

'Bribery' Enters New York Trial of Sergeant Provoo

By BUCK HENSHAW

Star-Bulletin Hollywood columnist who has been subpoenaed as a witness in the New York trial of John D. Provoo, who was a prisoner of war in the same Japanese camp with Mr. Henshaw during World War II.

NEW YORK, Feb. 2—Bribery, though a harsh and undignified way of putting it, is now an added unpleasantness behind the scenes in the New York murder and treason trial of John David Provoo, ex-U. S. Army sergeant.

Williston M. Cox, former U. S. Air Force colonel of Knoxville, Tenn., Jack K. Wisener of Garland, Tex., Capt. Edwin Kalbfleish of Washington, D. C., Frederick Hoblitt of San Francisco, and I are co-recipients of the "bribe."

Five of us, formerly in Japanese war prison with the notorious sergeant have been brought here by his defense and asked to "think of something nice to say about the accused."

IF WE DON'T get busy and "think of something nice," we shall be compelled to sit here in New York until the trial is over. It may take months.

I guess we'll be here until it's over.

The first day we appeared at court and the defense realized that any testimony we might give would be extremely damaging to their case, they pulled out a bag of tricks.

First several of our group were taken to Provoo's cell to talk with him. Afterwards his attorneys asked: "Don't you feel sorry for him?"



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When this failed to work, another defense counsel, Mrs. George Plotkin, expressed sympathy over having to hold us indefinitely in New York. She said she realized we all have responsibilities at home; that to remain for a long period would certainly place our respective jobs in jeopardy.

"WHY DON'T you each try to give us a deposition saying something nice about Provoo, then we might be able to release you?"

NO DEPOSITIONS

There will be no depositions saying "something nice" no matter what concessions they promise. And we do not feel the least bit sorry for this man who caused us so much trouble and anxiety during prisoner of war days.

Now that we are found to be so uncooperative, the defense threatens to call many more witnesses, men from Korea, Japan, Germany and all points of the U. S. More men, who, like those of us already here, never felt anything for Provoo but fear and contempt. More men and more delay which will run the cost of this farce well over the \$2,000,000 already charged to the taxpayers.

PROVOO is on the stand shouting denials to all charges of collaboration with the Japanese. He would have the court think he was a model prisoner, loyal to his country, who used his knowledge of the Japanese language for the betterment of prison conditions for his fellow men.

SABOTAGE TRIAL

It is, to say the least, painfully amusing to some of us who remember how he spied on our activities, listened to our conversations and reported everything we did to the Japanese authorities. He forgets his gross insubordination. He does not recall how he had an American officer, Capt. Edwin Kalbfleish, removed from our camp, thrown into solitary confinement and later brought to trial for sabotage.

It is obvious that his defense feels disheartened after hearing these facts reported by so many eye witnesses. Disheartened, at least, to the point where they have told us that they are not really sincere about their defense job; that they are only defending because they were government ap-

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pointed; that they would not have taken the Provo case if there had been any choice in the matter.
