides from showing the power of decision-making who has now over the U.S. Armed Forces, and the political-strategic affairs of the war, it shows also not only his power of influence, but also his direct power bearing over the political leadership and of the decisions of the President (Executive Branch), Congress (Legislative branch), in the country.

We can see that President Bush as well as the Republican Congress and many democrats, have acted based on what the military commanders say, and specifically, what General George Casey and other High Ranking commanders say.

The Republican-led Senate, embracing President's Bush handling of the war, rejected two Democratic efforts Thursday to begin a withdrawal of US. troops from the three-year conflict. (Star Tribune, 6/23/06) ... Republicans voted overwhelming to leave deployment decisions in the President's hands. (Star Tribune, 6/23/06).

It is evident that the Republican-led Senate rejected the two Democratic proposals (Senator Levin and Senator Kerry) to bring the troops home, and left the "decision" in the hands of President Bush (who also acts on what Gen. Casey say). For all the aforementioned explanations, it is no wonder that this was so, since the debate about bringing back the troops was based in the convenience or inconvenience of setting a date to withdraw U. S. troops from Iraq, something that of course, was previously rejected by the Field commanders and by Gen. Casey.

"I don't like it (timetable); I feel it would limit my flexibility and give the enemy a schedule to focus on," Gen. George Casey said.

It deserves to highlight that all those voting in the Senate against the two Democratic proposals to bring the troops back, used, among others, basically Gen. Casey's arguments: a) that setting a timetable to withdraw the troops "would limit its flexibility" and b).. "will give the enemy a schedule to focus on."

Those two supposed inconveniences or arguments against setting a timetable to withdraw the troops from Iraq stated by Gen. Casey (precisely when the Senate was going to vote), without a doubt, had a great impact in all those voting against the two Democratic proposals to bring the troops home. But they were also the ones that did not explain what the reality of the war was and the convenience of withdrawing the troops from Iraq at a preset timetable in order to end it. They were the ones who did not let the "actions be the ones to determine the events instead of the events be the ones determining the actions." But what was even more disgraceful, they were the ones not open to the possibility of working together to forge a "real strategy" to end the war, when even the United Nations and other international community organizations to be involved, to replace the strategy that until now exists, and thus, and rejoicing of having a hope that the troops will soon come home, and a possible solution to the conflict of the Iraqi war, instead of continuing with the same or worse, and condemn the Iraqi people to live in a hell, and to the troops to an never ending punishment.

Why do I say that those inconveniences or arguments talked about by Gen. Casey are supposed? Because besides of being in fact assumed, and I do believe that will always remain so, since if there was a real strategy it would not take away flexibility from Gen. Casey nor it will loose sight of the enemy so it can focus in a plan, in case there was such a possibility. That would be decided by the best option, because despite of what many believe, there are many options to end the war, to bring the troops home and to pacify the region.

3) The war on terror is a real war against those who wish to burn out the flame of freedom," AlMaliki told members of the House and Senate. He echoed the Bush administration stance with his declaration that Iraq is the "front line in the war on terror." (Star Tribune, 7/27/06)

"Iraq will be the graveyard for terrorism ... Iraq is the battle that will determine the war." Al-Maliki
(Star Tribune 7/27/06)

... Al-Maliki didn't request a specific amount, but he said, *"we need your help."* (Star Tribune, 7/27/06)

We have to believe that the Iraq's premier statements had the intention to support his host (President Bush) and to say what many wanted to hear. We have to realize the Premier Al-Maliki came to the USA to get more help.

With this in mind, it is obvious that in one hand, the Iraq's premier could not deviate from the official political line, and therefore he has to show his country as being in the "front line in the war on terror," and as the "graveyard for terrorism," as the "battle that will determine the war," and in the other hand he will have to show his government as the loyal ally of the USA in the fight against terrorism. And he did it very well, despite being confronted by some of the Democratic congressmen, in particular by Sen. Mark Dayton, regarding his statements against Israel and the Lebanon conflict.

