

FORRESTAL'S FALL: DID HE JUMP, OR WAS HE PUSHED?

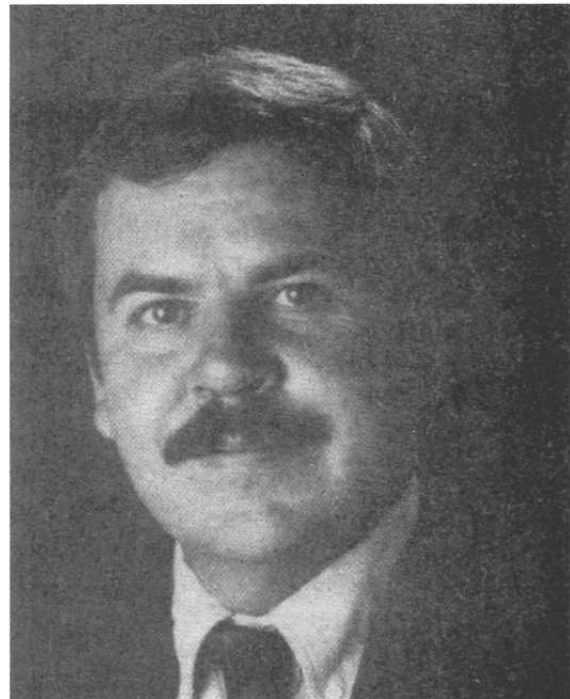
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We hear daily of strange and unexplained happenings, and not the least of these was the case of James V. Forrestal 44 years ago.

Forrestal, as the older readers of FSR will recall, had been the U.S. Secretary for the Navy under President Harry Truman, and then, in July 1947 (the very same month in which the famous UFO crash at Corona, near the highly important Roswell Air Force Base, allegedly occurred) he became the Secretary for Defence when the new unified command of the Armed Forces came in. He held this position until March 1949, when he seems to have suffered some sort of emotional or mental breakdown. He was taken to the Bethesda Naval Hospital, and we are given to understand that he committed suicide there in May 1949 by leaping from a window.

If we are to believe the copious evidence now available, it seems that on September 18, 1947 (less than three months after Kenneth Arnold's famous sighting of "nine flying discs" over the Cascade Mountains in the north-western State of Oregon) President Truman had affixed his signature to a top-secret document listing twelve very high-ranking individuals who were henceforth to be the members of an exclusive panel, "*Majestic 12*", or "*MJ-12*", whose task it would be to investigate the UFO problem and report on it to the President. It appears to be widely believed and accepted that James Forrestal was No. 3 on that List of Twelve.

Our warmest thanks to MUFON JOURNAL's Editor Dennis Stacy for kindly sending us this extraordinarily interesting article which — so far as we know — has not been published elsewhere. EDITOR.



It is well known that Forrestal committed suicide by leaping from the 16th floor of the Bethesda Naval Hospital, where he had been under observation and treatment for physical and psychological exhaustion for the better part of the previous two months, following his reluctant resignation as Secretary of Defence a month earlier. Forrestal had taken to looking into closets and under his bed, convinced he was being followed and bugged by the FBI and/or other governmental agencies. He told at least one close confidant "They're out to get me," and another that "Something awful is about to happen to me." "They" were variously described as "Communists... Jews or Zionist agents."

Forrestal's opposition to the creation of a separate state in Palestine (now modern day Israel) was adamant and unyielding, as were his warnings about and suspicions of, post-WWII Soviet intentions. As Secretary of the Navy (from 1944 to 1947), Forrestal had overseen the creation of the largest naval force ever to sail the seven seas. Those ships ran on oil (as did all of America's major military machinery), and Forrestal did not want to offend the Arab suppliers of same by supporting the formation of a Jewish state in their midst.

