

# THE WEEK

## Michael Flynn denies calling for Biden coup, despite video of his comments

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Michael Flynn, a retired Army lieutenant general and former President Donald Trump's first national security adviser, spoke at a QAnon conference in Dallas on Sunday, and he was widely criticized afterward for agreeing with an audience member that there should be a Myanmar-style coup in the U.S. Evidently, the idea of such a coup is popular in some QAnon circles as a way to get Trump back in office, and since Flynn also claimed falsely Sunday that Trump actually won the 2020 election, it isn't a stretch to assume he was endorsing a military putsch against President Biden.

On Monday, Flynn claimed he was misquoted. In a video of the event, asked why there can't be a coup in the U.S., Flynn replied: "No reason, I mean, it should happen. No reason."

Flynn said on Telegram "there is NO reason whatsoever for any coup in America, and I do not and have not at any time called for any action of that sort," adding: "Any reporting of any other belief by me is a boldface fabrication based on twisted reporting at a lively panel at a conference of Patriotic Americans who love this country, just as I do." He claimed he said: "There is no reason it (a coup) should happen here (in America)." Because we can't read Flynn's mind, it's possible that's what he meant to say. But it's not what he actually said.

Flynn's actual comments got cheers from the QAnon audience. "It would be very marginally less contemptible if he at least owned up to giving the crowd the fascist red meat they so clearly wanted," Julian Sanchez, a senior fellow at the libertarian Cato Institute, wrote on Twitter. "But he wants to cling whatever last shred of mainstream respectability he imagines he enjoys and also take the applause and cash from QAnon," plus get invited on Fox News.

Retired four-star Army Gen. Barry McCaffrey told MSNBC on Monday night that "the Department of Justice is gonna be hard-pressed not to consider whether this language is criminal in nature." Flynn's rhetoric "is actually very dangerous," he added. "I think Mike Flynn has a mental health problem, to be blunt."

Flynn previously admitted under oath that he lied to the FBI about Russia — Trump eventually pardoned him — and after Trump lost, Flynn suggested he declare martial law in a handful of states Biden won.