Nevertheless, is worth to mention that once more, those arguments, I dare to affirm, are not just pure rhetoric, but that they are simply untrue. Let us examine why.

Do we perhaps believe that Iraq is "the front line in the war on terror" because now the terrorists are taking advantage of sectarian violence that has many causes, and has been created in the country? Is it because that "Iraq will be the graveyard for terrorism", when terrorism is a worldwide phenomenon? Is that "Iraq is the battle that will determine the war (against terrorism), at least lately when hate, the desire for vengeance, the terrorists, and so on, have grown so much in the world due precisely to this battle being waged, and many other errors committed by the Bush Administration, the Congress, and even the battlefield commanders? I am quite sure when I say that those assertions by Al-Maliki are false and self-serving, and what he is doing is to express and accept, those false and self-serving perceptions to act on them, so to believe in that rhetoric has to be denounced because it can bring upon the USA, Iraq and the world even more dire consequences than the ones the war has brought so far. In my judgment, there is nothing to loose but everything to gain by being more realistic and honest about all those things and to try to see the Iraqi conflict and the war on terrorism without false perceptions, without demagoguery, nor egotistical goals, nor prurient interests, for the good of the country, the Iraqi people, the region and the world.

4) **Against the simplistic arguments of the "stronger" and the "weakest" against terrorism.** Those keeping the watch and those putting at risk national security and the American people. The patriots who care and those surrendering the country. Those seeking victory and those self defeatist that "cut and run."

We have to recognize that President Bush, his Republican party and his allies have demonstrated more cohesion and determination than the opposition, specially the Democratic Party, to achieve their objectives, among those to continue the war. But it is pertinent to point out that in order to obtain their goals, they have resorted in the past, and do even today, to means not only questionable but blatantly dishonest.

So, we can see that while they have adopted the posture of being the strongest against terrorism, they have accused the Democratic opposition and other opponents to be weaker against it. While they are the ones watching over National Security and the American people, those against the war (specially the Democratic Party) are the ones putting at risk National Security and the American people. While they are the patriots watching vigilantly over the country, the Democratic opposition and others against the war are the ones surrendering the country. While they are the ones seeking victory against the enemy, those against them and the war, are called "self-defeatists," and in particular the Democrats, are the party of "cut and run."

As you can see, these and other simplistic arguments and postures are used by President Bush, his Republican party and his allies, among other things, to discredit and defeat the Democratic opposition in every front (specially in Congress), in order to achieve their objectives. Without a doubt this tactic will continue, at least for the upcoming mid-term elections in November. For all of the above, it is imperative to go to the root of those arguments, of those postures and to denounce, unmask their falsehoods, not just with the purpose of playing the electoral game, but with the true purpose to unmask all falsehoods, to treat the country's problems in a responsible manner and to spare the American people and other countries in the world of greater harm in the future.

When President Bush, the Republican Party, and his allies express their arguments and show their postures (very strong against terrorism), that "watch for National Security", we have to realize that they only have partisanship with not benefits, but rather detrimental for the country. In the name of being strong against terrorism, to be patriots, and to strive for victory, a senseless war was created instead. Entire populations are destroyed. The future of many young people is sacrificed, and valuable resources are wasted. More enemies are created around the world. Citizens are more and more deprived of their rights, and the country's own liberty, democracy and constitutionality are in question, that, and to reaffirm that those arguments and postures only have partisan interests, also means, undoubtedly, that this is a policy of failure, that we are going on the road to destruction, and it is time to act soon and decisively before the "fire raging begins consuming everything in its flames". This shows that it is time for those called "weaker" who have always acted with common sense, be the ones confronting those falsehoods with determination and change the course of events and of history for the good of the country and the world. Warning: "We have to understand that we live in a world of cause and effect, action and reaction, and that a force used blindly and/or misapplied can only cause harm/destruction. We can not confuse strength with stupidity.

