

Mass shooting at San Francisco UPS facility leaves four people dead, including gunman

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15 June 2017

Early Wednesday morning, a United Parcel Service (UPS) employee allegedly shot and killed three coworkers at a distribution center in the Potrero Hill district of San Francisco, California, in the worst mass shooting in the city in recent years. When police arrived and cornered the shooter inside the building, he allegedly shot himself, later dying in the hospital. Two others suffered gunshot wounds during the incident and are still in the hospital, according to police.

The shooter was identified Wednesday evening by police as San Francisco resident Jimmy Lam. According to ABC 7, Lam was in his mid-40s and lived in the Sunset District with his children and was estranged from his wife.

ABC 7 reporter Dan Noyes tweeted that a UPS employee told him “Lam ‘Had it out for a manager,’” and sources told NBC Bay Area that Lam had a history of mental illness.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* has identified one of the victims as 46-year-old Mike Lefiti of Hercules, California, a veteran driver near retirement who left behind three children. Authorities are waiting to release all the victims’ identities until they are confirmed by the medical examiner and families have been notified.

The shooting occurred at 8:55 a.m., shortly after all the workers had arrived for their shift and were gathering for their pre-delivery meeting, according to UPS spokesman Steve Gaut. An employee at the facility told the *San Francisco Examiner*, “We were all working when it happened,” and another employee added, “He just came up and just started shooting.”

When notified of the incident, San Francisco Police (SFPD) issued a “shelter in place” alert to the neighborhood and quickly arrived in full force, with dozens of police cars, armored vehicles, sheriff’s cars and fire department vehicles surrounding the building. In a military-style lockdown, officers patrolled the area with

rifles drawn, evacuating victims and employees.

A SWAT team then entered the building, and when they found the shooter he aimed his weapon to his head and shot himself, according to SFPD Assistant Chief Toney Chaplin. The gunman was reportedly still alive when he was taken to San Francisco General Hospital, where he later died.

“He saw police and turned the gun on himself,” Chaplin said, adding, “We believe this incident is not related to terrorism.”

At around 10:30 a.m., police declared the building secure and said the incident was contained. Two guns were recovered at the scene, including what police referred to as an “assault pistol” used by the shooter. Authorities have begun interviewing families of victims and witnesses to try to determine Lam’s motive.

Witnesses described the incident as highly chaotic. Mashie Kleven posted on Twitter, “Terrifying. All hell broke loose. I’ve seen this stuff in the news but never expected to see it in real life.”

Nearby residents posted photos online showing several UPS employees on the roof of the building with their hands up, signaling that they needed help and weren’t involved in the attack. Once on the roof, armed police reportedly ordered these bystanders to keep their hands up until they were closer.

A nearby resident who identified himself as “Chino” told the *SF Gate* that he saw several people covered in blood being dragged from the building by officers and firefighters and loaded into ambulances. He said, “I was sick to my stomach, seeing those bodies. They were looking pretty bad.”

A group of UPS employees also ran to a nearby bus stop, banged on the door to be let in and quickly boarded the bus, shouting to the driver, “Go, go, go.” They disembarked the bus after driving a safe distance away.

As in every previous such mass shooting incident, local,

state and federal politicians have issued perfunctory statements of condolences, portraying the attack as a “senseless act of violence.” Such statements do nothing to explain the underlying social causes of mass shootings and violence.

The specific motive behind the San Francisco shooting has yet to be determined, but it was undoubtedly influenced by the profound social crisis gripping the United States. As the social counterrevolution has steadily eroded the living standards of the working class in recent decades, such outbursts of extreme violence have become increasingly common.

The shooting took place merely hours after a gunman opened fire on Republican lawmakers at a congressional baseball practice in Alexandria, Virginia, wounding Republican Majority Whip Steve Scalise and several others.

A similar workplace shooting occurred just last week in Orlando, Florida, in which army veteran John Robert Neumann, Jr., 45, entered the factory from which he had recently been fired and fatally shot five people, before turning the gun on himself.

Three years ago, at another UPS distribution center in Birmingham, Alabama, a recently-fired employee shot and killed two of his supervisors before turning the gun on himself.

The UPS facility in San Francisco is the largest package sorting hub and delivery center in the city, with 850 workers serving the large metropolitan area. Workers at UPS distribution centers face comparable conditions to those of workers at Amazon “fulfillment” centers, as well as US Postal Service and FedEx facilities. They are routinely surveilled by managers and under constant pressure to meet demanding time and labor requirements.

According to the Gun Violence Archive, the San Francisco shooting was the 154th mass shooting so far in 2017. In 2016, the web site tracked a total of 384 mass shootings, while at this point in the year there had been 142, indicating an increase of more than 8 percent in the number of mass shootings year-to-year.



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