FEDERAL MONITOR SUSPENDS RAYMOND JENSEN FROM UAW FOR DEATH THREAT AGAINST UNION PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE WILL LEHMAN



BY WILL LEHMAN
Mack Trucks worker and rank-and-file candidate for UAW president

On August 4, the court-appointed UAW Monitor found that Raymond L. Jensen Jr. violated the rules of the 2026 UAW election when he posted a death threat against me.

Jensen's UAW membership is suspended for two years. He is barred permanently from ever running for elected office in the UAW, barred from campaigning for any candidate in this election, and has been ordered to apologize to me. He accepted all of the findings.

The findings are on the record. On July 16, Jensen posted on my public Facebook page, directly beneath my statement on the federal criminal investigation into Shawn Fain, an image of me bound and gagged, bleeding from the mouth, with an armed man aiming a rifle at my back. Questioned about it, he admitted the post was his and offered no explanation of any kind.

That is a total vindication of the complaint my attorney and I made, but this victory belongs to the rank-and-file and workers who took this up as their own fight.

I want to thank workers for speaking out against the threat. Autoworkers at Bridgewater Interiors, Warren Truck, Sterling Heights Assembly, and Sterling Stamping spoke on camera in defense of this campaign. Statements came in from UAW members and other workers across the United States, from Mexico, from Canada, from postal and health workers in Britain, from students in New Zealand. Workers spoke out because they understood that a threat against a rank-and-file candidate is a threat against the right of every worker.

The posting of a bound and gagged candidate was intended to teach a lesson to every worker who has voted down a contract, spoken up at a meeting, or thought about challenging the apparatus in their own local: this is what happens to you.

I was the target, but I was never the only one. Workers face threats and intimidation from the union bureaucracies all the time. Antwiane Sanders was recently fired at Nexteer for standing up to UAW officials in his own plant. Workers are victimized, isolated and driven out of their jobs for opposing this apparatus, in plants across this country, week after week, and almost none of it is ever investigated or penalized. Most of those workers have no lawyer and no campaign behind them. That is the real climate in this union, and one finding does not change it.

Jensen is a tool. The responsibility lies higher up.

Six days before this finding, at the candidates' forum on July 30, Fain tried to avoid the subject entirely. When I forced him to address it, he said he did not condone "that stuff," and then told me, "If you're running for president, get ready, brother, because you'll be getting them every day," effectively doubling down on the threat. He offered no indication that Jensen would face any consequence whatsoever.

No worker should conclude from this that our protection lies with the Monitor, the Labor Department or the courts. It does not. The Monitor's office exists only because this apparatus stole from its own members on a scale that sent more than a dozen officials to prison, including two former presidents. It did not prevent that corruption, and it has not stopped the victimization of workers who speak out.

The Monitor has penalized Jensen, but the apparatus remains. The task of abolishing the apparatus and carrying out a fight for what we need is the task of the rank-and-file.

So take this campaign forward. Vote for me in October, but do more than vote. Build a rank-and-file committee where you work, independent of the apparatus and answerable to no one but the workers who elect it. Link it to the committees at Nexteer, at American Axle, at Bridgewater, and to workers in Mexico and Canada and beyond. There is a rebellion already underway in this union, in the contract rejections and the strikes and the anger on every shift. Deepen it. Organize it. Make it something the apparatus cannot threaten its way out of.

They are threatened by the power of the working class because they understand they are not on the same side as the masses of workers they misrepresent. We as workers need to understand our mass class power if we are to dismantle this bureaucracy.

JOIN THE FIGHT FOR WORKERS' POWER!

Get involved with the rank-and-file campaign in the UAW elections.

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