4) Other argument heard frequently is that "we can not withdraw troops from Iraq, because that will demonstrate weakness to the enemy, taking advantage of this."

Those using that argument they must reach an understanding that withdrawing from a conflict, let alone a war which brings only tragedy and sacrifices to the populations involved in it, it is not weakness but prudence, intelligence and above all wisdom. Just because of fear of showing

"weakness", one may not bear the unbearable, or to support absurdity with not perspective, and worse yet, to continue living in an error sacrificing lives, resources, and so on. o withdraw from a conflict, a war, does not have to be conditioned to a show of weakness or any other suggestive condition, but for the true nature of the conflict. In this instance, knowing what is happening with the Iraqi war, the wiser alternative is not other than to withdraw the troops from Iraq, to end this tragic war, and to work alongside with the international community, the United Nations, [etc. to](#) pacify Iraq and the region.

5) To conclude this critical analysis of arguments, I'd like to mention one more used for those in favor of the war and by some against it. They say...."that in the Iraqi war there are no choices, there is not another option but to continue the war". Till when? They do not know it. To them, I simply say: there is not a blinder person than the one refusing to see, no deafer person that the one refusing to listen", and they should not forget that history will judge them.

SOME CONSIDERATIONS FOR BRINGING THE TROOPS HOME

To bring the troops home, besides of being one of the things the American people want the most, and without a doubt, one of the most important events among other political-strategic-tactical objectives to occur, it is certain that an honest and true analysis is needed at all levels (political, military, national security, economics) to avoid any surprises, failure, guilt, accusations, and greater division in the country. With this in mind, I will proceed to contribute to that argument as follows:

i) In regards to what the population thinks, feels and believe:

We are all aware that among the population there is a lot of debate, opinions and points of view about the war in Iraq, about bringing the troops home, that are akin and contradictories. However, we should carefully analyze the most important ones, to understand, at least in general terms, what the population is thinking, feels and believes about these topics. Taking this into account, one could say:

- a) That in principle, especially with the experience of the Viet-Nam war, and for the nature of the Iraqi war, the American people, despite of all the justifications, and propaganda, has demonstrated support for the troops, but not in favor of the war. (Read the polls).
- b) That the American people will not agree with bringing the troops home and leave irresponsibly the Iraqi people to fend for themselves, especially after so much human sacrifices and money spent.
- c) That the American people, despite of justifications, inconveniences, assumed and false arguments, does not agree with open-ended term to bring the troops home.
- d) That the American people perceives that the Iraq war, besides of the high cost in human lives and money caused till now in Iraq, in the U.S. and to its allies; it has brought as a consequence the destabilization of the region, worsening of the sectarian struggle in Iraq, hate, the thirst for revenge, a greater radicalization of the opponents and terrorists in the region and in the world, and worse yet, it has brought harm to the moral principles, of democracy and liberty (Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo prisons) maintained by the USA. All of this affect in many ways, but more so, the National Security of the USA.
- e) The American people wants the lies, the demagoguery, and the war to stop, and for the troops to come home as soon as possible.

- f) ASSUMPTION: That the American people, are indeed agreeing with a withdrawal of the troops from Iraq at preset timetable and to end the war, if there was a real political military strategy to benefit the country and a valid reason to do it.
- g) ASSUMPTION: That the American people, for the reverence to their constitution, their democratic values, that despite of the high esteem for their Armed Forces, and in particular the Military High Command, it would not agree that they [military] be the ones assuming responsibilities that, by the Constitution, belongs to the President of the Republic (Executive Branch), the Congress (Legislative Branch), or to any other power designated by the Constitution.