Ironically, "the godfather of the national security state" that America became in the wake of the war was also vigorously opposed to the unification of the armed forces under the National Security Act of 1947 which resulted in the creation of the position of Secretary of Defence. Among other structural reorganizations of government, Forrestal feared that his beloved navy might be threatened, and so he lobbied long and hard to water down the new Secretary's powers. Elevated to the position by Truman after the Act's passage, Forrestal found out just how successful (and wrong-headed, in this case) he had been. The constant struggle to mediate inter-service rivalries and squabbling no doubt contributed greatly to the psychic strain of

The third name listed as a member of the supersecret MJ-12 group (according to the controversial "Majic" papers) is that of one James V. Forrestal, President Harry Truman's (and the nation's) first Secretary of Defence. His is the only name with an asterisk beside it, as follows: "The death of Secretary Forrestal on 22 May, 1949, created a vacancy which remained unfulfilled until 01 August, 1950, upon which date Gen. Walter B. Smith was designated as permanent replacement."

the Secretary's final years.

Forrestal was beset by other demons as well. According to Clark Clifford's autobiography, *Annals of Government*, "his personal life was unhappy" as "his wife Josephine, a beautiful, difficult and troubled woman, was drinking heavily." Moreover, "Forrestal had left the Catholic Church, and was deeply guilt-ridden."

And of course if Forrestal really was MJ-3, he had another burden to bear, presumably as the first man who "knew too much about flying saucers." The Roswell Crash, assuming that incident unfolded as pictured, happened barely twelve weeks before Forrestal took over as the country's first Secretary of Defence. Could knowledge of Roswell have been the final straw that pushed Forrestal over the edge? Or was he pushed by his superiors? Clifford, a longtime Washington power-broker and personal savant to several presidential administrations (now under a cloud of scandal for his role in the international B.C.C.I. banking debacle), notes that Forrestal was confined to Bethesda Naval Hospital for fear that "he might blurt out national-security secrets to the wrong people."

So Forrestal jumped or was pushed. According to Stanton Friedman, much material about Forrestal's final days remains classified and out of reach of the Freedom of Information Act. But some new material has recently come to light, which forms the basis for this article. It included a three-part excerpt from Clifford's memoirs, which appeared in *The New Yorker* (April and May of 1991), and a recent biography of Forrestal just published in the U.S., *Driven Patriot: The Life and Times of James Forrestal*, by Townsend Hoopes and Douglas Brinkley (illus., 587 pp., \$30, Alfred Knopf, 1992). Hoopes served on Forrestal's staff and went on to become Assistant to the Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee and Under Secretary of the Air Force (among other distinguished upper-echelon positions). Brinkley is an Assistant Professor of History at Hofstra University.

CONSPIRACY THEORIES

At this point, let's put on our conspiracy caps. First, there can be no doubt that Forrestal was indeed a troubled personality. A workaholic before the word was coined, Forrestal was a driven patriot in more ways than one. Hoopes and Brinkley tell of an aide who came across the Secretary in his Pentagon office at 9:30 in the evening and suggested that he go home. "Go home?" Forrestal replied bleakly. "Home to what?"

Clifford tells of sitting behind Forrestal, a close friend, at a cabinet meeting in 1948. He noticed that the Secretary "had scratched a raw spot on the top of his head with his fingernails. As the meeting progressed, he continued to scratch until it was the size of a half-dollar. I watched in silent horror as the blood slowly oozed from this spot."

Forrestal was feeling besieged on all sides. Truman, who had succeeded to the presidency upon Roosevelt's death, had recently won election on his own, and was expected to heavily reorganize the war-time cabinet. Forrestal was suspicious, correctly, that Truman's ambitious campaign fundraiser, Louis Johnson, whom Forrestal viewed as a total "incompetent," had his eyes on the Defence Secretary's job. Moreover, two national and highly influential radio and newspaper columnists, Walter Winchell and Drew Pearson, were mounting increasingly personal attacks on Forrestal for his support of the looming cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union, and for his active opposition to an Israeli state. Pearson's assaults were particularly virulent.

