



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 December 1990

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Dear Charles,

Meeting Between Prime Minister and  
HM Ambassador, Baghdad

Mr Harold (Hooky) Walker, our Ambassador in Baghdad, is calling on the Prime Minister at 1130 tomorrow, 19 December. I attach a biographical note.

Mr Walker returned to London for consultations last Thursday. He has seen the Foreign Secretary and held a joint press conference today with Mr Hogg. The Prime Minister may wish to cover the following areas in discussion:

(a) Political. The Prime Minister will wish to ask about the mood of the Iraqi population, its attitude to the invasion of Kuwait and to the imposition of sanctions, and to seek Mr Walker's views on the stability of the regime, and in particular Saddam Hussain's chances of survival if Iraqi withdraws fully from Kuwait, whether as a voluntary act or after hostilities.

Mr Walker is of the view that Saddam Hussain will not wait until 15 January before making a move of his own. Destabilising Jordan is a possible Iraqi option.

The Prime Minister will also wish to look at Iraqi options in the event of hostilities, in particular the extent to which Iraq may try to drag in Israel, whether directly or indirectly, in order to give the conflict a pan-Arab dimension.

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(b) Hostages. The decision to release all foreign nationals has lifted a burden of work and anxiety from the Embassy in Baghdad, and from Mr Walker personally. Over the past three months the Embassy has devoted most of its energies to consular activity. With the departure of all but a small group of British citizens (we estimate that there will be around 10 by the New Year), the question arises as to whether it is necessary or prudent to keep staff in Baghdad at all. We shall be discussing shortly with the Americans their intentions over the future of their own Embassy. The Foreign Secretary is likely to raise this with the Prime Minister tomorrow afternoon.

(c) Iraqis in the UK. The position of the Embassy in Baghdad is complicated by the likely expulsion of 8 Iraqi intelligence officers from the Embassy in London and of 64 Iraqi students (probably on 3/4 January). This will have been discussed earlier in the day in OPD(G). The Iraqis are likely to retaliate against our Embassy in Baghdad.

*Yours ever,*

(S L Gass)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

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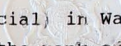
MR HAROLD (BERNERS) WALKER CMG

(HM Ambassador at Baghdad)

Mr 'Hooky' Walker was born at Holbrook, Suffolk on 19 October 1932 and was educated at Winchester and Worcester College, Oxford, where he took a degree in Modern History. He is the son of the late Admiral Sir Harold Walker KCB RN. Between school and university he did National Service in 1951 and 1952 and was commissioned in the Royal Engineers.

Following a year as a Temporary Assistant Principal in Information Policy Department of the Foreign Office, he was successful in the 1956 Open Competition for the Administrative Branch of the Foreign Service. He continued in his original appointment, as an established Third Secretary. In 1957 he was assigned overseas as a full-time Arabic language student at the Middle East Centre for Arab Studies at Shemlan in Lebanon and, on the successful completion of his course, a year later, was appointed Assistant political Agent at Dubai. He remained there for two years and then returned to the Foreign Office for a tour of duty. First he served in Arabian Department for two years and in 1962 became Private Secretary to the Parliamentary under-Secretary, Mr Peter Thomas. In 1964, having spent a year as Principal Instructor at MECAS, he was posted to Cairo as Second, later First, Secretary and two years later was transferred to Damascus as First Secretary, Head of Chancery and HM Consul. In 1967, following the break in relations between Syria and the UK, he returned to London once again, working first in North and East African Department and then, for 1968 to 1970, as Head of The Diplomatic Service Administration Office. In 1970 he became

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First Secretary (Commercial) in Washington and three years later, on promotion to the rank of Counsellor, he was appointed Head of Chancery at Jeddah. In 1975 he was transferred to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to fill the post of Deputy Head of Personnel Operations Department becoming, a year later, Head of the Department. Late in 1978 he did a sabbatical term at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and from 1979 to 1981 he served as HM Ambassador and HM Consul-General at Bahrain. In 1981 he was appointed HM Ambassador at Abu Dhabi, and in 1986 became HM Ambassador at Addis Ababa in April 1986. He took up his present appointment as Ambassador in Baghdad at the beginning of 1990. Mr Walker was made a CMG in the 1979 Birthday Honours.

In 1960 he married (Agnes) Jane Bittleston, his second cousin, who was born at Greenwich in 1934, the daughter of the late Captain C J L Bittleston DSC RN. They have two daughters, born in 1961 and 1965, and a son, born in 1963. Before her marriage Mrs Walker was for a time an Assistant Purser with the Orient Line and later worked at the British Council.

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