

President Trump's Pick to Replace Mike Flynn Doesn't Want the Job

According to several reports, President Donald Trump offered the job of national security adviser to Vice Adm. Robert Harward (ret.), but he turned it down.

Although some reports suggested the former Navy SEAL and the president couldn't agree to personnel and staffing issues, the official reason given for Harward's refusal was personal. The defense industry executive said Trump was "very accommodating to my needs, both professionally and personally" but cited family commitments in his response to the media.

"I'm in a unique position finally after being in military for 40 years to enjoy some personal time," he said.

Harward, who served as second-in-command at U.S. Central Command under now-Secretary of Defense James Mattis, also served as Deputy Commander of U.S. Joint Forces Command and led the task force assigned to train the Afghan National Army during the Obama Administration.

Dysfunction in the U.S. intelligence community also likely played a role in Harward's decision to turn down the president's job offer. Whomever eventually takes the job has a huge mess to clean up between disaffected Obama loyalists and establishment types who oppose Trump's efforts to "drain the swamp."

So, the search continues with what appears to be four contenders, although only Lt. Gen. Keith Kellogg and Gen. David Petraeus are among those being widely discussed in the media. Friday morning, the president tweeted:

General Keith Kellogg, who I have known for a long time, is very much in play for NSA – as are three others. {eoa}