

President Touches on Cuba After Castro

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NEWPORT, R.I., June 28 — President Bush on Thursday raised the anticipated death of the dictator [Fidel Castro](#) as an opportunity to push for democracy in [Cuba](#), which he called the “one nondemocracy in our neighborhood.”

“One day, the good Lord will take Fidel Castro away,” Mr. Bush said during remarks here at the Naval War College.

The audience reacted by laughing and clapping at what seemed to be a wink from Mr. Bush. But, in an apparent effort to dispel the notion that he was making light of Mr. Castro’s health, he hushed them, saying, “No, no, no,” and continued, “Then, the question is, ‘What will be the approach of the U.S. government?’

“My attitude is,” he said, “that we need to use the opportunity to call the world together to promote democracy as the alternative to the form of government they have been living with.”

Mr. Bush’s comments came in response to a question about his assessment of the situation in South America.

Mr. Bush also used the opportunity to take a thinly veiled swipe at his other nemesis, President [Hugo Chávez](#) of Venezuela.

“In the neighborhood there is a person who is undermining a democracy,” Mr. Bush said, following his regular refusal to mention Mr. Chávez by name. “And therefore we need to be concerned about the loss of democracies in our neighborhood.”

Mr. Bush stopped here on his way to his family compound in Kennebunkport, Me., where he is to meet with President [Vladimir V. Putin](#) of Russia.