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WILL TRUMP'S AG BE "INDEPENDENT"?

Statement of Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.

Yesterday in a letter to Justice Department lawyers regarding President Trump's recent Executive Order on refugees from predominantly Muslim countries, Acting Attorney General (AG) Sally Q. Yates wrote, "At present, I am not convinced that the defense of the executive order is consistent with these responsibilities, nor am I convinced that the executive order is lawful."

Last night President Trump fired Sally Yates, accusing her of not fulfilling her duty of defending a "legal order designed to protect the citizens of the United States" that had been approved by the Justice Department's Legal Counsel. White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer then belittled her by saying "Ms. Yates is an Obama administration appointee who is weak on borders and very weak on illegal immigration."

While all cabinet appointees serve at the pleasure of the President, the position of AG is unique among all cabinet positions. The AG must be able to render an *independent* legal judgment based on the law not on White House loyalty, policies or positions.

Interestingly enough in 2015 Sally Yates was grilled by Sen. Jeff Sessions at her confirmation hearing on precisely this point of following the law or being loyal to a President. "Do you think the AG should say no if the President gives an unlawful order?" Sally Yates answered correctly in 2015 and acted correctly in 2017.

The President has his own counsel. The Attorney General is the counsel for the country. He or she has the right and the duty to disagree without fear or intimidation.

It is freighting but unclear whether President Trump and his administration understand that the AG has a higher loyalty than to Donald Trump. The AG has a loyalty to the law – and the American people!

Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.
Founder and President
Rainbow PUSH Coalition

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Rainbow PUSH Coalition is a multi-racial, multi-issue, progressive, international organization that was formed in December 1996 by the Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr. through merging of two organizations he founded Operation PUSH People United to Serve Humanity (estab. 1971) and the Rainbow Coalition (estab. 1984). With headquarters in Chicago and offices in

Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, New York and Oakland, the organization works to make the American Dream a reality for all citizens while advocating for peace and justice around the world. RPC is dedicated to improving the lives of all people by serving as a voice for the voiceless. Its mission is to protect, defend and gain civil rights by leveling the economic and educational playing fields while promoting peace and justice around the world.

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