

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

(George Bush Library)

Document No. and Type	Subject/Title of Document	Date	Restriction	Class.
01a. Memo	Case Number 270609SS From President Bush to Allan Bromley Re: Kuwaiti Oil Fires (1 pp.)	10/03/91	P-5	

Collection:

Record Group: Bush Presidential Records
Office: Records Management, White House Office of (WHORM)
Series: Subject File - General
Subseries: Scanned
WHORM Cat.: CO083
File Location: 257455 to 353600

Open on Expiration of PRA
 (Document Follows)
 By JPB (NLGB) on 1-19-2009

Date Closed: 8/26/2004	OA/ID Number: 00002-001
FOIA/SYS Case #: 1998-0099-F	Appeal Case #:
Re-review Case #: 2004-1910-S	Appeal Disposition:
P-2/P-5 Review Case #:	Disposition Date:
AR Case #:	MR Case #:
AR Disposition:	MR Disposition:
AR Disposition Date:	MR Disposition Date:

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P-1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P-2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P-5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Removed as a personal record misfile.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- (b)(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- (b)(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- (b)(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- (b)(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- (b)(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- (b)(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- (b)(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- (b)(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information

27060955

C0083

09

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

DATE:

10 - 3 - 91

FROM THE PRESIDENT

To: Allan Browning

1. Thanks
2. If you feel inclined
you might want to
call Dillon on the
Fives; but I
will just let this
matter rest

AP

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

(George Bush Library)

Document No. and Type	Subject/Title of Document	Date	Restriction	Class.
01b. Memo	Case Number 270609SS From Richard Haass to William Sittmann Re: Memorandum to the President Regarding Kuwait Oil Fires (1 pp.)	09/23/91	P-5	

Collection:

Record Group: Bush Presidential Records
Office: Records Management, White House Office of (WHORM)
Series: Subject File - General
Subseries: Scanned
WHORM Cat.: CO083
File Location: 257455 to 353600

Open on Expiration of PRA
 (Document Follows)
 By JJB (NLGB) on 1.19.2009

Date Closed: 8/26/2004	OA/ID Number: 00002-001
FOIA/SYS Case #: 1998-0099-F	Appeal Case #:
Re-review Case #: 2004-1910-S	Appeal Disposition:
P-2/P-5 Review Case #:	Disposition Date:
AR Case #:	MR Case #:
AR Disposition:	MR Disposition:
AR Disposition Date:	MR Disposition Date:

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P-1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P-2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P-5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Removed as a personal record misfile.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- (b)(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- (b)(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- (b)(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- (b)(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- (b)(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- (b)(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- (b)(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- (b)(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

6890

September 23, 1991

01 SEP 30 P4:30

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR WILLIAM SITTMANN

FROM: RICHARD N. HAASS 

SUBJECT: Memorandum to the President Regarding Kuwait Oil
Fires

D. Allan Bromley, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, wrote a memo to the President disagreeing with an assessment of the ill affects of the Kuwait oil fires, reported in an August 20 letter by Dillon Ripley. There is no need for an NSC stance on any of this. I would leave it to Phil Brady to determine if the package is worth the President's time.

Attachments

Tab I Bromley Memorandum

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

DATE: 10/3/91

NOTE FOR: ALLAN BROMLEY

The President has reviewed the attached, and it is forwarded to you for your:

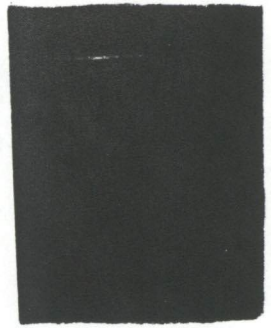
Information

Action

Thank you.

PHILLIP D. BRADY
Assistant to the President
and Staff Secretary
(x2702)

cc:



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Date: 9/18

TO: BILL SITTMANN

FROM: **JOHN S. GARDNER**
Special Assistant to the President
and Assistant Staff Secretary

- Information
- Action
- Let's Discuss

Does NSC have an objection to
sending this to the President?
Would you like to make any
other comments to it?

Thanks JG

John -
Bromley's office
is trying to
find the
original letter
it was supposed to
show. No
response has gone
out yet. B.

