

Feds may have secretly recorded UAW President Gary Jones ordering cover-up of embezzlement of union funds

Jerry White
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The legal net is closing in on United Auto Workers union President Gary Jones, with legal experts saying the FBI likely has undercover recordings of Jones ordering subordinates to destroy evidence and take the fall for him, according to the *Detroit News*.

Last Saturday, the UAW announced Jones was being put on paid leave, just two days after Edward Robinson, who worked closely with Jones in the UAW Region 5 office in Hazelwood, Missouri, was charged with conspiracy to embezzle union funds and conspiracy to defraud the United States. Robinson is expected to plead guilty in the case.

According to the indictment released last week, between 2010 through at least September 2019, Robinson and Region 5 Director Vance Pearson—who has already been indicted—conspired with five other top UAW officials, only identified as “UAW Officials A-E,” to use \$1.5 million in union funds for their personal use.

Sources close to the investigation have identified Gary Jones as “UAW Official A”; former president Dennis Williams as “UAW Official B”; Jones’ former deputy Danny Trull as “UAW Official C”; and Amy Loasching, a top aide to Williams, as “UAW Official D.” The identity of “UAW Official E” has not been revealed.

According to the indictment, Robinson and his coconspirators pilfered hundreds of thousands of dollars from the union’s Solidarity House headquarters in Detroit and Community Action Programs (CAP) in the Southwest and Midwest, which are UAW political action committees funded by a per capita tax that is part of the union dues deducted from workers’ paychecks.

Robinson and others submitted phony expense

vouchers to the national UAW headquarters and the CAP funds for what they claimed were legitimate Region 5 activities. Half a million dollars was diverted from the Midwest CAP fund alone, the indictment states, with a significant portion “converted to cash, to further fuel the lavish lifestyles to which the officials had become accustomed to.”

The most damning revelations concern how Jones reportedly reacted once the net began closing in on him. During a meeting between Official A, Robinson, and Pearson, “Official A promised to provide a sham job to a relative of Edward N. Robinson in order to ‘take care of’ a relative if Robinson agreed to falsely take sole responsibility for the UAW Midwest CAP cash embezzlement portion of the conspiracy, thereby attempting to protect UAW official A from federal criminal prosecution.”

A similar meeting was held in March 2019 to discuss the government investigation and the sham job for Robinson’s relative. Discussing whether the government already had obtained documents from the union and the hotels relating to the embezzlement scheme, “UAW Official A told Edward N. Robinson that (UAW Official A) wished they ‘burned the records,’” according to the indictment.

During the March meeting, the indictment states, UAW Official A again assured Robinson that he would provide for the financial well-being of the relative in exchange for Robinson taking sole responsibility for the cash embezzlement. “UAW Official A stated: ‘We’ll take care of [the relative]. I told you that we’d take care of it.’ UAW Official A also expressed concern whether federal investigators had gotten hold of records concerning the use of UAW money to

purchase golf clubs for UAW Official A and other UAW officials.”

According to the legal experts who spoke to the *Detroit News*, the direct quotes suggest that federal prosecutors have “undercover recordings capturing Jones and others discussing possible crimes,” including “destroying evidence and obstructing justice.” While the government has not yet filed discovery notices in federal court revealing how they collected the evidence, the *News* continued, “The use of direct quotes is a strong indication that investigators obtained audio recordings of Jones and other UAW officers either through a wiretap or a hidden recording device.”

Robinson is the only UAW official who participated in all three conversations directly quoted by prosecutors.

In addition to embezzling CAP funds, Pearson and Robinson, along with Officials A and C (Jones and Trull), also established “Master Accounts” with various hotels across the United States, allegedly for Region 5 conferences. The accounts were used to divert money from the national headquarters to outside vendors that supplied the union officials with “cigars, private villas, high-end liquor and meal expenses, golfing apparel, golf clubs, and green fees,” according to the indictment. “If the funds from the UAW’s headquarters were exhausted or additional funds were needed, checks were issued from the UAW Midwest CAP and Southwest CAP to satisfy debts incurred by senior UAW for illegitimate and personal expenses.”

The UAW officials’ high-flying living reportedly included:

- \$129,336 on luxury condominiums and villas
- \$46,588 for lavish restaurants
 - \$80,904 for golf green fees and merchandise purchases
- \$15,274 for cigars and related paraphernalia
- \$18,750 for spa services, clothing, musicals, and amusement park tickets

Zeroing in on Jones, the indictment says, “To conceal the theft, Edward N. Robinson was directed by UAW Official A [Jones] to fraudulently backstop the payments with receipts for fake expenses or for expenses which had already been fully paid.” After obtaining between \$500,000 and \$700,000 in checks from the UAW CAP, prosecutors say, Robinson cashed them in and “split hundreds of thousands of dollars in

cash proceeds with UAW Official A,” i.e., UAW President Gary Jones. “Between 2010 and 2017, UAW Official A deposited over \$93,000 in cash into one of his personal bank accounts.”

The entire affair smacks of a Mafia operation, complete with burner phones and offers to look after family members of gangsters who fall on their swords. This underscores the fact that the UAW is not a workers’ organization but a criminal syndicate, which takes bribes from the auto bosses and embezzles workers’ dues money in exchange for enforcing the dictates of the corporations and the Wall Street.

Nothing that has been “negotiated” by these corrupt operators, including the latest deals at GM and Ford, can be considered legitimate. Workers have every right and duty to organize themselves in opposition to the UAW gangsters and their pro-company deals, which give the automakers a green light to close plants, force out higher-paid veteran workers and exploit an ever-growing pool of temporary and contract workers.

To stop the UAW-company conspiracy from proceeding any further, autoworkers must form rank-and-file factory committees, take control of the contract struggle, and make preparations for an all-out strike against the auto industry, appealing for support from workers internationally to carry out a common fight.



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