On January 7, 1948, Truman accepted the resignation of George Marshall and Robert Lovett at the State Department, replacing them by Dean Acheson and James Webb. But Forrestal was allowed to continue twisting in the wind. There is some evidence that Truman himself was not entirely happy with the thought of Johnson as Secretary of Defence, but the latter would accept no other reward for his successful campaign services and actively lobbied to have Forrestal dropped. Forrestal was frantic. Eight years of continuous service had exhausted him; coupled with his current troubles, it was beginning to show. He became dishevelled in appearance and indecisive in action, making it harder for Truman to hold on to him, even had he wanted to. Finally, Truman asked for Forrestal's official resignation, which was duly tendered. A three-month transition period was inexplicably cut short, and on March 28, Louis Johnson was sworn in as the new Secretary of Defence.

The same day Forrestal said his farewells to the President in person. Truman surprised Forrestal by awarding him the Distinguished Service Medal before the assembled Cabinet and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. "Unable to respond to the President's generous words of praise," Clifford writes, "Forrestal was led, speechless, from the room. It was suddenly clear to everyone that something was very wrong."

Forrestal was more composed the next day, when he attended a similar ceremony and received a silver bowl from the members of the Armed Services Committee. As Forrestal and an assistant, Marx Leva, started to return to the Pentagon, Air Force Secretary Stuart Symington suddenly approached and said, "There is something I want to talk to you about." Leva then followed in a separate car.

Quoting from *Patriot* (p.447), "What Symington said to Forrestal on this short trip remains a mystery. Symington later denied the trip had occurred or that he was alone with Forrestal, but Leva and Ohly (another Forrestal staffer) are insistent on that point. *They imply that Symington had said something that shattered Forrestal's last remaining defences, for when Leva entered Forrestal's office a short*

time later he was sitting in an extremely rigid position, still wearing his hat and staring blankly at a bare wall... A troubled Leva inquired if everything was all right. Forrestal did not reply and seemed unaware of everything around him. Leva persisted. Forrestal finally responded, saying, 'You are a loyal fellow', a phrase he repeated several times."

Asked by Leva if there was anything he could do, Forrestal said "Yes. Call for my car. I want to go home." *Home to what?* As it turned out, Forrestal no longer commanded an official car, same having passed to Johnson. Eventually, Leva rounded up Vannevar Bush's chauffeured limousine and accompanied the former Secretary back to his residence, Prospect House. (Vannevar Bush, of course, head of the Office of Scientific Research and Development, is listed as *MJ-2* in the Majic documents, just ahead of Forrestal.)

"M.I.B." THEORIES

Now another curious event occurs, with tones of visitation by MIB. Alerted by Leva, longtime friend and confidant Ferdinand Eberstadt hurries over to find a haunted Forrestal home, shades drawn, its main occupant mumbling that "they" had finally gotten him. Forrestal advised Eberstadt not to speak above a whisper as "they" had also wired the house. "He parted a blind and pointed to two *disreputable-looking* men on the corner who he insisted were shadowing him. Suddenly the doorbell rang and the houseboy opened the door on an *odd-looking* man who proceeded to tell Eberstadt he had been an alternate delegate from North Carolina to the 1948 Democratic National Convention and was seeking Forrestal's support for appointment to postmaster in his hometown. Surprised by this *strange coincidence*, Eberstadt nevertheless quickly got rid of the man by telling him to write a letter. When he left, Forrestal watched warily as the man made his way to the corner, where he stopped to talk to the other two men. 'You see, he is one of them' Forrestal said excitedly. To Eberstadt, however, it was soon apparent that the third man was merely asking directions. A trolley car came along, the others pointed to it, and he got aboard." (p. 449-450, my emphases).

This is still a curious episode, however. Why, for example, should all three of the men involved in this "strange coincidence" have non-ordinary appearances? And what was it that was "odd" about the one? Presumably, the latter had gotten directions to Forrestal's house; would he not remember how he had just come? Also, Prospect House was presumably in one of Washington's finer neighborhoods. What were two "disreputable-looking" types doing on Forrestal's block-corner in the first place? If they were strangers to the street, odd, then, that they would have the directions the third man needed. The whole thing has the appearance of a one-act play staged for Forrestal's "benefit."

