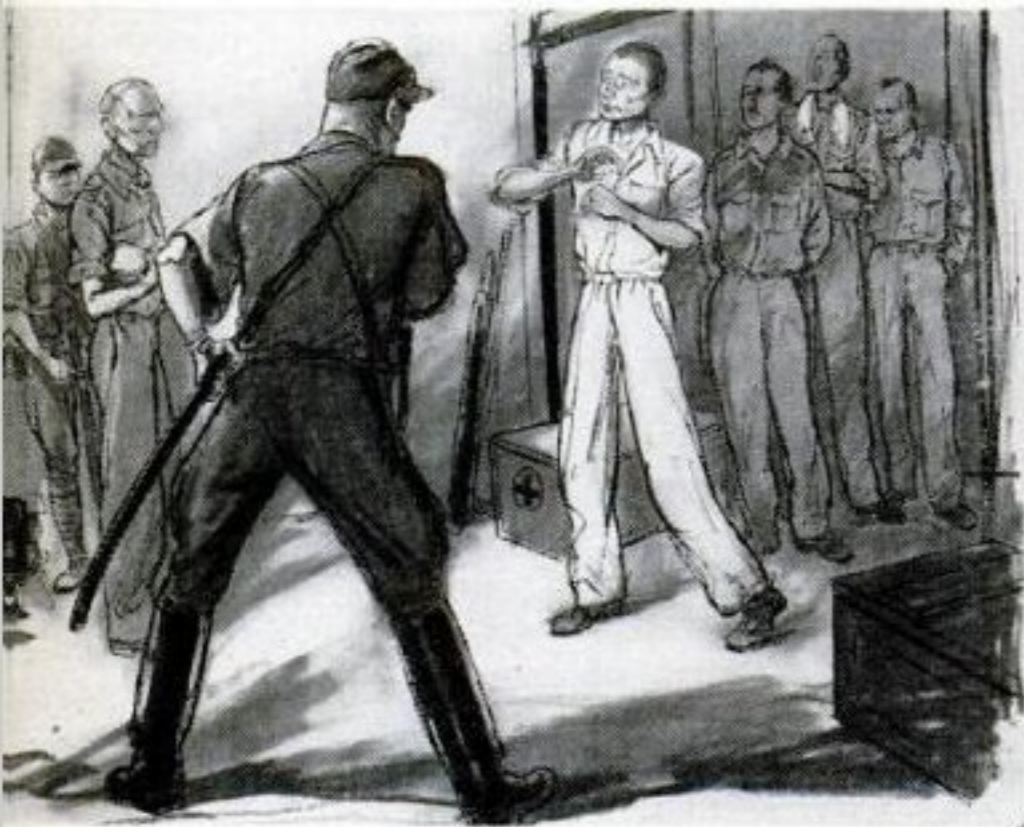


## THE TESTIMONY AGAINST PROVVO



**TEA PARTY** of Japanese officers is served by Provo, who, Corporal Brown said, ran a special mess for Japanese in Malinta Tunnel, Corregidor's main artery. Another witness said that at a time when rations for PWs were low Provo ordered the hospital mess to bake three-layer cakes for Japanese.



**THREAT TO PROVVO**, according to witness, was made by Japanese officer. Provo had rebuked Americans for joking with nurses, deprived them of privileges. The officer, said the witness, was angry because Provo exceeded his authority and offered to behead him. But a U.S. officer (left) interceded.



**FATAL ARGUMENT** took place between Captain Burton Thomson and Japanese officer. Thomson, a medical non-com testified, had sent word by Provo, refusing hospital supplies for a Japanese banquet. The captain was dragged before the officer (center) and Provo (right), thereafter taken out and shot.

**BUDDHIST ROBES** were occasionally worn by Provo. His head shaved in Buddhist fashion, Provo sometimes climbed to an island hilltop and recited Buddhist chants.



# A TALE OF TREACHERY ON CORREGIDOR

In a long, million-dollar trial U.S. accuses ex-sergeant of treason

At the Federal Courthouse in Foley Square, Manhattan, where the great trials of our time (the Communist leaders, Alger Hiss) have taken place, the air was hung once again with hateful charges of treason. On trial for treason was an ex-Army sergeant named John David Provo, a lanky, nervous, strange kind of man who had been born in San Francisco and had gone to Japan to become a Buddhist priest, and who, it was charged, at Corregidor had betrayed his fellow Americans to the Japanese.

Provo, honorably discharged in 1946 and arrested in 1949 when his re-enlistment ended, was among 10,000 Americans captured on Corregidor in 1942. He had become an interpreter for the Japanese—an understandable expediency, said his lawyers. But witnesses, who told the stories illustrated in these courtroom drawings for LIFE by William Sharp, testified that Provo had gone far beyond expediency.

An Air Force captain, Richard Sakakida, a Nisei who had also been an interpreter on Corregidor, described Provo's welcome to the Japanese on Corregidor (opposite page). Provo had told him, Sakakida said, that Japan had been forced into the war and that the U.S. must take the blame for it. While other Americans were mistreated, Provo wandered around freely, dressed in white civilian garb.

A stern retired colonel, Theodore ("Tiger")

Teague, described how Provo had tried to persuade him to reveal the U.S. code. "If you ask my advice," Provo had said, "you will give the Japanese the code. If you do not, they will beat it out of you." In court the tough old colonel hesitated a moment—there are seven women on the jury—before repeating his reply: "You son of a bitch. I didn't ask your advice. I don't intend to take it."

The most damaging testimony came from Cpl. Robert M. Brown, a medical orderly who testified that Provo told him, "I am the boss of Corregidor." Provo, Brown said, had joined with Japanese soldiers in beating an American sergeant who would not tell where the Americans had dumped a rumored \$750 million in silver in Manila Bay. Most serious of all, Provo had assertedly caused the execution of an American mess officer, Captain Burton Thomson, who had refused to give Provo hospital supplies for Japanese officers. "I am taking lip from no one," Provo had told Brown.

In three weeks the prosecution called 15 witnesses. It had 90 more to present, including General Jonathan Wainwright, U.S. commander at Corregidor. The U.S. was being fair about the case, which will probably last three months and cost the government more than \$1 million. If he is found both guilty and sane, ex-Sergeant Provo faces the death penalty.





**WELCOMING BOW**, which he said Provoo made to Japanese, is imitated by Sakakida as court stenographer and clerk (*left*) and Federal Judge Gregory Noonan (*right*) watch closely. Provoo, Sakakida testified, said he spoke Japanese and that he "would like to be of service." On board are maps of Corregidor and its tunnels.

**DEFENSE RISES** to dispute a point. The jury is in left background. In the left foreground are U.S. Attorneys Albert A. Blinder and Moses L. Kove (*standing*). Provoo sits at defense table (*right*) between Attorneys Murray Gottesman, Clara Storper. Other defense attorney, George Plotkin, is on his feet waving document.

