Twitter Thread by Lewis Goodall



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Charles Walker, Vice Chair of the 1922 Tory backbench committee in the Commons tells TWTW that he thinks the government knew it intended to “cancel” Christmas on Wednesday or Thursday but waited for Parliament to rise to do it. Says many of his colleagues find this “egregious.”

When put to Walker that Matt Hancock said this morning that wasn’t the case, it was the briefing on Friday which prompted the decision, Walker says: “Hmm yeah...well I’d have to disagree with the SoS on that.” So he’s either saying Hancock isn’t being truthful or is misinformed.

Walker: “Surely at some stage a senior government minister has say I’ve offered my resignation to the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister has to say- very early I’ve had to accept this.”

Reminder- Charles Walker is Vice Chair of the Tory backbench committee.

Walker heavily implies it’s Matt Hancock he wants to see resign: “I’m not asking for the government to collapse. I’m asking for a Secretary of State to take some responsibility.”

The Charles Walker interview is extraordinary in what he is inferring. A senior Conservative MP is essentially accusing his govt and ministers of deceit about what they knew about the new strain and when and by implication the timing of the new lockdown.

Whether it’s true or not, the nature of the accusation and where it’s come from, is extraordinary and a sign of how febrile the relationship between Number 10 and the backbench is right now.

NB this backbench discontent is likely why we’re hearing a ramped up tone from No10 on no deal.

Charles Walker: “The government in my view knew on Thursday, possibly even on Wednesday they were going to pull the plug on Christmas but they waited til Parliament had gone. That on top of everything else is a resigning matter.”

More Tory discontent directed at the Health Sec ■ https://t.co/7PKm9SRAcg

No, it was very human behaviour- well within the law- by people who probably faced Christmas alone and had been bounced into travelling en masse because of the midnight deadline. https://t.co/jJtNnAN6DM

— William Wragg MP (@William_Wragg) December 20, 2020