LACK OF A POLITICAL-MILITARY STRATEGY TO BENEFIT THE COUNTRY

As you can see by the results obtained and the current conditions of the war being waged in Iraq, it shows that this war, from the onset, it lacked a political-military strategy for the benefit of the country. This can be observed in the differences caused at the beginning, especially in the civilian-military higher echelons about the strategies and tactics to use to invade Iraq. But the most amazing thing is that up until now, after three years of war, thousands of deaths, hundreds of billions of dollars wasted, there is not yet a real political military-strategy to end the war, to pacify the region, to avoid more deaths, destruction, and to bring the troops home, to be really safe, and so the National Security of the country does not become a National Insecurity. It is really frustrating to see that neither the Bush Administration, nor the Republican Party, nor the Democratic Party, nor the Congress, nor the Field Commanders, nobody have shown to have a political-military strategy to end this war, and are forced to continue it with the same false perceptions, assumptions, politicking, instead of depending on good luck for things to go well, and to avoid so many deaths and injured and for a major disaster not occurring. We can not forget that "we live in a world of cause and effect, action and reaction, and therefore, if things are done wrong, the outcome is wrong also."

REASONS TO SUPPORT BRINGING THE TROOPS HOME FROM IRAQ AT A SET TIMETABLE

We know quite well that this Middle Eastern region has always been conflict ridden, due to many causes (historical, ethnic fighting, religious, economics, colonialism, territorial, oil). We also know that despite of it all, this region is very important to the rest of the world, just as important as its stability is . Therefore, due to these features inherent to the region, it is even logical to assume that its stability ought to be cared for, at least to avoid committing careless actions that could bring dire consequences to all. This is something that we can say is happening in these times with the US invasion of Iraq.

Since the U.S. occupation of Iraq and the subsequent fall of Saddam Hussein regime, was seen from the start, by friends and foes around the world, and in particular in Iraq, more like an invasion than a liberation of the Iraqi people, so it was quite clear the consequences that this will bring. Although even now we know a lot of these consequences, nevertheless we may mention some of them: a) the rejection and condemnation of the US invasion to Iraq by many countries around the world, causing isolation and a sequel of dire consequences for the country. b) the destabilization not just of Iraq but of the whole region (the Israel-Lebanon-Palestine conflict) which is showing its effects internally in Iraq, in the region and in the world. c) the deployment of the troops, from the beginning, in a hostile terrain, something that we know has brought regrettably consequences to the troops.

Now after three years into the war, we can see that the perception about invading Iraq has not changed, just the opposite, it has deepened, worsening the conflict. The dire human tragedies occurring daily and the aftermath of the war (economics, destruction, errors committed) can be seen and felt daily, not only by the Iraqi people but by the American people and the world, and in particular by the troops who endure sacrifices and die every day in the streets and fields of a country with nothing in common with, which it has not committed aggression against their own motherland, and not having major valid reasons to invade.

For all of the above, and because the troops are a factor that instead of helping to solve the problem make the conflict worse. We do not want the troops to be used and/or manipulated to serve other interests than the noble interests of the country. Because we do not want more deaths, more injured, more of a senseless war, and many other known and unknown factors, the least we can do now is: To end the war, bringing our troops home as soon as possible. To honor them, not just thanking them, to all who have offered their lives, who suffered and will suffer pain, and who sacrificed themselves to do their duty (or what they believe their duty was), and above all that those who made a decision to declare the war, should have their motives investigated, to ask for forgiveness (compensation, if possible), to all that direct or indirectly has been victims, have suffered the consequences and have been involved in a senseless conflict, including the Iraqi people. This will demonstrate:

- i) That we indeed care for the interests and the national security of the country.
- ii) That we really care for the interests and safety of our troops.
- iii) That the US really has high morals and democratic values to help it to recognize and mend its errors, and that it is not just being hypocritical when talking about them.
- iv) That we are indeed human beings not just for our intelligence, but for our spirituality and our conscience, and that we desire a world with peace and well-being for all.

