

The Washington Post reported the list of psychiatrists names was found in Vince Foster's office.

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BI Probes Handling of Foster Note

White House Staff Sked About Delay

FBI agents yesterday began interviewing White House staff members about their handling of a note found in the briefcase of deputy counsel Vincent Foster Jr. to determine why they waited 30 hours before turning it over to U.S. Park Police investigating Foster's apparent suicide on July 20.

The note has been described by White House staff members and Park Police as containing evidence of his dejection over his job and claims that have arisen in the White House counsel's office, such as the travel office affair.

Although it was discovered by an aide to White House counsel Bernard Nussbaum on Monday afternoon, it was not handed over to the Park Police until Tuesday evening in a series of high-level debates that ultimately involved Attorney General Janet Reno.

The delay aroused concerns among Park Police investigators that the White House was withholding evidence in the case. But White House officials have said the delay occurred because they wanted to provide a copy to Foster's widow who had not yet returned from her husband's funeral in Arkansas.

Justice Department spokesman Richard Stern said that Deputy Attorney General Philip B. Heymann requested that the FBI conduct the interviews on the handling of the note as part of an upcoming Park Police report on Foster's death. The idea was to have a "clearly disinterested party" review the mat-

Clinton Called Foster the Day Before He Died

Associated Press

Knowing that his old friend was "having a rough time," President Clinton called Vincent W. Foster Jr. the day before the White House lawyer died in an apparent suicide, a spokeswoman said yesterday.

Press secretary Dee Dee Myers divulged little about the conversation but said Clinton invited Foster to a movie in the White House. She said they talked about a number of things, including work, and that Clinton "wanted to see how he was doing."

But the spokeswoman said nobody, including Clinton, thought Foster was under any unusual strain. "There was no reason to believe... that he was in any way capable of killing himself," she told reporters.

Myers said Clinton called Foster at home July 19 and invited him to join mutual friends at the White House and see "In The Line of Fire," a movie about a veteran Secret Service agent. Foster declined, then the pair talked for about 20 minutes. Foster apparently killed himself at a Virginia park overlooking the Potomac on July 20.

Myers said it was a normal conversation between two old friends, and Clinton was not concerned for Foster's safety even after hanging up. She said the friends did not fight.

"He called him to talk to him. I think that he knew, as a number of people do, that Vince was having a rough time," she said, confirming a Newsweek magazine report about the call.

It was the first time the White House has specifically said that Clinton or other high-ranking officials were aware that Foster was going through a difficult period.

Myers said Clinton and aides knew that Foster was discouraged over events at work, but Clinton did not "believe that Vince was despondent, that he was in any way considering what happened. Nobody believed that."

Clinton has said the reason Foster killed himself probably would never be known.

Foster Had List Of Psychiatrists, Search Discloses

By Michael Likoff
Washington Post Staff Writer

White House officials searching the office of Vincent Foster Jr. last week found a note indicating the 48-year-old deputy White House counsel may have considered psychiatric help shortly before he died July 20 in what investigators have concluded was a suicide, federal officials said yesterday.

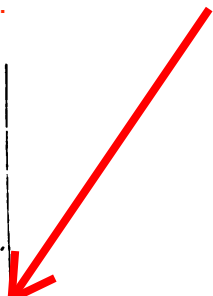
The officials said the note, containing the names of Washington psychiatrists, was instrumental in convincing Justice Department lawyers that a full-fledged investigation into the circumstances surrounding Foster's death was unwarranted. Foster was found dead of a gunshot wound to the head in a Virginia park.

Administration officials contended the discovery of the list tended to buttress accounts from Foster's friends that he was suffering from depression before his death. But there is no indication that Foster contacted the psychiatrists, and officials acknowledge that discovery of the document has not resolved many of the questions surrounding the incident.

Among the questions, officials said, was where Foster got the 50-year-old revolver that he apparently used to shoot himself and what he did for the five hours between the time he was last seen at the White House and the discovery of his body. The possibility that Foster met somebody at the park before the shooting cannot be ruled out, one investigator said.

Meanwhile, White House officials, who had spoken repeatedly of the "mystery" of the death, yesterday acknowledged that President Clinton and others were concerned that Foster was "down" in the days before his death.

Press secretary Dee Dee Myers said Clinton had called Foster the night before he died to invite him to watch a movie at the White House. Foster declined, and the two chatted for 20 minutes or so. "I think he knew, as a number of people did, that Vince was having a rough time," she said.



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