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Chavez blasts Bush as "donkey" and "drunkard"



Reuters Photo: Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez speaks during his weekly broadcast 'Alo Presidente' in the town of...

Sun Mar 19, 5:25 PM ET

CARACAS, Venezuela (Reuters) - Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez on Sunday lobbed a litany of insults at U.S. [President George W. Bush](#) ranging from "donkey" to "drunkard" in response to a White House report branding the left-wing leader a demagogue.

Chavez is one of Bush's fiercest critics and has repeatedly accused the U.S. government of seeking to oust him from the presidency of Venezuela, the world's No. 5 oil exporter and a supplier of around 15 percent of U.S. crude imports.

"You are a donkey, Mr. Bush," said Chavez, speaking in English on his weekly Sunday broadcast.

"You're an alcoholic Mr. Danger, or rather, you're a drunkard," Chavez said, referring to Bush by a nickname he frequently uses to describe the U.S. president.

A White House report released last week on pre-emptive force in national security described Chavez as a "demagogue" who uses Venezuela's oil wealth to destabilize democracy in the region.

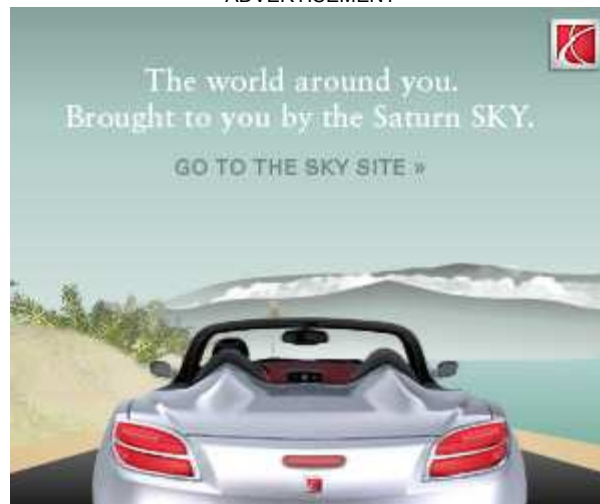
Washington is increasingly at odds with the former soldier over his close alliance with Cuba and [Iran](#). U.S. officials dismiss his anti-U.S. tirades as rhetoric meant to stir nationalism before presidential elections in December.

Chavez's remarks also came after Venezuela's El Universal newspaper printed an interview with U.S. Ambassador to Venezuela William Brownfield, who reiterated his government's concern over growing ties between Venezuela and Iran.

Tensions between the Washington and Caracas rose in January after Venezuela expelled a U.S. naval attache on espionage charges and the U.S. State Department responded by removing a top Venezuelan diplomat from Washington.

Chavez was elected in 1998 on an anti-poverty platform, and has used billions of dollars in oil revenues to finance development programs for the poor as part of his self-styled socialist revolution.

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