# Unite leader Sharon Graham criticises Ed Miliband’s Net Zero strategy amid Labour party turmoil



In a stark indication of the Labour Party's faltering direction, Sharon Graham, the general secretary of the Unite union, has publicly condemned the leadership of Ed Miliband, particularly regarding his hazy plans for achieving Net Zero. Graham advocated for a leader with a firm commitment to British industry to take on the crucial role of Energy Secretary, implying that Miliband's current approach falls woefully short.

This critical assessment looms large following former Prime Minister Tony Blair's recent interventions, which have exposed serious rifts within the Labour Party surrounding Miliband’s energy strategy. Blair warned that obsessively focusing on the immediate transition away from fossil fuels is "doomed to fail," reflecting a growing recognition that the British public is unlikely to accept financial sacrifices when they feel their individual actions contribute minimally to global emissions.

Blair’s remarks have sparked intense backlash within party ranks, but not all responses were negative—some MPs and ministers welcomed his realistic appraisal. In a true display of party disarray, a spokesperson for the Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, supported the Energy Secretary yet seemingly withheld assurances that Miliband would retain his position long-term—a courtesy afforded to other key figures like Foreign Secretary David Lammy and Chancellor Rachel Reeves.

Graham did not shy away from highlighting Miliband's shortcomings. "I'm not going to get into the personalities," she noted, "but there is an absolute lack of a plan.” Her call for governmental investment in renewable energy is a stark reminder that without robust policy frameworks, job security within industries aligned with the Net Zero goals remains a distant dream.

Echoing Graham’s concerns, the GMB union's General Secretary Gary Smith condemned the government’s strategy as “bonkers,” particularly spotlighting the senseless reduction of investments in North Sea oil and gas, which many workers see as a betrayal of the energy sector. His sentiments resonate with a broader sense of alarm over Labour's failure to support vital energy jobs.

When pressed about Keir Starmer's confidence in Miliband, a spokesperson for the newly appointed Prime Minister affirmed that Miliband is “doing a fantastic job,” but such unwavering support feels increasingly hollow amid rising criticism.

Environment Secretary Steve Reed attempted to deflect attention from Blair’s hard truths, characterising his input as necessary for the broader climate debate. However, his acknowledgment of some validity to Blair's critique underscores an uncomfortable reality: Labour's approach is floundering under internal conflict, jeopardising economic stability while pursuing environmental ideals.

Ultimately, Blair's warning resonates loudly—many political figures are still unwilling to temper the often-polarising climate dialogue. This ongoing discord within the Labour Party only serves to enhance the urgency for a more decisive opposition, one that can confidently champion sustainable economic growth while effectively addressing the nation's energy needs. With the country at a crossroads post-election, the electorate deserves clarity and direction, not the vacillation currently exemplified by Labour’s leadership.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.energylivenews.com/2024/06/24/unite-union-boss-criticises-labours-net-zero-plans/> - Sharon Graham, leader of the Unite union, criticized Labour's net zero manifesto promises, warning that the policy could negatively impact oil and gas workers.
* <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/07/27/spare-public-huge-burden-of-net-zero-says-tony-blair/> - Former Prime Minister Tony Blair warned against asking the public to do a 'huge amount' to tackle climate change, stating that Britain's efforts alone cannot solve global warming.
* <https://www.ft.com/content/6d443344-c492-49f1-a888-759a5afc4e48> - Keir Starmer defended the UK's net zero policy after criticism from Tony Blair, emphasizing that the government's approach aligns with Blair's suggestions, including investments in carbon capture and artificial intelligence.
* <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/tony-blair-paper-warns-against-net-zero-dogma/> - The Tony Blair Foundation's report cautioned against a dogmatic approach to net zero, suggesting that unrealistic targets could harm public support and set a damaging precedent for international climate efforts.
* <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/tony-blair-climate-catastrophe-cop26-b958863.html> - Tony Blair emphasized the urgency of addressing the climate crisis, stating that while it's not too late to avert catastrophe, the world must accelerate efforts and shift from 'campaign mode to practical policy'.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-11181330> - Tony Blair discussed the uncertainties in climate science, advocating for action based on likelihood and potential consequences, and warned of a 'heavy price' for inaction.
* <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14668341/Union-chief-Ed-Miliband-plan-Net-Zero-Tony-Blair.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data