

Sunak's one remaining priority as PM is how he might ...

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Imagine you are Rishi Sunak right now. Humour me and try, for a moment.

Your migration policy is failing.

So too is just about everything else your party is doing.

You face a torrid time on Monday at the Covid inquiry, which is going to show that you were utterly negligent on 'Eat out to help out' and maybe 20,000 people died as a result.

And you know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that your party will be thrown out of office at the next election.

And then you face the one real worry he has about that election, which is that he might keep his seat and be forced to do another five year term in office when there might be so many better things for him to do in California.

Now imagine what, in that case, is his biggest priority at present. I would suggest that is how he might spend more time with his family's money.

So, what does he do? He engineers a showdown with his party. He refuses to make it a confidence issue so that his MPs can vote against him without fear of losing the whip, but in advance he makes it clear that this is a 'back me, or I will walk' issue.

That is what the Rwanda issue is all about for Sunak. It is his chance to quit as PM, on what he will suggest to be principle, and then announce he will either also be quitting the House, or won't be standing again.

Sunak desperately wants to lose next week's vote on the Rwanda Bill. If he does not, he will want to lose the vote on the third reading, which may be more likely. Either way, he thinks he will then have created his own way out of the mess he alone has created.

Will it work? Who knows? Frightened Tory MPs might spite him and keep him in office,

knowing they are doomed anyway.

That, though, is the last thing think Sunak wants. He knows it is game over for him and that the Tories need their fifth leader in five years. All he wants is to engineer the exit. And that's precisely why we have such an absurd Bill before parliament, but which is not absurd enough for his opponents, so that the party can split over it.

Whatever happens, Sunak wants out.