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

(George Bush Library)

Document No. and Type	Subject/Title of Document	Date	Restriction	Class.
01c. Memo	Case Number 270609SS From D. Allan Bromley to President Bush Re: Kuwait Oil Fires (1 pp.)	09/17/91	P-5	

Collection:

Record Group: Bush Presidential Records
Office: Records Management, White House Office of (WHORM)
Series: Subject File - General
Subseries: Scanned
WHORM Cat.: CO083
File Location: 257455 to 353600

Open on Expiration of PRA
 (Document Follows)
 By JN (NLGB) on 1.19.2009

Date Closed: 8/26/2004	OA/ID Number: 00002-001
FOIA/SYS Case #: 1998-0099-F	Appeal Case #:
Re-review Case #: 2004-1910-S	Appeal Disposition:
P-2/P-5 Review Case #:	Disposition Date:
AR Case #:	MR Case #:
AR Disposition:	MR Disposition:
AR Disposition Date:	MR Disposition Date:

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P-1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P-2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P-5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Removed as a personal record misfile.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- (b)(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- (b)(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- (b)(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- (b)(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- (b)(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- (b)(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- (b)(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- (b)(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

10/3/91

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 17, 1991

91 SEP 17 P4:57

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: D. ALLAN BROMLEY

Alan

SUBJECT: Kuwait Oil Fires

You have received a letter, dated 20 August, from Dillon Ripley, an old Yale colleague of mine, former Secretary of the Smithsonian and now Chairman of the Darwin Scientific Foundation. The letter concerned the alleged ill affects of the Kuwait oil fires.

I regret to say that Dillon and his colleagues appear to be overestimating the consequences of these fires and extrapolating to potential worldwide effects for which there are no current scientific foundations.

✓ As you know, at your request, Bill Reilly visited the area and I have been briefed by him, by John Knauss of NOAA, as well as several others who have visited Kuwait recently. While there are, admittedly, always possible surprises, the consensus of those I trust is that the environmental and health consequences of the fires--both locally and globally--are very much less than had initially been anticipated. Largely this reflects the relatively low altitudes to which the smoke plumes have been injected into the atmosphere and the relatively rapid rate at which the oil spills have been cleared at the higher temperatures characteristic of the Gulf as compared to more familiar spills at higher latitudes.

Bill Reilly's op-ed piece--a copy of which I include herewith makes these points.

My impression is that Bill, John and their colleagues are doing an excellent job of monitoring--and measuring--the Kuwait situation and that, although obviously well-meaning, the Darwin Foundation would have little to contribute at least at this time.

Enclosures

MR. PRESIDENT:

NSC has no objection.



NHB Room 336
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
Washington, D.C. 20560
U.S.A.

20 August 1991

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

The Darwin Scientific Foundation, of which I am the Chairman, has recently had an interesting meeting in Boston, and there discussed, with a measure of competent, almost unparalleled participation, the scientific implications of the extraordinary oil plume which is now rising in the sky over Kuwait at a temperature estimated in the neighborhood of 2,000 degrees centigrade.

This immense out-thrust of oil under tremendous pressure has produced huge lakes of oil in some places and will, no doubt, continue to burn, in part, and poison the atmosphere up and down the Arabian Gulf and all about creating a vast pall of smoke which has now been visible to the recent astronauts and will potentially envelop the earth at varying altitudes, spreading long-term results which could include disease and carcinogens galore.

I am hopeful that we can conclude these discussions with an additional report emanating from a meeting at the Smithsonian on September 28th, and believe that at that time it could well filter into the consciousness of the agencies involved sufficiently to require continuing concern and supervision. At least it is important in the realm of public concern to see if it would not be possible to initiate some long-term monitoring of these effects which are likely to be somewhat catastrophic as they spread ~~west~~ ^{west} east over central and southern Asia and ~~east~~ ^{west} across Arabia into Africa. As this is an international area, I am wondering if you feel that this can all be paid for at present by the rather hard-up Kuwaitis?

All of this is coming rather close to home, and I am inclined to feel, with others who have been affected in their thinking about these matters, that it would be wise to send out a major military figure as the Arab savants have

urged from their vantage point. However, I would think that such a person should be in a private capacity such as General Sewall. In this way a liaison to the White House could be accomplished without too close a connection.

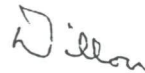
I am sure that such an event, irreparably depressing as it may be, will stir your interest and is of sufficient magnitude to require international attention at the U.N. level. Parenthetically, if the Secretary General is eventually to be replaced with another personality, I would suggest an ideal person like Mrs. Thatcher, now waiting in the wings, one in whom we all have tremendous confidence.

We may well be on the threshold of new developments in this regard, approaching an apocalyptic scale. I have been in touch with Allan Bromley, Brent Scowcroft, Nick Brady and other colleagues who would, I am sure, respect these suggestions and be capable of useful advice to yourself.

After a rather hectic summer, and some bouts with arthritis (an intimation, I suppose, of other coming events?) I hope that I may have a chance to continue to communicate with your offices and to impress these officials with the magnitude of the problem and the vital importance that this represents.

