

143



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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

# SPOT COMMENTARY

[REDACTED]

02 March 1991  
1500 EST

IRAQ+KUWAIT: SITUATION REPORT #621

[REDACTED]

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Approved for Release, *[Signature]*  
Date

OCT 1997

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### Major Threat from Kuwaiti Oil Fires

The smoke and toxic pollutants produced by more than 500 oil well fires in Kuwait are a major threat to the environment and human health in the region, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] These fires are emitting the equivalent of roughly 10 percent of the world's total normal weekly emissions of smoke and solid pollutants and have blackened the skies over Kuwait, Iraq, Iran, and Saudi Arabia. [REDACTED]

The [REDACTED] study, which assumed favorable weather and 500 to 900 oil well fires, concluded that pollution from these fires would pose a threat to the elderly, infants, and individuals with cardiovascular or pulmonary impairments. The fires also will produce reduced visibility more than 100 kilometers downwind. In fact, [REDACTED] predicts that daylight illumination will be equivalent to about one-thousandth of normal on a moonlit night, five to 30 kilometers downwind. While the study judges that there is almost no chance of major global climatic change as a result of these fires, most of the phenomena predicted in a nuclear winter scenario will occur on a regional basis. [REDACTED]

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