

NPR (National Public Radio): President Trump Pardons Former Sheriff Joe

Arpaio August 25, 2017 8:14 PM ET [AMITA KELLY](#)

President Trump has pardoned controversial former Sheriff Joe Arpaio for a misdemeanor criminal contempt conviction.

A statement issued by the White House Friday night said, "Today, President Donald J. Trump granted a Presidential pardon to Joe Arpaio, former Sheriff of Maricopa County, Arizona."

Known as "America's Toughest Sheriff," Arpaio gained a reputation for his harsh — his critics would say cruel — treatment of immigrants in the country illegally.

Arpaio [was convicted of criminal contempt](#) earlier this summer for defying a judge's order that his deputies stop detaining immigrants because they lacked legal status. His deputies carried on the practice for 18 months. Trump hinted at the pardon last week and again at a Phoenix rally Tuesday night.

Last week, he told Fox News he was "seriously considering" a pardon and that Arpaio is a "a great American patriot" who has done "a lot in the fight against illegal immigration." Tuesday night, he asked the crowd of supporters: "Do the people in this room like Sheriff Joe?"

"You know what, I'll make a prediction: I think he's going to be just fine," he said. "OK? But I won't do it tonight, because I don't want to cause any controversy."

The statement issued by the White House said:

"Arpaio's life and career, which began at the age of 18 when he enlisted in the military after the outbreak of the Korean War, exemplify selfless public service. After serving in the Army, Arpaio became a police officer in Washington, D.C. and Las Vegas, NV and later served as a Special Agent for the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), formerly the Bureau of Narcotics. After 25 years of admirable service, Arpaio went on to lead the DEA's branch in Arizona.

"In 1992, the problems facing his community pulled Arpaio out of retirement to return to law enforcement. He ran and won a campaign to become Sheriff of Maricopa County. Throughout his time as Sheriff, Arpaio continued his life's work of protecting the public from the scourges of crime and illegal immigration. Sheriff Joe Arpaio is now eighty-five years old, and after more than fifty years of admirable service to our Nation, he is worthy candidate for a Presidential pardon."

[In an interview with NPR's Wade Goodwyn last Thursday](#), Arpaio had equally effusive praise for Trump, predicting that he will end up regarded as the greatest president in American history. He also said he thought that, like him, Trump had been unfairly smeared as a racist. "We need him and I feel sad how they're trying to destroy him. It makes me sick," he said. "I'll tell you one thing, he's got guts and courage and that's what this country needs." Arpaio said he didn't ask for a pardon and, as of late last week, had not spoken directly to Trump about one. The misdemeanor conviction carries a possible sentence of up to six months.

Among his most controversial measures, the sheriff instructed his deputies to detain Hispanic residents and inquire about their legal status. He then disregarded a federal judge's ruling that he didn't have the legal authority to do so.

In the 1990s, at the start of his tenure, Arpaio opened Tent City jail, which housed inmates outdoors in the blistering Arizona sun. For years, activists criticized it as inhumane. But the newly elected sheriff, Sheriff Paul Penzone, said it was voluntary and inmates preferred it. Counter to Arpaio's claims, [Penzone said](#), there was no evidence that the tough reputation of the jail made people less likely to commit crimes. The city began tearing it down earlier this year.

Huffington Post: Trump Pardons Former Sheriff Joe Arpaio, Who Illegally Targeted Latinos

The self-declared “law and order” president backs a man who defied a court order.

By Ryan J. Reilly

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Friday pardoned a notorious former Arizona sheriff who willfully violated a federal judge’s order by unlawfully detaining individuals his officers claimed might be in the country illegally.

Former Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who had previously proclaimed himself “America’s toughest sheriff,” was convicted of criminal contempt last month for violating a 2011 order that barred Arpaio and his office from detaining individuals solely based on suspicions about their legal status. Arpaio, 85, was scheduled to be sentenced on Oct. 5.

“Throughout his time as Sheriff, Arpaio continued his life’s work of protecting the public from the scourges of crime and illegal immigration,” the White House said in a statement late Friday. “Sheriff Joe Arpaio is now eighty-five years old, and after more than fifty years of admirable service to our Nation, he is a worthy candidate for a Presidential pardon.”

Trump’s pardon of Arpaio, the first of his presidency, amounts to a tacit endorsement of Arpaio’s discriminatory tactics and reads as a favor to a political ally. The media-savvy former sheriff, known for parading inmates around in pink underwear, supported the former reality TV star’s presidential campaign and spoke at the Republican National Convention last summer. Both men were prominent promoters of the racist conspiracy theory that former President Barack Obama wasn’t born in the United States.