IMPORTANCE AND CONVENIENCE OF BRINGING THE TROOPS HOME. AND TO HAVE A SET TIMETABLE TO DO IT

For all the things happening with the Iraq war, with the troops, the region, and for all its meanings, and the good it will cause to bring the troops home, it is possible that all could agree on the importance and convenience of bringing the troops home without delay. However, it is worth mentioning (in case there are some people not yet aware of it) that for this to happen, is also important and convenient to set a timetable to do it, otherwise we will confuse our hope with illusion.

To set a timetable to bring the troops home, we must understand that serious work needs to be done to achieve it, since this will not happen if the correlation of forces in the Congress does not change (difficult, but not impossible) to be favorable to this purpose; for which, it must be united as opposition (specially the Democratic Party), more work is to be done, using true facts and arguments, together with some moderates and honest Republican congressmen, (there are some, I'm sure) but also a to launch a staunch counter-offensive to counter-attack with clarity the interested actions of the Bush Administration, the Republican Party and its allies, and thus to demonstrate the American people the importance and convenience to set a timetable to bring the troops home, and the subsequent benefits that would bring. We have seen before that, for several questionable causes, this objective has failed, and regrettably have left the troops with uncertain perspectives regarding the course of the war, and to bring them back.

With a single and honest purpose of helping to bring the troops back from Iraq, and to end the war for the benefit of all involved, and even those not involved in it, I take this opportunity to highlight some of the political-strategic-tactical objectives to be achieved and which would demonstrate the importance and convenience of bringing the troops home and to set a timetable to do it.

POLITICAL-STRATEGIC-TACTICAL OBJECTIVES TO BE ACHIEVED BY BRINGING THE TROOPS HOME, AND TO SET A TIMETABLE

Among several political-strategic-tactical objectives, one could mention the following:

- i) To end at a set-time all deaths, injured, dangers, sufferings, and tragedies occurring daily, with the costs that a war like this may have at all levels. To end the excuses and the lies contained in it. In summary, to end with all what the war is bringing to the Iraqi people, the American people (in particular, the soldiers), as well as the world.
- ii) To relief the tensions in the region. To withdraw the invading-occupying forces, a factor of tension, hate, resistance, justifications, loss of face, causing so much unrest, not only in Iraq but in the region as well, and causing confrontations within the Iraq population.
- iii) To press the Iraqi government to consolidate and to seriously assume its role of governing the country, and to take responsibility of national security (in many instances this has been neglected), and therefore to allow the Iraqi government and people, backed up by the international community to fix its problems (more likely), since the presence of troops in Iraq is not an pacifier/stabilizing factor, but it is part and parcel of the conflict in Iraq and in the region.
- iv) To give the international community (U.N.), the Arab League, the G-8 countries, U.S.A. and the non-aligned countries, the opportunity and the chance work together with the Iraqi people to solve the conflicts and to stabilize Iraq and the region.
- v) The American troops will change its role from being in the frontline to be a support troops of the Iraqi army till the American troops withdraw from Iraq. The Iraqi forces would have the advantage of gaining experience and to assume the responsibility of National Security of the country with the support and supervision of the American forces, and at the same time, sparing many lives and dangers to them.
- vi) To improve the moral of the troops knowing that in a set time they will go home and knowing that the return is not longer uncertain.
- vii) To repair the bad relations that the U.S. has with the countries opposed to the war, and to end the self-isolation, so there would not be any roadblocks to exercise diplomacy.
- viii) To show the American people that thanks to a responsible policy and a sure strategy, the war conflict would have a successful outcome and that now the troops would be safe indeed. .. in its own country.

