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Al Sharpton Gets Physical With Fox News, But Not Over Taxes

You have to hand it to Reverend Al Sharpton for being in the right place at the right time. Fox News reporter Leland Vittert got into a heated confrontation with Sharpton when Sharpton tried to keep him from questioning Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake.

“We can’t ask questions?” Vittert challenged, “You are a public official and we can’t ask questions?” Sharpton snapped back that, “You will have the opportunity. At the press conference, we will answer all questions,” Sharpton said.

When second man began pushing the reporter away. Sharpton threw up his arm and gave a light shove. Vittert said he didn't get to ask Mayor Rawlings-Blake whether she ordered Baltimore police [to stand down and let the crowd loot](#). She might not have been able to answer in a way that turned the tables, but Rev. Sharpton probably could. He always seems to get by just fine.



That appears to apply to taxes too. Rev. Sharpton has plenty of experience with delinquent taxes, and so do other [MSNBC hosts](#). With tax debts and his overall notoriety, he looks a trifle close to the White House. In fact, [Mike Allen](#), Politico's chief White House correspondent, asked outgoing Attorney General Eric Holder, "Is [Al Sharpton](#) too close to this White House?" It isn't an irrelevant question.

Rev. Sharpton is revered as an activist by many, yet not by all. For example, he has been accused by [Eric Garner's daughter, of being all about the money](#). Rev. Sharpton has also long had big tax troubles. He has owed hundreds of thousands of dollars to New York State and millions to the IRS. Most taxpayers with debts that large and outstanding that long would be pushed and prodded to pay.

The Reverend seems unfazed, living a kind of charmed life, even if his finances are notoriously a little sloppy. Perhaps it is the fact that he is an MSNBC host, where taxes look somewhat optional. After all, look at the recent revelations that [four MSNBC hosts owe tax debts](#). Arguably, though, those debts are not up to Mr. Sharpton's standards. In fact, Rev. Sharpton could surely teach others at MSNBC how the tax game is played.

One trump card in that game might be fires. On several occasions, Rev. Sharpton had fires that destroyed his records *just* as he was about to turn them over to officials. He may have explained the [tax receipts rule the IRS keeps quiet](#). In *Cohan v. Commissioner*, the Appeals Court rocked the IRS back on its heels with the Cohan Rule. It allows taxpayers to prove by "other credible evidence" they actually incurred deductible expenses.

No matter, Mr. Sharpton was able to get the nation's top law enforcement officer, the recently departed Attorney General Eric Holder, to defend him. General Holder found nothing wrong with Rev. Sharpton's ties to the White House. Still, many [questions remain why](#) President Obama would keep Rev. Sharpton so close when [he owes millions in taxes](#).

Mr. Holder saw no problem with Rev. Sharpton's proximity to the most powerful man in the world. General Holder said, "The president has a number of people who he listens to, who he interacts with. You know, Reverend Sharpton is a person who has interacted with people within the administration, including myself. But we also hear from people who have, you know, fundamentally different views than Al Sharpton has."

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