Arpaio, who served as sheriff from 1993 through 2016, had long been accused of discriminatory practices against Latinos. A 2011 report by the U.S. Department of Justice’s Civil Rights Division concluded there was reasonable cause to believe that Arpaio and his office engaged in a pattern or practice of unlawful policing and racial profiling. Arpaio’s officers called Latinos “wetbacks,” “Mexican bitches,” “f-ing Mexicans” and “stupid Mexicans,” the Justice Department found, and Latino drivers were four to nine times as likely to be stopped by his officers as non-Latino drivers were. A lawsuit filed by the Justice Department was settled in 2015.

“With his pardon of Arpaio, Trump has chosen lawlessness over justice, division over unity, hurt over healing,” Cecillia Wang, deputy legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union, said in a statement Friday. “Once again, the president has acted in support of illegal, failed immigration enforcement practices that target people of color and have been struck down by the courts. His pardon of Arpaio is a presidential endorsement of racism.”

Arpaio took a break from dinner with his wife on Friday night to call into Sean Hannity’s program on Fox News. Hannity said Arpaio was “convicted ... only of criminal contempt” and said he was “very relieved” for Arpaio.

Arpaio said that it was “great” to hear about the pardon and that he loves the president.

Hannity, who apparently thought that a former sheriff charged with a federal crime would have somehow landed in his former county jail, joked with Arpaio about the conditions in Arpaio’s former facility, referencing pink underwear and the bologna sandwiches served there.

But Arpaio said incarceration wouldn't have been that big of a deal.

“Sean, it's federal, I could play bocce. ... It would've been alright,” he said.

At a Tuesday evening rally in Phoenix, Trump had signaled that the pardon was coming. The president claimed Arpaio had been “convicted for doing his job.” But Trump said, “I'll make a prediction: I think he's going to be just fine, OK?”

Ahead of his trial, the Justice Department had argued that Arpaio “viewed his defiance of the federal government's directives on immigration as a badge of honor” and “bragged about his deputies' contemptuous immigration enforcement practices to the press.”

In finding Arpaio guilty of criminal contempt, U.S. District Judge Susan R. Bolton said in July that the former sheriff had shown “flagrant disregard” for the 2011 order banning him from detaining people because he thought they were in the country illegally.

“Not only did Defendant abdicate responsibility, he announced to the world and to his subordinates that he was going to continue business as usual no matter who said otherwise,” Bolton ruled on July 31. “The evidence at trial proves beyond a reasonable doubt and the Court finds that Judge Snow issued a clear and definite order enjoining Defendant from detaining persons for further investigation without reasonable suspicion that a crime has been or is being committed; that Defendant knew of the order; and that Defendant willfully violated the order by failing to do anything to ensure his subordinates' compliance and by directing them to continue to detain persons for whom no criminal charges could be filed.”

Arpaio's lawyers have since moved for an acquittal, arguing that the government's handling of the case reeked of “unconstitutional selective prosecution.” They questioned the court's “motivations” in not allowing a jury trial. They also claimed that the verdict was driven by the desire “to vindicate the authority of a fellow judge.” And they argued that Arpaio had a right to be present for the issuing of the verdict, which was in fact emailed to his lawyers. The prosecution has not yet responded to the defense's motion.

Trump's pardon of Arpaio skipped over the typical review process for pardons, which are usually routed through the Justice Department's Office of the Pardon Attorney.

The pardon came less than two weeks after the white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, that turned deadly when a neo-Nazi sympathizer crashed his vehicle into a crowd of anti-racist demonstrators. Trump faced criticism for what was seen as his lackluster condemnation of white supremacists and his attempt to equate the racists in Charlottesville with those who turned out to oppose them. Civil rights advocates like Vanita Gupta, the former chief of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, warned that pardoning Arpaio — who she said “personifies the same bigotry and intolerance we witnessed in Charlottesville” — would sow hate and division.

“If President Trump uses his power to pardon a discredited law enforcement official who persistently engaged in illegal racial profiling of the Latino community, it will not be a dog whistle to the so-called ‘alt right’ and white supremacists, but a bull horn,” Gupta said.

