

UAW caught covering up plan to double temporary workers in new Fiat Chrysler agreement

Eric London
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With a week remaining before workers at Fiat Chrysler vote on a new contract, the UAW has been caught in a cover-up with the company to hide a bombshell buried deep in the agreement.

Bloomberg Business reported yesterday afternoon that “Fiat Chrysler can double its use of lower-paid temporary staffers under a new labor agreement being voted on by the UAW.”

The new agreement allows the company to use temporary workers for eight percent of work hours instead of the four percent figure listed in the first proposed agreement. Temp workers can now be used 365 days a year.

According to *Bloomberg*, “The new rules on temps weren’t in the highlights distributed to union members.” To put it another way, the UAW and FCA tried to sneak one past the autoworkers in order to ram through another sellout deal.

“I haven’t been this shocked in my life,” a Toledo Chrysler worker told the WSWS. “For the UAW to bend over and let FCA do this is wrong.”

The revelation undercuts all the lies being put forward by the UAW and its propaganda public relations firm BerlinRosen.

First, while the UAW claims that the deal creates “a clear path to traditional wages,” new temp hires will max out at just \$18.41 at the end of the proposed four-year (48 month) contract (pp. 282-3 in the pdf file). Those temp workers hired before ratification will reach \$21 at the time that the contract term expires.

Second, while the UAW says that this agreement is “huge progress toward eliminating the gap,” this deal will create a permanent low tier of new temporary workers.

Third, while the UAW claims that the contract “strengthens job security,” the doubling of temp positions will pave the way for a massive reduction in higher-paid, permanent positions. This also underscores the real character of the so-called “job growth” that the UAW and the company promise—the UAW is helping the company transform the auto industry so that low-wage, temporary work is the new standard.

One GM worker in Colorado said that this was part of the UAW’s plan to maintain a lower tier by bringing in “temps with lower wages and no benefits. For them it’s a new Burger King—‘have it your way.’ The union takes union dues from them and doesn’t represent them.”

A Mopar parts worker in Michigan said, “It’s a new tier 3, or whatever number tier it is now. Why would they ever hire a permanent worker again? Some of the temps took a massive pay cut during the bankruptcy. They were at \$23 an hour and were told if they didn’t hire in at base tier-two rate as full time they would not be called into work ever again.”

According to Kristin Dziczek, director of the Center for Automotive Research, “This will cause some tension with the membership. Taking on more temps is part of the compromise to get the tentative agreement and they could agree to more for a new deal. FCA has a limit on what they will spend on labor.”

For that reason, workers want to know: What are the other secret giveaways in the contract that the UAW has kept from the workers? Why wasn’t this important

piece of information in the highlights?

In its conspiracy with the company, the UAW's aim is becoming all the more clear. It has sought to split tier-two workers and pit them against one another by giving more appealing, front-loaded raises to workers with 4-8 years experience and a \$1,000 bribe to tier-one workers. All of this is aimed at passing a sellout deal that is effectively the same as the one that workers have already rejected.

The UAW is employing divide-and-conquer tactics not only within Chrysler; it is also seeking to prevent workers at Ford and GM from uniting with their allies at FCA.

In a letter sent Monday, UAW Vice President James Settles told workers at Ford to "allow [FCA workers] the time to discuss their agreement amongst themselves... I respectfully ask that you wait to pass judgment until we reach a tentative agreement at Ford." He implored Ford workers to "fight together, not against each other."

Workers at Warren Stamping in the Detroit suburbs are also reporting that the UAW is engaged in a fierce intimidation campaign against tier-two workers. One tier-two worker said that the UAW's intimidation was "terrifying," and that workers are being told if they don't vote "yes" they will be fired.

This treatment shows what is really behind the UAW's public relations campaign. The UAW is paying the New York/Washington DC firm BerlinRosen over \$115,000 to create a handful of social media graphics spreading lies about the contract.

One Toledo Jeep worker told the WSWS, "If the UAW was for the workers and for the truth, why would they hire a PR firm to push this contract?"

As the details of the deal trickle through the UAW-FCA information blackout, workers are growing increasingly opposed to the proposed agreement.

"Sergio Marchionne said American workers had to give up their 'culture of entitlement' and accept a 'culture of poverty,'" the Toledo Jeep worker said. "It's my blood, sweat and tears that creates their wealth. You can't sit on top of the pillar and push everyone else down. I make you rich and I have to worry about what my kids won't get, what bills I can't pay. It's obscene.

"If we don't fight now it's going to affect our children's children. For the last eight years, and now if

this deal passes for a total of 12, this contract has been a movement for the rich. I don't want to see people losing their homes and living in the gutters.

"If we don't stand up then what we say about loving our children and doing anything for their future is meaningless. Instead, it's going to be, 'I love you son and daughter, get ready for enslavement and try these chains on for size.'"



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