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By John H. Cushman Jr.

..."Those who think we are powerless to do anything about the greenhouse effect forget about the 'White House effect,'" he said. "As President, I intend to do something about it. We will talk about global warming, and we will act."

These turned out to be empty words.

Dan Becker, the Sierra Club's first official "climate advocate," stumbled upon a copy of talking points the new administration had prepared for its cabinet members. He handed it over to Phil Shabecoff of The New York Times, who latched early onto the budding climate story.

"Not beneficial to discuss whether there is or is not warming," the paper said. "In the eyes of the public we will lose this debate."

"Don't get into an advocacy position of the merits of various policy proposals," it went on. "Don't use specific numbers i.e., degrees, dollars, rates, etc. "

President Bush reacted to the emerging science of the greenhouse effect in much the way his son would later—cautiously, in a way that emphasized uncertainty....

From "[Keystone and Beyond](#)," By John H. Cushman Jr. Read the excerpt at [Bloomberg.com](#).

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