This event, coupled with Symington's "*There is something I want to talk to you about*," an incident later denied by the Air Force Secretary, begins to smack of orchestration aimed at unsettling an already unstable Forrestal. But there is more to come.

TOP PSYCHIATRISTS CALLED IN

Alarmed by this obvious and rapid disintegration of Forrestal's psyche and body, Eberstadt decides on the spot that he needs to be whisked out of Washington immediately for a little R & R. Clothes and golf clubs are hastily packed, an Air Force *Constellation* is arranged for through Johnson, and early that same evening Forrestal flies to Hobe Sound in Florida, outside Palm Beach, where he is met by Robert Lovett, who had a home there. Lovett is disturbed to find his friend but a bag of bones. His attempt to leaven the situation with humor is met by a ghastly stare. "Bob," Forrestal says, "they're after me."

At the same time Eberstadt has flown on to New York to consult Dr. Howard Rusk, the medical editor for the *New York Times*, as to "who was the most eminent psychiatrist in the country." Rusk recommends Dr. William Menninger of the Menninger Clinic in Topeka, Kansas. And another coincidence: Menninger just happens to be in New York, and agrees to fly down to see his new client in Florida the following day. "By another ironic twist" (Hoopes and Brinkley, p. 450), Menninger had been called to the Pentagon just three months earlier to help set in motion a study of the phenomenon known as combat fatigue. John Ohly, the Forrestal assistant in charge of the study, was canvassing the field of psychiatry to find the most suitable experts to serve on the study group, and he had arranged for Menninger to come to Washington. The psychiatrist had spent half a morning with Forrestal discussing various aspects of combat fatigue, but so far as is known he did not notice any trace of this condition, *or any other mental or emotional abnormality*, in the behavior of the Secretary of the Defence." (My emphasis.)

Now, a mere three months later, on March 30 and 31, Dr. Menninger has several lengthy discussions with the former Secretary and finds that he is "suffering from severe 'reactive depression' — essentially the condition of combat fatigue seen with such frequency during WW11 — which results from an accumulation of *intense external pressures* that overwhelm the mind and nervous system. In Forrestal's case the principal systems were "anxiety, paranoia, and a sense of total failure that produced impulses to suicide." (p. 452, my emphasis).

"I'VE BETRAYED MY COUNTRY"

Prior to Menninger's arrival, Forrestal confided to Lovett (out of hearing range of some beach umbrella stands that he believed to be wired) that

"I've done a bad thing." What this might have been was never specified. In hospital later, shown several glowing newspaper editorials lauding his national service, Forrestal would snort: "The fools. Don't they know I've betrayed my country?"

Menninger recommended immediate treatment, volunteering his own clinic. Lovett wondered how Forrestal's collapse could have been so complete and sudden, given that he was so careful about maintaining his physical fitness. "Menninger replied that Forrestal had expended tremendous energy to suppress his mounting anxieties over a long period of time — especially through the intense strain of his last year in office. The effort to keep everything locked up had consumed him physically and spiritually. His collapse had been swift because he was used up." (p. 452)

The question, then, was not *when* Forrestal would receive treatment, but *where*? At the time, the diagnosis of mental illness carried quite a stigma. Moving Forrestal to a prominent psychiatric clinic in the country's heartland would be impossible to keep from the press and public. Instead, the Navy suggested, he should be treated at a general hospital, namely the Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland. According to Hoopes and Brinkley (p. 453), it was felt that "the specific nature of the illness could be more easily kept from the public if Forrestal was treated at Bethesda... because the whole naval organization was better equipped to screen visitors and isolate the patient from inquiring newspapermen." Menninger and Eberstadt, on the other hand, "were for publicly acknowledging Forrestal's condition of 'combat fatigue' and sending him to Topeka for treatment that had proved successful in hundreds of similar cases."