Fox News: Sheriff Joe Arpaio wins pardon from Trump Published August 25, 2017

President Trump granted a pardon to Joe Arpaio, the former sheriff of Maricopa County, Ariz., on Friday. Arpaio, 85, was recently found guilty of criminal contempt for defying a judge's order to stop traffic patrols that allegedly targeted immigrants.

He had been charged with misdemeanor contempt of court for allegedly willfully defying a judge's order in 2011 and prolonging his patrols for another 17 months.

Arpaio acknowledged extending the patrols, but insisted it wasn't intentional, blaming one of his former attorneys for not properly explaining the importance of the court order and brushing off the conviction as a "petty crime."

He was expected to be sentenced on Oct. 5 and faced up to six months in jail if convicted.

"Sheriff Joe Arpaio is now 85 years old, and after more than 50 years of admirable service to our Nation, he is worthy candidate for a Presidential pardon," the White House said in a statement.

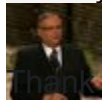
"I am pleased to inform you that I have just granted a full Pardon to 85 year old American patriot Sheriff Joe Arpaio," the president tweeted on Friday night. "He kept Arizona safe!"

[Donald J. Trump](#)

 I am pleased to inform you that I have just granted a full Pardon to 85 year old American patriot Sheriff Joe Arpaio. He kept Arizona safe!

[8:00 PM - Aug 25, 2017](#)

Arpaio thanked Trump in an earlier tweet, saying that his conviction was the result of a "political witch hunt by holdovers in the Obama justice department."



[Joe Arpaio @SheriffJoe](#) Thank you for seeing my conviction for what it is: a political witch hunt by holdovers in the Obama justice department!

[7:07 PM - Aug 25, 2017](#)

Known for his controversial takes on many issues, including his "birther" campaign against former President Barack Obama and for housing inmates in desert tent camps, Arpaio is best known for his approach to battling illegal immigration. In 2009 he claimed to have arrested 30,000 illegal immigrants since starting his efforts in 2005.

At a rally in Phoenix, on Tuesday, the president asked supporters in the crowd if Arpaio was "convicted for doing his job?"

The crowd cheered.

"He should have had a jury, but I'll make a prediction: He'll be just fine," Trump said. "But I won't do it tonight, because I don't want to cause any controversy."

"We'll see what happens," Arpaio said amid discussion of the pardon.

"[I]t doesn't matter because I'm still going to support him as long as he is the president of the United States because that's the way I am," Arpaio said. "I don't desert for political reasons. I'll stick with him."

But Sen. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., who has had a [public feud with Trump](#) in recent weeks, was unsupportive of the move.

"Regarding the Arpaio pardon," Flake wrote on Twitter. "I would have preferred that the President honor the judicial process and let it take its course."



[Jeff Flake](#)

[Regarding the Arpaio pardon](#), I would have preferred that the President honor the judicial process and let it take its course.

[7:05 PM - Aug 25, 2017](#)

During the presidential campaign, Arpaio showered Trump with support. Trump, meanwhile, has invoked Arpaio's name in his calls for tougher immigration enforcement and used some of the same immigration rhetoric and advocated for tactics that made the former Arizona lawman a national name a decade earlier.

Arpaio appeared for Trump at rallies in Iowa, Nevada and Arizona, including a huge gathering in the affluent Phoenix suburb where the sheriff lives. Arpaio also gave a speech at the Republican National Convention in which he said Trump would prevent immigrants from sneaking into the country.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Briertbart News: Donald Trump Pardons Sheriff Joe Arpaio

by CHARLIE SPIERING 25 Aug 2017

President Donald Trump pardoned Sheriff Joe Arpaio on Friday evening, citing his record of service to his country.

“Arpaio’s life and career, which began at the age of 18 when he enlisted in the military after the outbreak of the Korean War, exemplifies selfless public service,” read a statement from the White House.

The Arizona sheriff, now 85-years-old, is considered a hero among supporters of immigration enforcement. Arpaio served in the Army before becoming a police officer in Washington DC and Las Vegas and a special agent in the DEA. He became the Sheriff of Maricopa County, Arizona in 1992.

“After more than fifty years of admirable service to our Nation, he is worthy candidate for a Presidential pardon,” the statement concluded.

Arpaio was convicted in July 2017 for [violating](#) a federal judge’s order to not detain suspected illegal immigrants. He faced up to six months in jail for the conviction and possible fines.

Arpaio endorsed Donald Trump for president in January 2016, as he was campaigning against primary challengers in Iowa.