Warmly and with much admiration and respect for all that you have been achieving, I am,

As ever,



S. Dillon Ripley-
Secretary Emeritus

William K. Reilly

Facing Facts on the Environment

A recent poll by the Roper Organization on "Environmental Protection in the 1990s" shows that environmentalism tops safe sex, patriotism and "The Simpsons" for what's "in" in 1991. That's heady company, and I hope the environment continues to keep it. It is good news for those of us in the business of protecting it.

But evidence suggests the environment's high standing reflects growing concern over risks large and small, and a feeling that there is no risk so small—and none so expensive—that government should not work to eliminate it.

Until recently we have made little effort to assess our overall environmental quality objectives, to target our laws and scarce resources to reduce the greatest risks to human health and natural systems. Now I think we've got to. There simply are more anxieties than we can possibly create laws to alleviate, and far more risks than resources to eliminate them. Determining which risks need a full-scale response by government and which do not is a value-laden task. If there is a source of trustworthy information that can lend authority and coherence in helping characterize and even rank risk, it is good science.

In my opinion, the environmental debate has long suffered from too little science. There has been plenty of emotion and politics, but scientific data have not always been featured prominently in environmental efforts, and have sometimes been ignored even when available. As major new environmental problems arise, I propose we approach them as scientifically as possible, asking: "How much do we know? What are the critical questions to which we need answers? Are we organizing to get key information? What do the data tell us about the seriousness of the problem and the magnitude of the appropriate response?"

Suppose we apply this to the Kuwait oil fires. I traveled to Kuwait at the request of the president to assess the environmental threats from the fires and to observe firsthand both the containment and cleanup efforts and the environmental monitoring work of an interagency team of U.S. scientists and technical experts. Two concerns are uppermost: impacts on global climate and short- and long-term health effects.

Both a U.S. interagency team and another team of federally funded scientists operating under the auspices of the National Science Foundation—as well as British scientists from the Royal Meteorological Society—believe global climatic effects from the fires are unlikely. The plumes generally rise to between 10,000 and 12,000 feet, with the highest readings to date taken at around 20,000 feet. This suggests they will not reach heights of 38,000 to 40,000 feet, at which altitude we might see the plumes distributed around the globe by the stream.

So, regarding the risk to the global environment, there is emerging scientific consensus that the volcanic eruptions at Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines—which do reach the upper altitudes—pose a greater threat worldwide to the atmosphere.

And what of risks to public health? Our air monitoring data and those of the Kuwaitis thus far show significant levels of toxic gases—sulfur dioxide or hydrogen sulfide, for instance—that would have meant acute effects for those living in the region. Particulates are heavy—but our initial analyses did not reveal heavy metals, hydrocarbons or volatile organics that would mean problems. We are still studying the samples, and we are mounting a more extensive monitoring effort, so we may yet find something troubling.

We have urged Kuwait to link air monitoring and weather reports, and issue daily air quality advisories. And the World Meteorological Organization is overseeing a long-term monitoring plan at the request of the Saudi Arabian and Kuwaiti governments. These efforts should provide real-time air alerts and establish with some certainty what's happening. Coupled with the work of the World Health Organization, the air monitoring also should begin to give us a picture of any potential for long-term, chronic health effects on the people living in the Persian Gulf countries. Our Department of Defense is monitoring the health of U.S. troops—those who served and those still there.

I caution—as I've made clear all along—that our findings are preliminary and may change as results of ongoing scientific assessments come in, as Kuwait's full monitoring system comes on line, or as the wind and weather patterns shift. It runs counter to experience to see pollution on the scale encountered in Kuwait without also seeing impacts on health, particularly affecting asthmatics and others with lung disorders. Nevertheless, thus far, hospital admissions for respiratory disorders are no greater this year than in prior years. Much of the most polluted area is uninhabited desert or water.

To date, the risk to public health in no way compares to the deadly London fog of 1952, in which almost 4,000 people died, or to the dense fog of 1948 in Donora, Pa., in which 10,000 people were overcome and 20 died. These were acute episodes in heavily populated areas—with clear but immediate evidence of health effects.

Despite the recent U.S. findings, some refuse to believe the data. The Bush administration is committed to environmental policies that are grounded in science. In the matter of the Kuwaiti oil fires—as I hope in all other environmental matters before us—we are prepared to subject our work to the review of outside experts, to be inclusive in the fact-finding process as possible, and to be open always to revising our opinions and strategies in the light of new information. I invite anyone with hard information from Kuwait that contradicts our preliminary findings to get it to us as quickly as possible.

We will continue to monitor the environment of Kuwait, to analyze pollution samples and to calculate risks and advise on any protective policies needed. But we also need to recall that to equate every incident, every problem, with a major risk undermines our ability to focus on the most significant risks. Nothing is 100 percent safe. Neither are all risks equal. That is as true in the United States as it is true in Kuwait.

WASHINGTON POST
August 20, 1991
Page A15