The Navy and secrecy won. On April 2, 1948, Forrestal was flown to Bethesda. "Although heavily sedated, Forrestal was in a state of extreme agitation during the flight, convinced that his enemies were omnipresent and determined to get him. He now wondered aloud whether the root cause of his troubles had been his break with the Catholic Church forty years before, whether he was being 'punished' for being a 'bad Catholic.'" During the limousine ride to the hospital, "he made at least one attempt to throw himself out of the car. Arriving at Bethesda, he declared that he did not expect to leave the place alive." (p. 452)

REMOVAL TO BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL

Menninger saw Forrestal on April 3 and again on April 6, but responsibility had now officially passed to Captain George N. Raines, Bethesda's chief psychiatrist, "although recent evidence suggests that the White House was beginning to exert its influence on physical arrangements and public relations. In 1984, Dr. Robert P. Nenno, a young assistant to Dr. Raines... disclosed that Raines had been instructed by 'the people downtown' to put Forrestal in the VIP suite on the sixteenth floor

of the hospital... The decision to put Forrestal in the tower suite was regarded by the psychiatric staff as 'extraordinary' for a patient who was 'seriously depressed and potentially suicidal,' especially when the hospital possessed two one-storey buildings directly adjacent to the main structure that were specifically organized and staffed to handle mentally disturbed patients. Nenno added, 'I have always guessed that the order came from the White House.'" (p. 454, no emphasis necessary).

"Apparently determined to make the best of a decision he could not effectively resist," Hoopes and Brinkley continue, "Raines had special security screens installed on the windows of Forrestal's room and established a system of around-the-clock surveillance by doctors, nurses, and enlisted medical corpsmen." Menninger approved the arrangements, as well as the course of treatment Raines proposed.

After Forrestal had settled in, he asked Raines one day why the heavy screens? "That's to keep you from jumping out the window," Raines said. "Forrestal replied that he could never bring himself to jump out of a window, nor could he even slash his wrists. He thought it possible that he could hang himself or take an overdose of sleeping pills."

Raines essentially confirmed Menninger's diagnosis of reactive depression. Other members of the psychiatric staff at Bethesda "thought the condition was closer to 'involitional melancholia,' a variant of manic-depression and a form of schizophrenia. This was not inconsistent with the Menninger-Raines diagnosis, but somewhat broader and more serious." According to one textbook, "suicide is always a great risk." (p. 454-55)

There were other risks as well. For the first week of his incarceration Forrestal was kept in a constant state of narcosis, to which he seemed to respond favorably; "this was followed by four weeks of subshock insulin therapy. Here the results were less successful than Raines hoped for, but he decided not to use the more controversial electric shock treatment, at least until it was shown that more moderate measures had failed to produce improvement." (p. 460)

WAS THERE FEAR OF WHAT HE MIGHT SAY?

Still, one day Forrestal sent for Rear Admiral Sydney Souers, executive secretary of the newly formed National Security Council, "telling him to bring an instrument for detecting listening devices because the hospital room was 'wired.' Souers examined the room with the device and told Forrestal he could find nothing. Forrestal replied, 'They knew you were coming and took them out. Now they'll put them back again.'" **Interestingly, Souers is listed as MJ-8.** This scene has its surreal side, too. Surely Raines or his second in command would have known of Souers' impending visit to "sweep" Forrestal's room clean of listening devices. Did Raines okay the visit as contrived therapy, a

means of play-acting aimed at placating his patient's fears? That seems unlikely, else, given Forrestal's now raging paranoia, he and his staff would have been occupied round the clock doing nothing but responding to his constant complaints of being spied on. Did Souers do it on his own, to humor an old friend? Was he absolutely truthful when he said no such devices were on the premises? We'll probably never know. **But aside from any flying saucer beans Forrestal might have spilled, we do know that both the Navy and White House were concerned, in Clifford's words, that Forrestal "might blurt out national-security secrets to the wrong people."** Under such circumstances, it seems only logical to conclude, for whatever reason(s), that Forrestal's room and conversations probably *were* closely monitored. As an old T-shirt slogan of the Sixties had it: "Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean you aren't being watched!" Souers' visit, in other words, *could* have been a convenient way for him to report back to his superiors; thus the play-act, bug-sweep, could also have been for the fearful Forrestal's "benefit" alone.

