

Originally Processed With FOIA(s):
2005-0336-F

FOIA Number:
2005-0336-F

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Record Group/Collection: George H.W. Bush Presidential Records
Collection/Office of Origin: Science and Technology Policy, Office of (OSTP)
Series: Bromley, D. Allan, Files
Subseries: Organization Files - Non-Government Organizations

OA/ID Number: 62086
Folder ID Number: 62086-010

Folder Title:
Institution - World Resources Institute (WRI) [1989]

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 28, 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR JOHN H. SUNUNU

FROM: D. ALLAN BROMLEY *Allan*
SUBJECT: GUS SPETH OF WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE

Recently I sent you a memo in response to Ed Rogers request concerning a proposed meeting between you and Gus Speth to discuss his letter, dated May 1989, addressed to President Bush.

Speth has now requested that I meet with him to discuss the same letter and before replying to him I would be interested in whether you met with him -- and if so, how it went.

Happy New Year!

Attachment

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

December 13, 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR JOHN H. SUNUNU

FROM: D. ALLAN BROMLEY

Allan

SUBJECT: A possible meeting between you and
World Resources Institute (WRI)
representatives

I am responding to Ed Rogers's memo requesting input concerning the above-mentioned meeting.

- O My experience in discussions with groups like this has not been rewarding! I am usually reminded of how effective it is to try to change religious beliefs on the basis of scientific arguments.

That being said, I think that you should talk to these folk because I am convinced that, apart from having their minds made up, they really do not know of all that we are doing. A discussion with you, where you emphasize this, could do some good and at least make it more difficult for them to maintain their negative views of this Administration.

Let me then provide you with a few talking points, none of which you do not already know very well, but in the hope of being helpful.

Gus Speth's letter to you of December 1 encloses a copy of the May 1989 WRI Call for Action on Global Climate Change. Let me key the following points to that document.

- O The preamble, particularly in its third paragraph on page 1, makes a whole series of unsupported statements. The last sentence in particular may be true in the long term, if we do nothing except load our atmosphere with greenhouse gases at our current rates. The authors, however, do not even mention the potential damage to our economy that major mitigation activities would inflict, or to the plight of developing countries if

their orderly industrialization and development were to be substantially slowed or halted.

In short, this is a standard scare approach; moreover, as I shall note below, we are not maintaining a status quo but rather are taking more aggressive action -- as an insurance policy against possible effects of greenhouse warming -- as well as for many other compelling and independent reasons.

- O The authors note that the U.S. has a special leadership responsibility. I agree. And we are exercising that leadership. Measured in terms of our commitment of both financial and human resources to the understanding of, and response to, global change, we exceed the efforts of any other nation by at least an order of magnitude. In FY 1990 we will provide roughly \$500 million in this area in federal support; currently we project an increase in this support to roughly \$1 billion in FY 1991.
- O The integrated seven agency U.S. research program prepared by the FCCSET Committee on Earth Sciences and released by the President at the Paris Economic Summit is a very concrete evidence of leadership. The plan described in the document, "Our Changing Planet," is widely regarded as a model for national research activities directed toward understanding and responding to global change (where appropriate).
- O WRI Point 1:

Jim Watkins and DOE are working aggressively on a National Energy Policy that focuses heavily on increased energy conservation. It will be available in 1990. This is particularly important, since 57 percent of our greenhouse emissions come from fossil fuel combustion -- particularly in large electrical generating plants.

The Clean Air legislation makes a major contribution to reduction of greenhouse emissions.

The increased Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) mileage requirements on U.S. automobiles is an additional contribution to energy conservation and greenhouse emission reduction. BUT, arbitrary requirements such as the quoted 45 m.p.g. by 2000 cannot be considered seriously without detailed reference to the technology and economic impacts involved. Clearly, improvements are possible and will

continue, but I consider it irresponsible to pull numbers like this out of thin air.

- O I note the call for alternative, non-CO₂ emitting energy supply. The authors are very reluctant to admit that the technologies they first list are inherently niche sources and that currently the only option for the production of large blocks of electrical energy -- thus replacing fossil fuel combustion -- is the nuclear fission one. I agree that we must have a sea change in the technology and personally support the modular high temperature gas-cooled reactor (MHTGR) approach with standardized units at approximately 350 megawatts. Recent European tests have confirmed the intrinsic safety of this design under simultaneous loss of both helium and water cooling.

- O WRI Point 2:

We are already committed to total elimination of both production and use of CFCs prior to 2000 -- ahead of the requirement of the Montreal Protocol. This will eliminate 25 percent of our former greenhouse gas emissions.

- O WRI Point 3:

The Department of Agriculture's initiative under consideration for FY 1991 is very relevant to the national role. And we have initiated talks with Brazil, for example, concerning possible incentives for preservation of the world's remaining major tropical forests -- apart from the oceans, the largest CO₂ sink on the planet -- quite apart from their housing the largest remaining uncharacterized gene pool available.

- O WRI Point 4:

The President's announcements in Malta, offering to host the first negotiating meeting leading to a Framework Convention on Global Change and a research conference focusing on the science and economics of the environment, are only two components of our coherent national program designed to understand and, where appropriate, respond to global change. Other components include our strong participation in the U.N.-sponsored Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (including chairmanship of its Working Group on Responses) and the formation of the DPC Working Group on Global Change charged with development and integration of recommendations for federal policy in this area.

- O I think we can, and should, be very proud of our approach and our accomplishments and that we must continue to emphasize that those who claim that we are "hanging back" or "abdicating leadership" either are ignorant of the facts or have their own agendas.
- O We must continue to insist that our policies and our actions must be based on sound science and sound economics -- and not on emotion and mob psychology, although it is not considered good form to even suggest the latter possibility.
- O I would take this opportunity to suggest that we need a more aggressive media campaign out of the White House emphasizing the positive steps that the President is taking with respect to environmental matters. We should get out ahead of the environmental activists -- and the Congressional Democrats -- many of whom are trying to paint a very negative picture of the Bush Administration in environmental matters.
- O What would you think of the idea of putting together a National Environmental Plan for the Administration, pulling together all the activities that we do have under way and providing a coherent overview of our national activities, with timelines (both short and long), objectives, etc.? The DPC Working Group has already requested the necessary input from the agencies and perhaps could pull together a draft of such a Plan once we get the science and economics conference organized.
- O I hope that these notes are useful. ~~Let~~ me know if you need more.
- O I include a few recent articles that you may find of interest. Our viewpoint is getting through more frequently at least.