

Spying for the G-Men

"A wretched young man . . . sporting a dazzling red, white and blue tie, came to the witness stand . . .," The New York Daily Worker said. "Wiping his nose continuously," he told the jury "how for nine years he had lived a double life, a life without honor, in a decaying vista of falsehood. . . . His small eyes were shifty. . . . He nervously licked dry lips. . . . His hands were moving continually."

The "wretched young man" was Herbert A. Philbrick of Melrose, Mass., a 33-year-old advertising executive described by other New York newspapers as calm, smiling and composed. As a surprise Government witness last week in the trial of 11 U.S. Communist leaders, charged with teaching violent overthrow of government, he told a damning story.

Enlistment. In 1940 shortly after Philbrick enrolled in Harvard University graduate school, he had remarked to his mother: "There's a youth congress in Cambridge and I don't like the looks of it." But what his mother didn't learn until last week was that he had taken out and kept membership in the group, stepping from there to Communist Party membership. All the while, he was informing the FBI of Red goings-on.

Names, dates and places, he had jotted down in a little black book. Upon this he drew heavily last week, stating:

1. Dr. Dirk J. Struik, Dutch-born professor of mathematics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, secretly lectured Cambridge Communists in December 1947 on revolts patterned after the Indonesian "peoples' revolution . . . against the existing imperialist power."

2. At a 1946 party meeting in Boston, C.P. organizer Manny Blum told 100 members "to adopt the policy of colonizing . . . taking jobs in key industries . . . [such as] the General Electric plant in Lynn, Mass., producing jet airplane engines. . . . He said the automobile, steel, coal, lumber and maritime industries were mentioned in connection with recruiting 10,000 workers for 'mass struggles'."

3. In C.P. schools in Boston, he (Philbrick) was "instructed that the revolution [in the U.S.] will not take place next week' or next month . . . but . . . in case of a heavy depression, or in case of a war, in which case the conflict would be converted into civil war."

Free Agent. Defense attorneys asked Philbrick how much the FBI paid him, drew an answer which helped little: His only FBI-reimbursed expenses were C.P. dues (10¢ to \$2 a month) and rental for a dictaphone.