

In letter to Shawn Fain, UAW VP Boyer confirms he and Fain knew Stellantis would axe thousands of temporary workers

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The crisis within the United Auto Workers union bureaucracy has deepened with the publication Friday of a letter from UAW Vice President Rich Boyer to UAW President Shawn Fain. It contains damning revelations about the role of all sections of the UAW apparatus in the betrayal of temporary workers and the membership as a whole.

The publication of the letter follows the issuing of a status report June 9 from the monitor in charge of overseeing the UAW bureaucracy that it is investigating systematic corruption within the Fain administration, targeting in particular Fain and Secretary-Treasurer Margaret Mock as well as an unnamed regional director. Mock, as well as Boyer, said they had been targeted because they refused demands by Fain to authorize the misuse of union funds.

The monitor explains in its status report that Fain's office has been obstructing access to information needed for the investigation for months.

Boyer's letter was written in response to his removal by Fain as head of the union's Stellantis department in late May. Attempting to deflect workers' anger over mass layoffs directed at the UAW bureaucracy as a whole, Fain charged that Boyer had betrayed the membership by allowing Stellantis to "run roughshod" over the collective bargaining agreement.

In his letter, Boyer admits that both he and Fain were aware that the claim that all temporary workers—known as "supplemental employees" (SEs) at Stellantis—would be converted to full-time under the new agreement was a blatant lie. The promise of full-time work for temp workers was used by Boyer and Fain to sell the contract to the membership, when in fact they knew Stellantis was

planning mass layoffs in order to avoid having to promote SEs to full-time.

Boyer writes, "The company told us during bargaining that they were not going to convert all 5,500 SEs, and we ensured that we communicated to you that they would only convert 3,200 after ratification. Furthermore, we informed you that the company only wanted to retain 500 SEs or less on role."

This confirms the WSWs assessment at the time that "the UAW was fully aware of the company's plans to eliminate the jobs of thousands of SEs before they were converted and deliberately misled workers to get the pro-company contract ratified."

The letter from Boyer was a response to one written by Fain previously, which accused Boyer of agreeing to concessions such as excluding temps from profit-sharing and imposing a strict attendance policy. Fain also blamed Boyer for the delayed reopening of the Belvidere Assembly Plant.

Boyer's demotion by Fain was an expression of a deep crisis in the corrupt UAW apparatus, which faces enormous rank-and-file anger over job cuts and attacks on working conditions, including the sacking of thousands of supplemental workers. In recent weeks, the UAW bureaucracy faced a mass rebellion by tens of thousands of UAW academic workers at the University of California system, who carried out a political strike against the US-backed genocide in Gaza, and suffered a defeat in the unionization vote at Mercedes Benz in Vance, Alabama.

In another sign of the turmoil wracking the UAW leadership, the *Detroit News* reported that UAW Local 7 President Eric Fleming, at the Jefferson North Assembly Plant in Detroit, attempted to raise a motion Friday at a meeting of the UAW Stellantis Council to reinstate Boyer. The motion was ruled out of order. "The head of the

UAW removing the VP, that's huge," Fleming told the *Detroit News*, "That's major. There's confusion on the (plant) floor."

The crisis in the UAW apparatus has serious implications for Biden's reelection campaign, particularly in the vital swing state of Michigan. Fain has emerged as a key backer of Biden's faltering campaign under conditions where Biden is widely hated for his support for the Israeli genocide in Gaza and his anti-democratic and pro-corporate policies.

Boyer's damning letter responding to Fain comes just one day after Fain was the subject of a fawning interview by Vermont Democratic Senator Bernie Sanders, another key Biden supporter, who promoted the UAW president as a "great" labor leader.

In his letter, Boyer denounced Fain's statements as a "direct attack on my character and an insult to me and my staff."

He goes on to state, "Your action against me implies that you or your staff had no visibility or involvement in our discussions during the 2023 negotiations with Stellantis," calling it a "blatant lie, insult and personal attack on my credibility."

Boyer affirms that Fain's staff, including Democratic Socialists of America operatives within the UAW such as Chris Brooks and Ben Dictor, were intimately involved in the negotiations with Stellantis and apprised of all the terms of the sellout agreement that was ultimately crafted.

Boyer stated that Fain's staff was fully aware of major concessions contained in the Stellantis deal, including the implementation of a punitive attendance policy and the exclusion of SEs from profit-sharing.

In demoting Boyer, one of the grounds cited by Fain is Boyer's decision to hold a meeting of the UAW Stellantis Council in Puerto Rico March 17-18 at the luxurious San Juan Sheraton Hotel and Casino, with discounted rooms costing \$298 per night. There are no auto plants in Puerto Rico, but plenty of warm sun and sandy beaches.

The hotel features, according to its website, "stunning views of San Juan Bay from the rooftop infinity pool" as well as "a private poolside cabana."

Defending the junket, Boyer writes, "One of the Council's objectives was to provide backing for the UAW members encountering impediments in bargaining rights in Puerto Rico. My presence was motivated by my desire to express solidarity with my peers, and the assembly proved to be highly productive." He notes that the meeting did not cost more than other similar paid

getaways for UAW bureaucrats living high on the workers' dime; in fact the cost was "marginally" lower.

This gives an indication of the real motives involved in the unseemly faction fight within the apparatus—control over literally billions of dollars in UAW assets and the union-controlled retiree healthcare fund and the lavish lifestyle this provides for a bloated union apparatus comprising hundreds of over-paid and under-worked bureaucrats and their hangers-on.

Workers at the Stellantis Warren Truck Assembly Plant in suburban Detroit were furious when told about the admissions by Boyer.

"Of course they knew about the layoffs, they don't care about us," said a production worker at Warren Truck.

An SE who had been laid off from Warren Truck in January said, "I just came back in April. Everyone should be treated equally. Everyone who negotiated this contract should get what they deserve."

Fain was installed as part of a US government-sponsored election aimed at giving the corrupt union apparatus a facelift after a federal corruption investigation resulted in more than a dozen high-level UAW officials being sent to prison, including two former presidents. It confirms the warning made by rank-and-file Mack Trucks autoworker and socialist Will Lehman, who opposed Fain and former UAW President Ray Curry in the election, that the UAW apparatus cannot be reformed but has to be abolished and power put in the hands of the rank and file.

All the documents relating to the monitor's corruption investigation should be made public to the rank and file as well as the all the side deals and unpublished agreements with management.

This requires that workers take the initiative by building rank-and-file committees in every workplace. These committees, democratically run by workers themselves, would map out a program based on what workers actually need, not what the UAW apparatus and companies say is allowed.



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