**China pressured WHO to delay global coronavirus warning: report**

By: Mark Moore

New York Post

May 10, 2020

<https://nypost.com/2020/05/10/china-pressured-who-to-delay-global-coronavirus-warning/>

Chinese President Xi Jinping pressured the director of the World Health Organization in January to hold off on issuing a global warning about the coronavirus outbreak, according to a report in a German newspaper.

The Jan. 21 conversation between Jinping and WHO leader Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus was reported in Der Spiegel, which cited intelligence from Germany’s federal intelligence service, known as the Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND).

The report published over the weekend said Xi urged the WHO chief to “delay a global warning” about the pandemic and hold back information on human-to-human transmission of the virus.

The BND estimated that China’s action to conceal information resulted in a loss of four to six weeks in the fight against COVID-19.

The WHO released a statement calling the allegations “unfounded and untrue.”

“Dr. Tedros and President Xi did not speak on January 21 and they have never spoken by phone. Such inaccurate reports distract and detract from WHO’s and the world’s efforts to end the COVID-19 pandemic,” the statement read.

The WHO continued to say China confirmed human-to-human transmission to the UN health agency on Jan. 20 and the WHO “publicly declared” two days later that “data collected … suggests that human-to-human transmission is taking place in Wuhan.”

The Chinese foreign ministry, in a 30-page article published on its website, refuted claims in the Der Spiegel article, saying it had responded in a “timely” manner and was “open and transparent” about alerting nations around the world about the outbreak.

It also responded to comments made by President Trump and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo that China misled other countries about the pandemic and claimed the virus began in a lab in the city of Wuhan.

The foreign ministry quoted President Abraham Lincoln in its defense, according to Reuters.

“As Lincoln said, you can fool some of the people all the time and fool all the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time,” it said in the article.

Trump has blasted China for holding back critical information about the virus to the world, including failing to accurately report on the number of cases.

He also ripped the WHO for being a “pipe organ” for the Chinese Communist Party.

“They must have known more than they knew,” he told reporters at the White House last month. “We knew things that they didn’t know, and either they didn’t know they didn’t tell us … right now, they’re literally a pipe organ for China, that’s the way I view it.”

The president has frozen the US’ payments to the WHO pending investigations by the intelligence community into the UN agency’s relationship with China.

The first cases of the coronavirus were reported in Wuhan, China, in late December.