



Kellyanne Conway says it's 'highly offensive' to refer to coronavirus as 'kung flu'

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[Kellyanne Conway](#) on Wednesday called reports of a White House official referring to COVID-19 as the “kung flu” virus “highly offensive” after a journalist pressed her repeatedly about the matter.

While speaking to reporters outside the White House about the Trump administration’s COVID-19 response efforts, PBS White House correspondent Yamiche Alcindor asked Conway about recent reports that some White House staffers have been referring to the virus as the “kung flu.”

“I’d like to know who they are. But hold on, you can’t just say that and not name them. Tell us who it was. Come up here and tell us who it was,” [the White House counselor said](#) while gesturing to CBS News White House correspondent Weijia Jiang. Jiang drew headlines on Tuesday after she [revealed on Twitter](#) that a White House official had used the term to her face but did not identify the individual.

Alcindor then asked Conway about her message to those staffers and whether she felt it is wrong for the White House aides to use the offensive language.

“Excuse me, that’s been alleged,” Conway replied as she and Alcindor began talking over each other.

“No, Yamiche, excuse me – Yamiche, I’m not dealing hypotheticals, of course it’s wrong,” Conway said.

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"But you can't just make an accusation and not tell us who it is," Conway added, turning again to Jiang. "Who is it?"

"I think you understand how these conversations go," the CBS News journalist replied. "I am also a journalist."

Conway then talked over Jiang, saying, "I don't know how these conversations go and that's highly offensive. So, you should tell us all who it is. I'd like to know who it is."

"I'm not going to engage in hypotheticals," Conway added as Alcindor attempted to ask another question. "I'm married to an Asian."

"I mean, I'm not engaging in hypotheticals," the administration official went on to say. "I'm married to an Asian ... my kids are partly — I'm married to an Asian American, my kids are 25 percent Filipino."

George Conway, a lawyer and husband of Kellyanne Conway, is half Filipino.

During a press briefing on the administration's response efforts to the COVID-19 outbreak on Wednesday, President Trump was also pressed by Alcindor about whether he thought it was "wrong" for a White House staffer to use the term "kung flu."

"A person at the White House used the term kung flu. My question is, do you think that's wrong?" she asked the president.

"Kung flu?" Trump asked, to which Alcindor confirmed: "Kung flu."

"And do you think you think using the term 'Chinese virus,' that puts Asian Americans at risk, that people might target that?" she continued, referring to Trump's past remarks referring to the disease, which was first detected in China last year, as a "Chinese virus."

"No, no, no," Trump replied before taking a question from another reporter. "Not at all. I think they probably would agree with it 100 percent. It comes from China. There's nothing not to agree with."

—Updated at 6:19 p.m.

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