But clearly not everything was arranged for Forrestal's benefit. His brother Henry, for example, visited four times and came away convinced, as he told Raines, that "what my brother needs is not to be cooped up there on the 16th floor. He needs to be on an estate somewhere, among friends, where he can walk around in the sun. He has been an exceedingly active man." (P. 462) But it was not to be. Henry also pressed a priest, Father Maurice S. Sheehy, on Raines with similar lack of results. "*For reasons never adequately explained,*" Raines turned down these requests while providing assurances that everything would be possible at the proper time. Henry ...asked, 'How long do you want to wait, Doctor? Delays in such cases can be dangerous. Have you ever heard of a case where being visited by a clergyman has hurt a man?' But Raines ...*possibly because a Catholic confessional might risk disclosing sensitive national security information, continued to put him off.*" (p. 462-63, my emphasis).

Again, this makes no logical sense. Forrestal has now been under official sequester for almost two months; rather than babbling national security secrets to one and all, he seems to have been mainly concerned with his own personal security.

SECURITY RELAXED

In early May, the claustrophobic security surrounding Forrestal was somewhat relaxed. "An enlisted corpsman remained on duty in the corridor just outside Forrestal's door, but the patient was encouraged to leave his room occasionally, to visit with nurses and other patients on the same floor, and to use a small pantry across the hall where he could pour himself a cup of coffee or prepare a snack. Fatefully, the pantry window was not equipped with the heavy tamper-proof screen that had been affixed to the windows of his bedroom; it

had only a light screen fastened by small hooks." (p. 463)

A quote from Raines himself is revealing. Admitting that the relaxation of restrictions was "one of the calculated risks of therapy," he went on to add: "I further recognized the well-known psychiatric fact that the next thirty days would constitute the most dangerous period of the illness as far as suicide was concerned, inasmuch as suicidal preoccupations had to be present, and at the same time privileges had to be extended to the patient to allow his full recovery." (p. 463). Raines last saw Forrestal on May 18, before leaving for a week-long absence, combining a vacation with a meeting of the American Psychiatric Association.

I WANT TO STAY UP LATE AND READ

On Saturday, the 22nd, Forrestal told corpsman Edward Prise, with whom he had become quite friendly (having promised a job in the future), that he didn't want a sedative as he intended to stay up late, reading. Prise was one of three corpsmen who guarded Forrestal around the clock, each spelling an eight-hour shift. Curiously (?), his usual midnight replacement had gotten drunk the night before (a Friday) and gone absent without leave. "The new man was a stranger to Forrestal and to the subtleties and dangers of the situation. Prise had observed that Forrestal, though more energetic than usual, was also more restless, and this worried him. He tried to alert the young doctor who had night duty and slept in a room next to Forrestal's. But the doctor was accustomed to restless patients and not readily open to advice on the subject from an enlisted man." (p. 464)

Even so, Prise lingered on for another half-hour or so. At 1:45 a.m. Sunday morning, his new replacement looked in on Forrestal and found him copying out by hand "*The Chorus from Ajax*," by Sophocles, "a brooding... poem... in which Ajax, forlorn and far from home, contemplates suicide."

