

TAC asked several writers—most of conservative disposition—how they would advise President Bush to proceed in his second term, if they had his attention. (We wish they did.) Their responses follow.

Get Realist

By James P. Pinkerton

Mr. President:

My best—if perhaps unwelcome—advice is to be realistic about what worked and what didn't work during your first four years. The victory was satisfying, but the temptation to overreach, always present at such moments, won't serve you well in a second term.

Perhaps your biggest success was drawing John Kerry as an opponent. A look at 50 percent-plus "wrong track" numbers suggests that you would have lost against a "normal" lunch-bucket Democrat like Dick Gephardt. It's hard to believe the Democrats ignored four decades of electoral history to run yet another Northern liberal.

You also were fortunate that the Democrats played to your cultural conservatism. Your outreach to evangelicals worked so well because the Left obliged by putting gay marriage on the national agenda. Gavin Newsom, the ultimate San Francisco Democrat, made your day by flamboyantly promoting illegal gay weddings; the Religious Right needed no prompting from us to put 11 anti-gay-marriage referenda on the ballot, thus swelling your vote.

Mr. President, these "successes" don't have much to do with you. And beating a candidate like John Kerry by three points does not give you a seat in the Landslide Hall of Fame.

As to the issues for which you are responsible, well, here I would respectfully suggest the record is not so good, and that a change of course is necessary.

While cutting taxes boosted the GDP and helped Citibank and Microsoft reap big profits in a globalized world, the Next Question for Americans is the fate of the social contract—what remains of it—and how to strengthen it for ordinary Americans in Schumpeterian times. The danger is that Democrats will eventually offer a plan for dealing with middle-class squeeze that doesn't centerpiece a tax increase.

You've been fortunate as well with the War on Terror. Sept. 11 has made you a consequential War President. You clearly relish the role and convey sincerity when you proclaim Operation Iraqi Freedom as part of a grand crusade to reshape the Middle East. Wars on Iraq and Iran are good electoral strat-

egy—they certainly help people forget that you neglected to read that memo of August 2001 entitled, "Bin Laden Determined to Attack Inside the United States." But electoral politics aside, there's not much reason to think these neo-Wilsonian ventures will actually succeed.

Of course, the Democrats may continue to commit electoral suicide—and you will look good by contrast. They could well forget the war issue, forget economic issues, and go back to their Hollywood base, emphasizing their dearly held frou-frou cultural concerns. Let's hope they don't start offering normalcy at home and realism abroad—for that would give you and your party real trouble—even if you are still receiving your orders from, as you put it in New York City, "beyond the stars." ■

James P. Pinkerton is a columnist for Newsday and a fellow at the New America Foundation in Washington, D.C. He served in the White House under Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush.

Court Control

By Phyllis Schlafly

The first order of business for the new Congress should be to restore self-government by curbing the power of the judicial supremacists.

1. The Senate should change its rules to provide that a filibuster can be ended by three-fifths of Senators present (instead of three-fifths of the entire membership). That would give the Republican majority a fair chance to confirm President Bush's nominees to the Supreme Court and other federal courts.

2. Congress should pass a law providing that federal judges have no power to hear a challenge to the Defense of Marriage Act or to change the definition of marriage to something other than one man and one woman or to give unmarried persons the legal benefits of husbands and wives.

3. Congress should pass a law providing that federal judges have no power to ban the Pledge of Allegiance, the Ten Commandments, and other public acknowledgments of God by public officials or on public property.

4. In appointing judges to the federal courts, President Bush should use the litmus test that he announced in the second presidential debate: "I wouldn't pick a judge who said that the Pledge of Allegiance couldn't be said in a school because it had the words 'under God' in it."

5. In considering judicial nominees, the Senate should require appointees to make clear whether they believe in the Constitution as written or whether they believe that the Constitution can evolve into whatever the Supreme Court says it is—a heresy first enunciated by the Warren Court in the 1958 case of *Cooper v. Aaron*. All candidates should be rejected who admit to the latter view.

