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White House says pardons for Trump associates not discussed

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WASHINGTON (Reuters) - There have been no conversations about President Donald Trump issuing pardons for any of his associates who have been charged or pleaded guilty as part of the U.S. Special Counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation, the White House said on Monday.

There has been "no discussion that I'm aware of" regarding pardons, White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders told reporters. Fellow White House spokesman Hogan Gidley also told MSNBC in an interview that the White House has not had any conversations about such pardons.

Gidley said he did not know whether any lawyers for Trump's associates had approached the White House counsel about pardons.

Mueller's team finished up work on Friday and submitted its findings to U.S. Attorney General William Barr, who issued a four-page summary on Sunday. Barr said the Special Counsel's Office had found no evidence of criminal collusion between Trump's campaign and Russia in the 2016 election but had left open the issue of whether Trump had tried to obstruct justice.

Still, Mueller's investigation led to charges and guilty pleas against dozens of people, including a series of Russian nationals and companies as well as several top Trump advisers, such as former campaign chairman Paul Manafort, former White House national security adviser Michael Flynn and former adviser Roger Stone.

“We have a very rigorous process that relates to pardons,” Gidley told MSNBC.

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