A portion of those lines reads as follows:

*Thy son is in a foreign clime
Where Ida feeds her countless flocks,
Far from thy dear, remembered rocks,
Worn by the waste of time —
Comfortless, nameless, hopeless save
In the dark prospect of the yawning grave...*

*Woe to the mother in her close of day,
Woe to her desolate heart and temples gray,
When she shall hear
Her loved one's story whispered in her ear!
"Woe, woe!" will be the cry —
No quiet murmur like the tremulous wail
Of the lone bird, the querulous nightingale —*

Clifford chose to quote these lines from the same poem: *Better to die, and sleep/The never waking sleep, than linger on/And dare to live, when the soul's life is gone.*

If Forrestal's choice of departing poetry conjures up no immediate flying saucer imagery, neither does it necessarily evoke his supposedly guilt-laden Catholic background. Why not, after all, simply quote one of the saints, with whom he must have been at least semi-familiar, or, for that matter, Christ Himself, as in "*My Father, why hast Thou forsaken me?*"

"A SUDDEN FIT OF DESPONDENCE"

In fact, Forrestal finished but the night of nightingale, before he was seized by what Raines would later refer to as a "sudden fit of despondence." Here Hoopes and Brinkley remind the reader that Forrestal had been instrumental in supporting *Operation Nightingale*, "an anti-Communist guerilla army made up of Ukrainian refugees, recruited and trained by the CIA to carry on a secret war against the Soviet Union from behind the Iron Curtain. Many of the recruits were Nazi collaborators who had carried out mass executions of their fellow countrymen, including thousands of Jews, behind the German lines during the war." (p. 465). Was this what Forrestal meant by having betrayed his country? Perhaps. But again, the episode — of which there must have been several in the course of Forrestal's multi-varied career — fails to match up in any symbolic or other sense with Forrestal's final choice of words. Clifford described the handwritten copy Forrestal was working on as a suicide note, whereas Hoopes and Brinkley leave no such impression at all. Certainly it appears to have been addressed to no individual in particular.

THE END

What happened next is subject to dispute, as is much else about Forrestal's suicide. Some accounts say that the inexperienced corpsman "went on a brief errand;" Nenno, however, said that Raines told him that Forrestal "pulled rank" on the obedient servant, sending him off on some inconsequential mission designed to remove him from the immediate premises. In his absence Forrestal

crossed the corridor into the unsecured pantry. He tied one end of his dressing-gown sash around his neck, the other to a radiator, removed the screen and climbed out the window. Whether the sash held for a moment or broke straight away is not known; at any rate, Forrestal plummeted 13 storeys to his death, landing atop the roof of a third-floor passageway.

This scenario, too, is somewhat curious. Forrestal had earlier confessed to his psychiatrist that he could never jump out a window, although he admitted that he might be able to hang himself. Why, assuming he might have been afraid of heights, then, did he not simply hang himself in his room, or at least try to? And why hang oneself out of an open window, sixteen floors above ground; why not simply jump and be done with it?

SOME QUESTIONS

Psychoanalyzing a suicide after the fact is admittedly risky business at best; still, there is much to Forrestal's fateful fall that doesn't quite add up. Why, for example, did Raines take a week's leave of absence during what he himself admitted was a particularly crucial period in the potential recovery — or suicide — of one of his most prominent patients? Why wasn't Forrestal permitted to see a priest, while Sydney Souers was allowed to sweep his room for suspected bugging devices? Why was the former Secretary of Defence confined to a tower suite instead of one of the existing ground-level psychiatric facilities? How did it happen — coincidentally during Raines' extended absence — that one of his regular watchers would get drunk and go AWOL, and then be replaced by a complete novice, unaware of the gravity of the situation?

THREE INTERPRETATIONS

There are at least three ways to read Forrestal's fall. The first is simply as a tragic sequence of unavoidable and unforeseeable events, in which

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A recent gathering of most of the FSR 'team', with families and friends.

Left to right: Joan Wilder, Leonard Wilder, Judy Stickney, Howard Raimbach, Gordon Creighton, Dr. Bernard Finch, Joan Creighton, George Wingfield, Wendy Kaye, Philip Creighton, Michelle Raimbach, Paul Whitehead.

Photo by Bobbie Finch