

Will the Tories vote on the basis of principles or cowa...

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This tweet highlights an interview with Rishi Sunak, recorded late last night and broadcast this morning:

<https://twitter.com/AdamBienkov/status/1670670879984869377?s=20>

Adam Bienkov of Byline Times highlights an issue with regard to Sunak's approach to the report on Johnson being debated by the Commons today. Sunak goes into what is very obviously a pre-rehearsed loop when asked about this report and, in the process, says nothing about his intentions or his opinions on this matter.

I think we have to assume that he will never say anything on the issue and that he will also find an excuse not to be in the Commons tonight when the vote takes place. I suspect that something mysteriously urgent will have come up by then that will require his attention.

Michael Gove was a little more forthcoming on Laura Kuensberg's programme yesterday. To her frustration, he was willing to applaud the committee for its work but said he would not vote on the report because he felt that a 90-day sanction was too strong. I suspect that a very large number of Tories will use the same excuse. She thought this inappropriate, and so do I.

MPs are put in parliament to have an opinion and not to sit on their hands. If they have no opinion on the duty of a minister to tell the truth then they are clearly failing to uphold the principles of Parliamentary democracy. That is the one thing that we will need to know about them when reviewing the voting tonight.

There is, however, another dimension in all this to consider. This is because these Tories still live in fear. I suspect that it is true that many of them face the risk of deselection by their local constituency parties if they vote in favour of this report. Rumour has it that many of those parties are under the control of far right-wingers. They will not vote tonight as a result to preserve their own self-interest. What that will tell us is something else. What we will really know at the end of this vote is which Tories

are willing to vote on the basis of principle, and which are just cowards. The balance between the two will be very telling.