“I have fought on the front lines to prevent illegal immigration,” Arpaio [said](#) when he endorsed Trump. “I know Donald Trump will stand with me and countless Americans to secure our border.”

MSNBC: With Arpaio pardon, Trump's 'law and order' vow becomes a cynical joke

08/28/17 08:40 AM—UPDATED 08/28/17 09:01 AM

By [Steve Benen](#)

THE RACHEL MADDOW SHOW, 8/25/17, 9:49 PM ET

Trump sends message to Mueller targets with Arpaio pardon

Over the course of seven months, Donald Trump has made several outrageous moves, but the president's pardon of Joe Arpaio is among the toughest to defend.

To be sure, this is a story with multiple angles. The White House waited until late on a Friday evening, with much of the country focused on a major national disaster, to announce that the president was abusing his power to aid a political ally. It was a dishonorable act, done in a dishonorable way.

Arpaio, among other things, was accused of violating people's civil rights. When a court ordered him to stop, the Arizonan ignored the order, which led a judge to find Arpaio guilty of criminal contempt. The racial aspect of this is tough to miss: on the heels of Trump's inflammatory response to Charlottesville, the president delivered his first pardon to help his confederate – who deliberately targeted people of color – before he could face any consequences for his illegal actions.

In fact, in Friday night's announcement, the president [praised Arpaio](#) for his crimes, which the disgraced former sheriff committed without remorse.

All of which raises some important questions about Donald Trump and his appreciation – or lack thereof – for the rule of law.

As a candidate, the Republican embraced the restoration of "law and order" – a phrase with a complex racial history – as one of his campaign's core promises. Elect Trump to the presidency, he assured Americans, and we'd see a president who'd demonstrate an unflinching commitment to law enforcement and forceful execution of the nation's laws.

It wasn't long before the vows were exposed as absurd. Once he was inaugurated, Trump fired U.S. attorneys under unusual circumstances, fired an acting U.S. Attorney General who dared to give the White House sound legal advice, and fired the director of the FBI in the hopes of derailing an ongoing investigation. The president hadn't even been in office four months when it became painfully obvious that his interest in the rule of law was something of a joke.

But Friday night, when he hoped Americans weren't looking, Trump took this broken promise in a farcical direction. A day later, a *Washington Post* [report](#) took the story in an even more alarming direction.

As Joseph Arpaio's federal case headed toward trial this past spring, President Trump wanted to act to help the former Arizona county sheriff who had become a campaign-trail companion and a partner in their crusade against illegal immigration.

The president asked Attorney General Jeff Sessions whether it would be possible for the government to drop the criminal case against Arpaio, but was advised that would be inappropriate, according to three people with knowledge of the conversation.

Instead, Trump let the case go to trial, knowing all the while that he'd negate the ruling if, after Arpaio's case was adjudicated, his politically ally was found guilty.

In case this isn't obvious, a president isn't supposed to intervene with the Justice Department about an ongoing criminal prosecution of someone the president likes. What's more, note that Trump didn't even bother to consult with his own Justice Department – or pay any attention to the department's pardon protocols – before rescuing his right-wing pal who acted as if he were above the law.

There's also the near future to consider. Special Counsel Robert Mueller is moving forward with his investigation into the Trump-Russia affair, and as of Friday night, everyone received a stark reminder that this president is comfortable abusing the powers of his office to keep his allies out of prison.

Indeed, it's easy to imagine Paul Manafort and Michael Flynn waking up on Saturday morning with a spring in their step. After all, in Donald Trump's America, loyalty to the law is nice, but loyalty to the president is almost literally a get-out-of-jail-free card.

Trump has told [a staggering number of lies](#) since entering politics, but his vow to restore "law and order" may be the most painfully ridiculous of them all. It's difficult to guess where this story goes next, but let's not forget that as recently as last month, the president reportedly [sought information](#) on his power to issue pardons to White House aides, members of his family, and even himself.

Trump [boasted](#) on Twitter soon after that "all agree" an American president "has the complete power to pardon."

Buckle up.

Postscript: On Thursday afternoon, White House Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders was asked about the possibility of an Arpaio pardon. Referring to the officials involved in the pardon process, [she replied](#), "I would imagine they go through the thorough and standard process, and when we have an announcement on what that decision is after that's completed, we'll let you know."

Whether the press secretary was lying or ignorant is unclear, but this serves as a reminder of what Rachel calls the "[silent movie](#)" dynamic: this White House is simply not a reliable source of information on developments related to the Trump administration.