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## The End of an Alliance for Police Reform

## White House ridicules accountability

BY EBONY

SLAUGHTER-JOHNSON

In July 2016, then-Attorney General Loretta Lynch committed the Department of Justice to investigating the shooting

outside a convenience store in Baton Rouge.

deepening of a tangible (if tenuous) relationship between the Department of Justice and the Black Lives Matter movement, which gained national promishooting of Eric Garner.

advocates and critics of police violence had allies in both the was President Obama himself.

At a minimum, these allies

fruits of this relationship included a series of damning

Baltimore.

has come to an end. In the false dichoto-

who was murdered by police cating for communities of color, Trump has made it clear that his administration will come The move represented the down on the side of the police.

White House website now ridicules the movement for police years." accountability as an effort to "to make life more comfortable hearings, Sessions again reit- form advocates for "dividing tributed by OtherWords.org. nence in 2014 after the police for the rioter, the looter, or the violent disrupter." In the Trump Until this year, civil rights administration's version of the world, protesters are disorderly agitators whose demands for Department of Justice and the justice only interfere with the White House — one of whom work of good men and women in blue.

If law enforcement has were sympathetic to the fight found a new friend in Trump, for racial justice. Not infre- it's consistently had one in Jeff quently, they were willing Sessions, the Alabama senator

resources to secure it. The eral — during Black History Month, no less.

As a senator, Sessions pubfrom Ferguson, Missouri to decrees, which are agreements Cleveland, Chicago, local departments make with In the age of citizens' rights. Sessions called Trump, that alliance those deals "dangerous."

ed in a Senate hearing provocof Alton Sterling, a black man police accountable and advo- Police," during which he lam- that are absolutely false." basted the Obama administrainto police misconduct. He troubling issue for a number of

decrees, claiming that they "undermine respect for our police officers" and testifying that away with them altogether.

Nor has Sessions ever both-San Francisco, and Washington to reform polic- ered to hide his disdain for ing practices that violate their civil rights activists. At the same 2015 hearing, Sessions chastised, "I do think it's a real In 2015, Sessions participat- problem when we have Black Lives Matter making statemy between holding atively titled "The War on ments that are really radical,

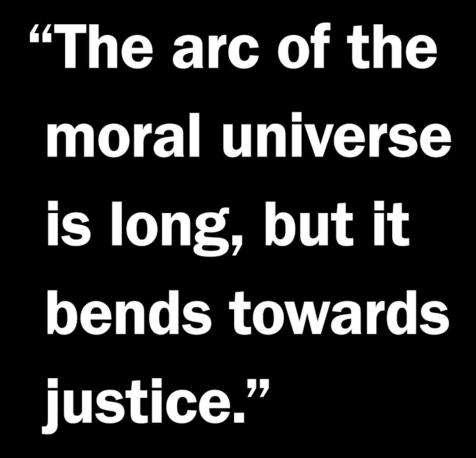
Trump's censure of the tion's aggressive investigations movement has been even more provocative. After lamenting called those actions evidence the murders of Philando Cas-Under Trump, the official of "an agenda that's been a tile and Alton Sterling as "terrible" in the summer of 2016, a freelance writer whose work During his confirmation tune. He condemned police re-

to expend their institutional just confirmed as attorney gen- erated his disdain for consent the country" and blamed them for the murders of two police officers in Baton Rouge.

Candidate Trump went so far reports on police misconduct lished an opinion on consent he might be interested in doing as to claim that he'd charge his attorney general with leading an investigation into the Black Lives Matter movement — an assignment that Sessions, by the looks of things, would enthusiastically accept.

> There will be more police shootings of black men in the future. There will be more protests that call for justice for these victims. But with a Department of Justice led by Jeff Sessions, people who want justice will be on their own.

Ebony Slaughter-Johnson is Trump quickly changed his covers history, race, and the criminalization of poverty. Dis-



Martin Luther King, Jr.





The Portland Housing Bureau proudly recognizes Black History Month