

Labour sells out to big oil and gas

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As the Guardian has noted in an email this morning:

After weeks of speculation, the secretary of state for energy and net zero, Miatta Fahnbulleh, approved drilling in the Jackdaw gas field this morning.

In a statement Fahnbulleh stressed that the government remains “resolute” in achieving net zero by 2050.

It has also announced a new wealth fund that will invest tax revenues from North Sea oil and gas into low-carbon projects.

Of course, anyone concerned about our environment will be furious about this. You cannot claim to be green or to be concerned about climate change while approving a new oilfield in the North Sea.

Miatta Fahnbulleh's credibility is destroyed forever. Formerly chief executive of the New Economics Foundation, she has now sided with the oil and gas industry for the sake of keeping a ministerial red box. That is what hypocrisy looks like.

And in terms of Labour's political support, the message of this is quite clear. People and planet do not matter. City interests do. Enough people will remember that to make a difference to its fortunes.

I am not surprised by this decision. It has been long trailed, quite deliberately. That, however, does not alter the fact that this represents a serious error of judgement.

We have a duty to ourselves and all the generations that will follow us to transition away from fossil fuels that are creating the crisis that is now unfolding around us, and the pathetic individuals who now make up our government have decided to make matters worse.

I hope they can live with their consciences. I couldn't have done so if I had been a party to this decision.