A PROPOSAL TO BRING THE TROOPS HOME IN A SET TIMETABLE, AND TO END THE IRAQ WAR

Whereas: That the situation in Iraq has deteriorated and that the conflict created there has a political rather than a military solution. That to resolve the Iraq conflict it is important the participation of the international community (U.N., Arab League, G-8 countries, E.U, Non-aligned countries.) where the U. S. would have to participate, but not like a judge nor like an interested party. That the troops can not be in the middle of a sectarian conflict and fighting a wrong war like the one affecting the Iraq people now. That the presence of American troops in Iraq is more an aggravating factor to the conflict rather than be a pacifier one. That it is irresponsible to expose the American troops to the danger of dying and other dangers in a conflict that belongs to the Iraqi people, and where its features are not clear neither internally nor in the outlying region, and its objectives are questionable. That for the benefit of the national security of the country, the safety of the troops, the solution to the Iraqi conflict and the stabilization of the region, it would be necessary the more realistic plan to bring the troops home at a set timetable. With that in mind, I would submit the following proposal:

- i) Official numbers of armies in Iraq:
 - 140,000 American troops (estimated)
 - 275,000 Iraqi troops. At the end of 2006 it would be 325,000 Iraqi troops (Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Star Tribune 8/9/06)
 - ii) A timetable to bring the American troops home.
 - A set time limit of fifteen (15) months. This would include the month of October 2006 until December 31, 2007. (Note: In case of not choosing October 2006 for this purpose, it would only limit the set time without altering the schedule. This would mean that the first troops would leave on January 1, 2007.
 - iii) A strategic-tactical procedure to bring 140 ,000 American troops from Iraq:
 - January 1, 2007: 40,000 troops
 - January 1, 2008: 100,000 troops
- a) Assuming approval is obtained on October 2006 to bring the troops home, three months (3) would have to pass until December 31, 2006 so on January 1, 2007 to bring the first 40,000 troops.

Explanation: The purpose of bringing the first 40,000 troops home at a set date, is to show to the Iraqi government that the troops would leave as decided. This would have the political-strategic objective to pressure the Iraqi Government to consolidate and to really assume its role of government and its responsibility for national security of the country, often neglected. Proceeding in this fashion, it would be the beginning of establishing that "the actions are the ones determining the events, and not vice versa" By that time, and according to Defense Secretary Rumsfeld there would be about 325,000 Iraqi troops in the region.

- b) As decided, on January 1, 2008 the remainder 100,000 troops would come home, but before, on the first week on December 2007, there would be a political-military assessment of the Iraq situation. If according to the outcome of this assessment it would be necessary to leave in Iraq some special armed forces (advisers, trainers, logistic personnel) in order to support their troops, then there would be more flexibility and about 100,000 troops will be allowed to leave, or as many as necessary for **this mission**.

Explanation: According to official reports, it shows that in the last three years 275,000 Iraqi soldiers have been trained, an average of 90,000 soldiers per year. That means that by the time the 100,000 American troops are schedule to withdraw (if all leave), there will be enough Iraqi soldiers to replace them,

During the period that the American troops would remain in Iraq, they will be in charge of ramping up the training of Iraqi soldiers, but only to support their military actions and prepare themselves for their withdraw. The Bush Administration and the Congress, would work by diplomatic channels with the international community to stabilize the region after the withdraw of the American troops and to insure that the Iraq would get the appropriate support to fix the situation.

CLARIFICATION: I am sure that this proposal to bring the troops home at a set timetable, is realistic. But I am aware that there could be many factors affecting the schedule in order to meet this goal. For that reason, I consider the schedule established herein, is flexible regarding bringing the troops home before, but not after the set date. This is the reason why: if we want the troops to come home, we'd have to set a date for it, because if we only want the troops to come home without telling when, we practically would be in the same position of those supporting an open-ended timeline to bring them home.

CONCLUSION

I) The arrogance of the Bush Administration and the Republican Party

If it could be proved that totalitarianism is the product of a policy stemming from an arrogant and disrespectful attitude from its governing officials, there would be not doubt that the US would move towards that. The arrogance present in the Bush Administration and the Republican Party is so grave that they are not only denying other people to know this world, and to have rational opinion, but even themselves do not want to admit that they could be wrong. They believe to be the owners of truth, and of all the virtues, while those opposing its policies and points of view are treated as ignorant and other expletives. All that it would not be as serious if there would not be consequences to regret as it is the case today with the Iraq war.

