



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 4, 2017

AG Sessions Requests Delay in Implementing Baltimore PD's Consent Decree

Eight days before the end of the Obama administration, Attorney General Loretta Lynch announced the final approval of an agreement allowing the Department of Justice to meddle in the affairs of the Baltimore Police Department. It only required approval from a judge for the agreement to become cemented into place.



Trump's new attorney general, Jeff Sessions, [asked the judge](#), U.S. District Judge James Bredar, to delay making his decision for 90 days so that the Justice Department, now operating under new guidelines from the president, could have time to "review and assess" it before its implementation.

The request came just hours after Sessions issued a memorandum to his department's lawyers to "ensure" that any such consent decrees

advance the safety and protection of the public, promote officer safety and morale, protect and respect the civil rights of all members of the public, *respect local control of law enforcement*, are rooted in timely and reliable statistics on crime and criminals, and do not impede recruitment and training of officers. [Emphasis added.]

Sessions added this to his department's request for a delay by Judge Bredar:

The City of Baltimore has made progress toward reform on its own and, as a consequence, it may be possible to take these changes into account where appropriate to ensure future compliance while protecting public safety.

This is music to the ears of those involved in the fight to keep police departments under local control (such as members of The John Birch Society's "Support Your Local Police" program), who have resisted efforts by previous administrations, including the Obama administration, to absorb, assimilate, and eventually turn local police departments into local substations of a national or federal police force. Although similar consent decrees are already in place in 15 police departments across the land, including Cleveland, Albuquerque, and Ferguson, Missouri, Sessions' memo and request give heart to those involved in the freedom fight that 25 other "investigations" undertaken by the Obama administration into police wrongdoing aren't likely to proceed further, at least for the moment.

The Baltimore agreement followed the communist tactic of "pressure from above, pressure from below." Following the death of Freddie Gray in a police van in 2015, riots instigated by the pro-communist Black Lives Matter movement "forced" federal officials such as Lynch to "investigate" his cause of death. That investigation, not surprisingly, found much evidence of police overreach, which could only be corrected by federal intervention and monitoring by an outside "disinterested" judge.

Baltimore officials, either unaware of the danger of the consent decree as a first step to federal control, or else party to the effort, were appalled at Sessions' request. Baltimore's new mayor, progressive Catherine Pugh, parroted the party line: "We strongly oppose any delay in *moving forward* [with the decree]. I, along with Police Commissioner Kevin Davis and the citizens of Baltimore, recognize that



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reforming our police department is long overdue. Any interruption in *moving forward* may have the effect of eroding the trust that we are working hard to establish.” (Emphases added.)

Of course, officials in the BPD also parroted the lie. A spokesman echoed Pugh, even using the same expressions commonly associated with the communist agenda, “move forward” and “progress”:

The Baltimore Police Department is continuing to *move forward* with reforms related to the forthcoming consent decree for the overall progress of the city of Baltimore. Further delays only serve to erode the trust of the public in this process. [Emphases added.]

In his first major speech as attorney general, given to a gathering of state attorneys general in February, Sessions talked about the causes of the uptick in crime in big cities over the past two years, telling his audience that that increase is “driving a sense that we’re in danger.” Accordingly, Sessions told his audience, “We are going to ... pull back on [local police department investigations]. I don’t think it’s wrong or mean or insensitive to civil rights. I think [the pullback is] out of a concern to make the lives of people, particularly the poor, minority communities ... safer [and] happier.”

The *Wall Street Journal* provided evidence of the extent of that danger. After combing through crime data of America’s 35 largest cities going back to 1985, the Journal noted that four of them — Chicago, Baltimore, Milwaukee, and Memphis — had rates of violent crime last year that either approached or exceeded records set more than 25 years ago. Said Sessions: “Where you see the greatest increase in violence and murders in cities is [where] ... we undermine the respect for our police, and make ... their job more difficult.”

Making the jobs of police officers more difficult is exactly what the 227-page consent decree that was hammered out between officials in Baltimore and officials in the Obama justice department would do. It would put in place, as the *Wall Street Journal* noted, “a raft of new policies and training programs, ... take steps to ensure that all stops, searches and arrests are constitutional, and ... use de-escalation techniques to resolve incidents without [the use or the threat of the use of] force. It spells out in detail when officers can use force and how such actions are to be reported to supervisors.”

Once in place the federally imposed consent decree would not only be enforced by police supervisors now acting as de facto federal government bureaucrats but would be “monitored” by a district judge. All this would hardly encourage a police officer on the beat to perform his duties, knowing that his every move could not only be life-threatening (by the criminal) but also career-ending (by his supervisor/government bureaucrat and/or the judge).

Pullback from performance has long been called the “Ferguson effect,” first coined by Sam Dotson, the chief of the St. Louis Police Department, back in 2014. As that effect takes hold, crime naturally rises as criminals rush to fill the void. The corresponding upsurge in crime provides a perfect excuse for federal sycophants to “investigate,” and develop a plan to “reform” the department, enforced from the federal level.

The chances of U.S. District Judge James Bredar delaying his decision are between slim and none as he already gave away his position in an aside to reporters that the judiciary doesn’t “operate on a four-year cycle.”

What is encouraging to those fighting to keep local police under local control is that 25 other “investigations” instigated during the Obama administration are likely to be put on the back burner under the new Trump administration. Further, it’s encouraging that Sessions understands the problem and refuses to promote the government “solution.”



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