6. Congress should amend a Watergate-era law, the Civil Rights Attorney's Fees Awards Act, to prevent the ACLU and others from collecting attorney's fees for lawsuits claiming that the public acknowledgment of God is an "establishment of religion" prohibited by the First Amendment.

7. Congress should prohibit the federal courts from ordering any government entity at any level to raise or redistribute taxes under any circumstance.

8. The Senate and House Judiciary Committees should hold weekly hearings on various proposals to reform the judiciary, to review and debate court decisions that declare laws unconstitutional, to limit the jurisdiction of federal judges on matters where we don't trust them, to take away the power of a single federal judge to use an injunction to block enforcement of a referendum during the years that a case winds its way through the court system, to limit consent decrees to one or two years, and to impeach judges who base decisions on foreign law instead of on the U.S. Constitution. ■

Phyllis Schlafly is the author of the new book The Supremacists: The Tyranny of Judges and How to Stop It.

Security Begins at Home

By John Derbyshire

Dear Mr. President:

You have won a splendid victory. As Charles Moore noted in the London *Daily Telegraph*, what happened on Nov. 2 was "the biggest vote ever cast for a conservative in the history of the world." There are, of course, some on our side of the aisle who doubt whether you can properly be called a conservative at all. You have broken a lot of conservative hearts these past four years. From what I know of your character, I doubt the next four years will leave us in a much happier frame of mind. We can hope, though. Here is my personal hope list.

Get out of Iraq. I supported the Iraq War, and I do not regret my support. Sept. 11 showed that the civilized world is in peril from fanatical terrorist groups with access to govern-

ment-scale resources in barbarous nations. It is unlikely we can eliminate terrorism altogether (as you yourself confessed in an unguarded moment during the campaign), but we can deny the terrorists government-scale resources by bringing down or intimidating likely governments and smashing up the resources. Iraq was a good start. I am sure we shall need to do more of this work. "Nation-building" is a liberal fantasy, though. The best we can hope for in Iraq is a despotic government that is not anti-American; or for continuing chaos in which no government can build threatening resources; or for fragmentation into small, impotent statelets. A swift departure soon, accompanied by suitably ferocious rearguard actions and properly brazen refusals to apologize or compensate, would bring about one or other of these results.

Change minds abroad. We have learned this past year and a half, those of us who did not know it already, that the United Nations is an embezzlers' club, the European Union is a discussion and dining group for failed politicians, and rabid anti-Americanism is the normal daily cast of mind for several billion people. This is not good. The civilized world needs to present a more united front to the forces of barbarism. It ought not be beyond the wit and powers of a U.S. administration to devise ways to turn important foreign nations more to our way of thinking without abasing ourselves before their fantasies of superior wisdom or truckling to thieves, fools, and pacifists. There is some promising material you might work with out there. Think of India, Turkey, Russia; think of the Anglosphere.

Face up to the entitlements crunch. It will soon be upon us. You have read all about it. The longer we wait, the more dire the situation will become. You don't have to look to re-election now, so you are better placed to administer painful medicine. Let it not be said, 20 years from now, "This awful fiscal calamity could have been prevented if the second Bush administration had acted."

Enforce the immigration laws, or ask Congress to change them. If it is true (which I do not actually believe) that the U.S. needs several million unskilled workers from abroad, propose immigration laws that acknowledge that fact and execute a policy that administers those laws in a strict and orderly way. If it is not true, instruct your officers to enforce the current laws, especially those that forbid employers to hire illegal immigrants. The greatest outrage in America's public life today is the wilful refusal of our federal executive to enforce the people's laws. Oh, and have the federal courts look at the "jurisdiction" clause in Section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment. "Obstetric tourism" is a much lesser outrage than the other, but it is still an insult to U.S. citizenship. ■

John Derbyshire is a contributing editor of National Review and the author of Prime Obsession.