

Bush: U.S. must prepare for Castro's death

by UPI

NEWPORT, R.I. - U.S. President George Bush said Thursday that the United States needs to be prepared to promote democracy in Cuba when Fidel Castro dies.

Bush, responding to a question about South America after a speech at the Naval War College, said that there is "only one non-democracy in our neighborhood."

Castro's brother, Raoul, has been in charge in Cuba since aging leader Fidel Castro had surgery last year.

"It's in our interests that Cuba become free and it's in the interest of the Cuban people that they don't have to live under an antiquated form of government that has just been repressive," he said.

Bush spoke of the value of free trade and of freedom of religion and the media in the Americas. He said that the United States should also work with "friends in the neighborhood" when democracy is being undermined -- presumably a reference to Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, although Bush didn't use his name.

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