

# Unions Bash Kraft CEO On Cadbury Takeover

Jane Wardell, AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — British union leaders and lawmakers lashed out at Kraft Inc. Chief Executive Irene Rosenfeld for failing to appear before an inquiry on the U.S. company's takeover of British confectioner Cadbury on Tuesday.

The Unite union also criticized Rosenfeld for failing to meet directly with workers at Cadbury sites across the country to reassure them about the company's plans after it backtracked on a promise to keep open a local factory.

Kraft's takeover of 195-year-old Cadbury caused much consternation in Britain, where it is a much-loved brand and the company's future remains in the spotlight ahead of a general election to be held by the start of June.

Rosenfeld declined to appear before a cross-party committee of lawmakers in the House of Commons on Monday to answer questions about the takeover, sending Executive Vice-President Marc Firestone instead.

Brian Binley, a member of the opposition Conservative Party, said her absence was a "sizeable discourtesy."

Firestone said Rosenfeld had the "deepest respect" for the committee and was absent to attend a board director's meeting, but the committee chairman, Peter Luff, pointed out the session had been arranged "around your convenience, not ours."

Jack Dromey, deputy general secretary of the Unite union, who also gave evidence to the committee, criticized Rosenfeld for not visiting Cadbury's operations across Britain personally.

"We don't want to go on seeing Irene on YouTube, we want her to sit down with workers," he said. "Warm words and cheesy smiles are not enough."

Unite is angered that Kraft changed its mind on preserving the Keynsham factory in Somerdale, western England.

During a long and bitter takeover battle, Kraft said it would save the plant and 400 associated jobs, a decision that would have reversed earlier plans by Cadbury to close the factory and move production to Poland.

However, shortly after Kraft completed its 11.5 billion pound takeover last month, it said the plant would close by 2011 because it had become clear that it was "unrealistic to reverse the closure program." Rosenfeld noted that Cadbury had already spent 100 million pounds building new facilities in Poland and that most production would be transferred by the middle of this year.

## **Unions Bash Kraft CEO On Cadbury Takeover**

Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

---

Lindsay Hoyle, a member of the ruling Labour Party, questioned whether the U-turn suggested that Kraft was "remote, smug and worst of all duplicitous."

Unite's national officer for the food and drink sector, Jennie Formby, told the committee she had urged the company not to make "glib" promises to keep the factory open, as she couldn't see how Cadbury's existing plans to shut the site could be reversed.

**Source URL (retrieved on 09/18/2014 - 12:41pm):**

[http://www.impomag.com/news/2010/03/unions-bash-kraft-ceo-cadbury-takeover?qt-most\\_popular=0](http://www.impomag.com/news/2010/03/unions-bash-kraft-ceo-cadbury-takeover?qt-most_popular=0)