



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on June 17, 2024

SF Fire Dept. Officials Fired Asian Firefighter After Attack by Black Firefighter, Tried to Stop Police Probe

In a clear case of racial bias, the San Francisco Fire Department (SFFD) kept a black firefighter on the payroll after he brutally attacked an Asian firefighter.

Instead, the department fired victim Gabriel Shin after he refused to follow an order not to cooperate with the police about the assault.

Shin sued the department in federal court last year, and for the first time has finally spoken to a reporter. Shin says officials threw him under the bus, likely because the suspect who nearly beat him to death was black firefighter Robert Muhammad.



Reinhard Krull/iStock/Getty Images Plus

But perhaps a more salient fact about the case is that the leftist mainstream media have largely ignored it. It doesn't fit their long-running narrative that "white supremacy" is the great peril for minorities.

The Attack

Amazingly, though Muhammad attacked Shin on February 1, 2022, he won't go to trial until November. And again, Muhammad is still on duty.

Filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, [Shin's lawsuit lays](#) out the details about the attack when, he alleges, Muhammad tried to kill him with a [hydrant spanner](#), a 15-inch wrench used to open a fire hydrant.

The terrifying attack began when Shin returned home to Oakland and began helping neighbors sweep the sidewalk. Waiting in ambush was Muhammad, the lawsuit alleges, who approached Shin from behind and said "I'm gonna give you a chance to save yourself."

Still, having turned around to see Muhammad, Shin put down his broom and said he wouldn't fight.



“Defendant Muhammad then pulled out an SFFD large hydrant spanner from behind his back,” the [lawsuit alleges](#):

Defendant Muhammad, who is approximately six inches taller, nine years younger and 30 pounds heavier than Firefighter Shin, raised the spanner high overhead and swung down with full force at Firefighter Shin’s head. Firefighter Shin ducked and started running for his life. Defendant Muhammad gave chase and continued swinging the SFFD hydrant spanner with full force, aiming each strike directly at Firefighter Shin’s head. Firefighter Shin yelled for help and repeatedly yelled for “Robert” to stop. Neighbors witnessing the attack also yelled at Defendant Muhammad to stop. One neighbor yelled that she had called the police. However, neither the prospect of eyewitnesses nor the potential for police arrest were enough to stop Defendant Muhammad’s brutal and unprovoked attack as he continued swinging the hydrant spanner with full force at Firefighter Shin’s head.

Muhammad swung 12 times at Shin, landing three blows to his right arm that snapped his ulna and finally hitting his head, causing a concussion.

Only a neighbor with a gun deterred Muhammad from killing the defenseless Shin.

The lawsuit says the department knew about Muhammad’s threatening behavior for years and did nothing about it, and “knowingly allowed Defendant Muhammad to threaten violence against Firefighter Shin.”

Shin hadn’t even recovered from his near-fatal wounds when department bigwigs pressured him to stop



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his cooperation with Oakland police. Indeed, a cop told Shin that the department refused to provide a photo of Muhammad and his date of birth so they could obtain an arrest warrant.

[Continues the lawsuit:](#)

SFFD supervisory officers initiated a concerted effort to pressure Firefighter Shin to end his own cooperation with law enforcement. On February 2, 2022, the day after the attack, an SFFD supervisory officer called Firefighter Shin. After Firefighter Shin shared material details of the attack, the supervisory officer asked if “we [the SFFD] could work something out” that involved Firefighter Shin not participating in a criminal proceeding against Defendant Muhammad. When Firefighter Shin held firm against this supervisory officer using the weight of his SFFD rank to intimidate and silence him, a second SFFD supervisory officer named Lieutenant Joe Certain called Firefighter Shin later the same day. After Firefighter Shin again shared a detailed account of the attack and his injuries, Lieutenant Certain defended Muhammad and repeatedly stated with the tone of an order, “you’re not really going to press charges.” When Firefighter Shin refused to cave to his direct supervisor’s pressure, Lieutenant Certain became irate, yelling as he issued Firefighter Shin a direct order to end his cooperation with the law enforcement investigation of Defendant Muhammad.

But that wasn’t all. The department expected Shin to sit for an interrogation as if he were the criminal, and then cut off his pay and health insurance.

[The 41-page lawsuit alleges](#) 14 causes of action against Muhammad and the city and county of San Francisco, including battery, assault, negligence, retaliation, and race and disability discrimination.

Muhammad faces trial for felony assault with a deadly weapon in November.

Interview

In his first interview about the murderous attack, [Shin told ABC7](#) in San Francisco that Muhammad was furious that fellow firefighters were discussing a “family crisis” Muhammad had and were concerned about him.

“People offered to cook for him, people offered to work his shifts for free and he rebuffed my offers,” Shin said.

But six months after the crisis ended, “Muhammad called to ask who in the firehouse was talking about his private business,” ABC7 reported:

[Said Shin:](#)

Robert, I said, I take ownership for speaking about that and you know, because we were concerned for you but I’m not going to tell you who told me. And he said the next time he sees me, he’s going to hurt me.

That’s what Muhammad did on February 1, 2022, authorities and Shin’s lawsuit allege.

“The whole time I was yelling at him, I said, ‘Robert, stop, what’s wrong with you, stop,’ you know, and he just didn’t stop,” Shin said. “He was relentless.”



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Shin also told ABC7 about department officials who pressured him to drop the case.

“The first person called me and said, ‘Is there any way we can work this out?’ Shin said. “The second person called me and said, ‘You can’t charge him. You know, you’ve got to drop the charges. That man’s got a family.’ And of course, I was angry. I said, ‘You know, he just tried to kill me.’”

No Media Coverage

Despite the brutal attack, ensuing pressure on Shin not to cooperate with police, and obvious racial bias on the part of fire officials, the leftist national media don’t seem interested in the case.

Google and site searches for “Gabriel Shin” at [ABC](#), [CBS](#), [CNN](#), [Fox](#), [NBC](#), [The New York Times](#), [The Washington Post](#), [Los Angeles Times](#), and [San Francisco Chronicle](#) returned no results.

That mightn’t mean those outlets didn’t run a story about the case. But it certainly means they didn’t give it the coverage they would have produced had a white firefighter tried to murder Shin with a hydrant spanner — or if a white firefighter had similarly attacked Muhammad.

As it is, [Shin’s out of a job](#). Muhammad isn’t.

HT: [SFist](#)



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