



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on June 25, 2012

Fire Captain Demoted for Facebook Post on Trayvon Martin Case

Miami-Dade Fire Rescue has demoted a veteran firefighter for posting politically incorrect comments about the Trayvon Martin case on his Facebook page.

Brian Beckman was a captain in the urban fire department until mid-May, about a month after he got riled about the Trayvon Martin case and said so on his own time at his Facebook account. He attacked the prosecutor, Martin's parents, and the [ubiquitous hoodie](#).



The firefighters union will fight the demotion, its chief said.

The Post

After Beckman's thoughts appeared on Facebook the day that George Zimmerman [was charged](#) with second-degree murder in Martin's death, a "source" sent them to [theGrio](#), NBC's website providing video material [of interest](#) to blacks.

The [Grio features](#) a screen shot of Beckman's rant, which reads:

Listening to Prosecutor Corey blow herself and her staff for five minutes before pre-passing judgment on George Zimmerman. The state seeks reelection again, truth aside. I and my coworkers could rewrite the book on whether our urban youths are victims of racist profiling or products of their failed, sh*tbag, ignorant, pathetic, welfare dependent excuses for parents, but like Mrs. Corey, we speak only the truth. They're just misunderstood little church going angels and the ghetto hoodie look doesn't have anything to do with why people wonder if they're about to get jacked by a thug.

"Prosecutor Corey" is the state prosecutor, [Angela Corey](#), in the case against George Zimmerman, who says he shot and killed Trayvon Martin in self defense on February 26.

[According to](#) theGrio, "The source who provided theGrio with the Facebook entry expressed concern that the comments reflected "the thoughts of someone who responds to the homes of the very people" being denigrated in the post.

After theGrio published Beckman's frustrations, Miami-Dade Fire Rescue said it was "investigating" the matter.

According to the *Miami Herald*, Beckman told theGrio, "I am a private citizen and have the same right to freely express an opinion on any subject that anyone else does. I choose not to embellish or alter the facts as your employer chose to do."

He told a reporter two days later that he could not comment because the matter is under investigation, the *Herald* reported.

The managing editor of theGrio, the [newspaper divulged](#), is also a columnist for the *Miami Herald*.



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Investigation Complete

The investigation complete, the fire department demoted Beckman. According to the *Herald*, "The ensuing investigation found that, though Beckman's Facebook page was personal, it hurt the public's trust in the department, the disciplinary action report said."

"While the opinion posted may have been personal, as a captain with Miami-Dade Fire Rescue, it greatly disrupted the public's confidence in our entire organization as a result of the reference to 'my co-workers,' " it said.

Quoting the firefighter's union president, Rowan Taylor, the [newspaper also reported](#) that Beckman is on administrative leave and must complete "diversity training" and a "psychological evaluation" before he returns to work.

Said Taylor, "Today the Fire Chief demoted Brian Beckman by two supervisory ranks back to the rank of Firefighter."

As union President, I believe this discipline is excessive. We will immediately file an appeal to an independent arbitrator. We anticipate that the case will be heard within the next few months. The decision of the independent arbitrator will be final and binding. Regardless of what the allegations are, all employees are entitled to a complete and proper fact finding investigation. Once that investigation is completed, discipline if considered should be supported by facts and should NOT be handed out based on outside pressure. As union President I believe that the facts in this case do not warrant the discipline handed out today. I want the public to know that the members of our organization have always served this community with professionalism and will continue to do so. This incident will not change our dedication to our jobs and the love of community that we all share. [Emphasis in original.]

NBC Had It In for Zimmerman

Analysts have noted that the fact that an NBC website is involved in Beckman's demotion is no surprise. The network tried to smear Zimmerman, [a Hispanic Democrat](#), as a racist murderer [by editing](#) the audio tape of his call to police in the minutes before he shot and killed Martin. The neighborhood watch volunteer spotted Martin acting suspiciously, he told a police dispatcher, before he shot and killed the 17-year-old football player [in self defense](#). "Is he black, white or Hispanic?" the dispatcher asked. "He looks black," Zimmerman answered.

But NBC employees edited the tape to make it appear as if Zimmerman said this: "This guy looks like he's up to no good. He looks black."

[NBC fired two employees](#) based in Miami for dishonestly editing the audiotape. A third reporter who [worked for](#) NBC Miami also got the boot. Unfortunately for Zimmerman, the damage was done. NBC had smeared him as a racist.

NBC's smear job, along with [other possible media shenanigans](#) with the truth, had the predictable results, including [an invitation from](#) the New Black Panthers to kill Zimmerman, an elderly couple being forced to leave their home because movie director [Spike Lee \(wrongly\) tweeted](#) their address as being that of the Zimmerman family in the case, and, finally, [Corey's inflated second-degree murder charge](#).

Corey on Defense

As for the prosecutor Corey, whom Beckman attacked in his Facebook post, leftist legal luminary [Alan Dershowitz](#) has repeatedly [blasted her](#) as "unethical," "immoral" and "irresponsible" because of [the](#)



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[affidavit](#) her office filed to bring second-degree murder charges against Zimmerman.

[Dershowitz argued](#) that [Corey's affidavit](#) omitted exculpatory evidence [that shows](#) Zimmerman shot Martin in self-defense. After the media [published reports](#) about Zimmerman's injuries, including a broken nose and [head lacerations](#), and those from Martin's autopsy, Dershowitz [called upon](#) Corey to drop the case. "If this evidence turns out to be valid, the prosecutor will have no choice but to drop the second-degree murder charge against Zimmerman — if she wants to act ethically, lawfully and professionally," [he wrote](#) in the *New York Daily News*, adding,

There is, of course, no assurance that the special prosecutor handling the case, State Attorney Angela Corey, will do the right thing. Because until now, her actions have been anything but ethical, lawful and professional.

As [Dershowitz wrote](#) a few weeks ago at Newsmax.com, Corey then called Harvard University, where Dershowitz teaches law, and threatened to sue the university if it didn't cashier him. A university spokesman told Corey that Dershowitz has a right to express his opinion, [Dershowitz wrote](#), further explaining why Corey should drop the charges:

Her beef was that I criticized her for filing a misleading affidavit that willfully omitted all information about the injuries Zimmerman had sustained during the "struggle" it described.

She denied that she had any obligation to include in the affidavit truthful material that was favorable to the defense.

She insisted that she is entitled to submit what, in effect, were half truths in an affidavit of probable cause, so long as she subsequently provides the defense with exculpatory evidence.

[Dershowitz suggested](#) that Corey "should go back to law school," where "she will learn that it is never appropriate to submit an affidavit that contains a half truth, because a half truth is regarded by the law as a lie, and anyone who submits an affidavit swears to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth."

Dershowitz averred that Corey was aware of Zimmerman's serious injuries, "clearly visible in photographs she and her investigators reviewed," when she submitted the affidavit. "The judge deciding whether there is probable cause to charge the defendant with second degree murder should not have been kept in the dark about physical evidence that is so critical to determining whether a homicide occurred, and if so, a homicide of what degree," [he wrote](#).

By omitting this crucial evidence, Corey deliberately misled the court.

Corey seems to believe that our criminal justice system is like a poker game in which the prosecution is entitled to show its cards only after the judge has decided to charge the defendant with second degree murder.

[Dershowitz called](#) the actions "gamesmanship."

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