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Donald Trump Backs Away From His Threat To Throw Hillary Clinton In Jail

“Lock her up” has been replaced with a shrug and a pledge to move on.

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After running a campaign that had, as one of its main rallying cries, a chant to lock up the opposition candidate, President-Elect Donald Trump has pledged to avoid doing just that.

The incoming administration will not be appointing a special prosecutor to investigate Hillary Clinton's use of a private email account and server while at the State Department, MSNBC's Morning Joe reported on Tuesday. Trump's campaign manager, Kellyanne Conway, confirmed as much later on the same program.

The announcement from the Trump transition raised immediate howls about political interference in, what should be, independent prosecutorial decisions. It was not entirely clear how or if the incoming attorney general would follow Trump's instructions, but the idea that he would pressure them to do so was seen as highly unusually and potentially dangerous in terms of the precedent it would set.

From a political standpoint solely, the news is an undramatic but highly expected coda to Trump's push throughout the campaign to pursue Clinton's prosecution if elected president. At one debate, he declared that his opponent should be in jail. The talk left many commentators appalled. Some argued that it was more customary to a banana republic than a modern democracy.

But Trump kept at it. His campaign was particularly critical of FBI Director James Comey for declining to recommend pressing charges over the summer. The team then praised him for examining fresh evidence regarding Clinton's emails with just days to go in the campaign, only to then suggest that the system was rigged when Comey announced he had found nothing new in his review.

Trump's supporters likely won't care that he is now backtracking on his pledge to prosecute Clinton. Some of them, in fact, viewed it as a tactically shrewd move.