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Trump doubles down on calling coronavirus 'Chinese virus,' saying 'It's not racist at all.'

[Jake Lahut](#)

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President Donald Trump listens during press briefing with the Coronavirus Task Force, at the White House, Wednesday, March 18, 2020, in Washington. (AP Photo/Evan Vucci)
AP Photo/Evan Vucci

- President Donald Trump opened up Wednesday's White House Coronavirus Task Force press conference by calling the COVID-19 virus the "Chinese virus."
- When asked by a reporter why he keeps using the term despite a CDC guidance and whether he thinks it's racist, Trump doubled down.
- "Because it comes from China," Trump said. "It's not racist at all. No, not at all. It comes from China. That's why. It comes from China."
- "As you know, China tried to say, at one point — maybe they stopped now — that it was caused by American soldiers," Trump continued. "That can't happen. It's not gonna happen, not as long as I'm president. It comes from China."
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President Donald Trump once again doubled down on calling the COVID-19 virus or the coronavirus "Chinese virus" at the outset of Wednesday's White House Coronavirus Task Force press briefing.

When asked by a reporter why he kept using the term — which the CDC advises against — and whether he thought it was racist, Trump insisted it was not.

"Because it comes from China," Trump said. "It's not racist at all. No, not at all. It comes from China. That's why. It comes from China."

—Dan Linden (@DanLinden) [March 18, 2020](#)

In a similar way to his defense of the term yesterday, Trump said he deploys the term to counter baseless allegations that the US military spread the virus in China as a chemical weapon.

"As you know, China tried to say, at one point — maybe they stopped now — that it was caused by American soldiers," Trump continued. "That can't happen. It's not gonna happen, not as long as I'm president. It comes from China."

CDC Chief Robert Redfield testified to the House last week and replied "yes" to a question asking if it is "absolutely wrong and inappropriate to call this the Chinese coronavirus."

At a Feb. 27 hearing, HHS Secretary Alex Azar also said people should not attach a nationality to the virus when describing it.

"You're absolutely right. We must ensure nobody is discriminated against based on ethnicity," Azar said at the hearing. "Ethnicity is not what causes the novel coronavirus."

The World Health Organization has urged people not to use other terms such as "Wuhan virus," "Chinese virus" or "Asian virus."

Watchdog groups have documented racist attacks toward people of Asian descent amid the outbreak, which Trump also dismissed during the press briefing when asked by PBS' Yamiche Alcindor whether he could understand why terms like "Kung Flu" and "Chinese virus" could bring harm to Asian-American communities.

"No," Trump said at the close of the briefing. "It comes from China."

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