This type of political behavior, to be sure, is defensible to a point, but when this reach the phase of threatening the freedoms of citizens, the democratic system, and worse yet, the country Constitution (as it is happening now with the Bush Administration), it must not be allowed. The American people has to be zealous on this, and not allow that in the name of a fight against terrorism, to defend the country and/or the American people, to wage and to promote wars, and to delegate so much power to a President and to put at risk the country's constitutionality, to create an spying and repressive apparatus to threaten the citizen freedoms, the country democracy. It is not fear that something bad would come from the outside world, without even be aware, that suddenly we would fall prey of something terrible from inside the country, from our very own system.

"These are challenging times, and they're difficult times, and they're straining the psyche of our country." Bush said. "There s a lot of people -good. decent people - saving "withdraw now".

Among several arrogant statements I have heard from President Bush, Vice President Cheney, Administration officials and Republican congress people, the aforementioned statements merits close attention to; since not only surpass any level of arrogance, lack of respect of opinions of others, but also defies even the core essence of the democratic system of the country and it demonstrates something more that authoritarianism.

How is it possible that the president of a country that wishes to spread liberty, democracy, constitutional institutions to other countries, can say that as long as he is the president he is going to do what he things is right, and any person suggesting something different, is simply wrong? This is an offense, an insult that President Bush make to the majority's opinion and to the wisdom of the American people opposing the war, and long for the troops to come home soon. Why President Bush, his party and allies do not see themselves as being wrong and detached from the world in which they live? Can they not see that all the tragedy occurring in Iraq is a product of a failed policy? I hope that soon President Bush, his party and allies can realize their errors for the good of the country and world peace.

Message to the Democratic Party

I respectfully address the Democratic party to recognize that, as the opposition and alternative to change, it is the only thing the American people have, This condition is even more relevant for the huge responsibility on the shoulders of the Democratic Party, at least in the current historic period, when the country is under threat from many external and internal dangers. It is time to thanks the Democratic Party for all its efforts that has been doing in the past, and it is doing now internally and externally to confront the Bush administration and the Republican Party for all of their follies, and in the upcoming elections to watch for the needs of the country. I am morally compelled by the current events, specially the Iraq war, to request the Democratic Party for its fundamental unity and integrity, to measure up to the needs of the American people and to be a real alternative of change to the Bush Administration and its Republican Party, for the benefit of the country.

Message of sympathy

My heartfelt condolences to all the families of soldiers, civilian combatants and not combatants, innocent victims who had died because of this senseless war. Moreover, I extending my sympathy, my deepest respect to all those who have been injured or maimed in the war, both American people as well as Iraqi people, and other countries affected I beg the Iraq people forgiveness for all the offenses, suffering, destruction that the US have caused to them and to end the internal bloodletting for the good of their own country. To the American people I ask not to allow committing aggression against other countries in its name, to punish the culprits causing so much unwarranted suffering, compromising the integrity of the country, and to be compassionate with the suffering of others. By this modest effort done in behalf of the noble cause of bringing the troops home and to end the war, I dedicate it to the children and other innocent victims, to all those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, and that in one way or another have suffered, suffer now, and will suffer the consequences of this war, to the Iraqi people, the American people and other countries affected by. To all of them I promise to- be always a tireless defender of the human being, its dignity, and an unconditional advocate for world peace.

God bless mankind and the world!

EXISTENCE = EXISTENCE

Jesus Hurtado
3026 32nd Ave. South
Minneapolis, MN 55406

Minneapolis, Minnesota, October 5, 2007

P.S. "I am a Bolivian national by birth, and a U.S.A. citizen. I work as an electro-mechanic technician. Married. A father of a son and a daughter. In 1989, I was part of a 20-day hunger strike group at the St. Paul Cathedral, St. Paul, Minnesota, with Father Roy Bourgeois and others to protest the conflict in El Salvador

JH / October 2006