

James Forrestal did not escape the scrutiny of Cooper either. Cooper claims that Forrestal, near the end of his reign as Secretary of Defense, began to object to the secrecy over the flying saucer issue. When he began to talk about this, especially to members of the "opposition party", he was asked to resign by President Truman. He expressed various fears to many people and believed that he was being watched. Forrestal later was said to have suffered a mental breakdown and was admitted to the Bethesda Naval Hospital, the same hospital to which Kennedy's body was taken for its autopsy. According to Cooper, in the early morning of May 22, 1949 "agents of the CIA tied a sheet around his neck, fastened the other end to a fixture in his room and threw James Forrestal out the window. The sheet tore and he plummeted to his death. He became one of the first victims of the cover-up."

A book has been written on Forrestal's death. (43) In the early part of his career he worked on Wall Street, becoming a millionaire by the age of forty-six. He was appointed an administrative assistant to President Roosevelt in mid-1940, rising to head the Navy Department in 1944 on the eve of the D-Day invasion of Europe. He remained in this position until he was appointed as America's first Secretary of Defense by President Harry S. Truman on September 17, 1947. It was the capstone of a distinguished career in the private sector and in government service. Later, Truman lost confidence in Forrestal, feeling that he was becoming irresolute and indecisive. He resigned this post in March of 1949 at Truman's request.

Louis A. Jackson, Forrestal's successor, was sworn in on March 28, 1949. The next day, Forrestal flew to Hobe Sound, Florida to vacation at the home of Robert A. Lovett, a friend, CFR member and long-time New Deal personage. On March 31, the White House reportedly ordered that a mental examination be performed on Forrestal, even though he had severed all connections with the government and it had no authority over him. On April 2, accompanied by the head psychiatrist of Bethesda Naval Hospital, Forrestal returned to Washington and immediately checked into Bethesda. Forrestal was a troubled man, but later, all of the doctors who examined Forrestal agreed that, he was not insane but was suffering from physical exhaustion due to overwork.

Over the next several weeks, Forrestal was held incommunicado, even though his health was reported to be improving.