

Donald Trump shares call to pardon himself before leaving office

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Washington, November 28 (RHC)-- U.S. President Donald Trump's full pardon for his former national security adviser Michael Flynn has sparked speculation that he might be considering a wave of pardons and commutations of federal crimes, possibly even for himself, before he leaves office.

Trump announced this week that he had granted clemency to Flynn, who had twice pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI in connection with the Russia investigation. The move followed the commutation of the jail sentence of his ally and long-time adviser Roger Stone.

After wiping clean Flynn's criminal record, Trump shared a call by congressman Matt Gaetz, Republican of Florida, to consider using his pardoning powers for others including himself. "Trump should pardon Michael Flynn, he should pardon the Thanksgiving Turkey, he should pardon everyone from himself to his

administration officials to Joe Exotic if he has too,” Gaetz said on Fox News before Flynn had been granted clemency.

“Because you see from the radical left a bloodlust that will only be quenched if they come after the people who worked so hard to animate the Trump administration. I think that the president ought to wield that pardon power effectively and robustly,” he added.

Donald Trump will lose his immunity upon leaving office and faces the prospect of lawsuits and criminal investigations. The president’s allies have suggested he could use his authority as commander-in-chief to pardon himself preemptively.

Trump previously said he had the “absolute right” to pardon himself. The president, however, had insisted he would not have to do so as he had not committed wrongdoing.

Rep. Adam Schiff, Democratic chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, accused President Trump of “acting like an organized crime figure.” Schiff, a long-time critic of Trump, said it was up to the Supreme Court to decide whether a president has committed wrongdoing.

“The Justice Department has taken the position that a president cannot pardon himself,” the Democrat said. “It would ultimately be up to [the U.S. Supreme Court] to decide. The Constitution is not a suicide pact.”

According to White House sources, Trump is expected to use his authority in cases that extend beyond the Russia inquiry and could include his close associates and members of his family. Alan Dershowitz, the president’s attorney during his impeachment trial, is advising two of his clients — a New Jersey man serving more than 20 years for defrauding investors, and a billionaire businessman convicted in corruption scandals — also to seek clemency.

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