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SAIGON, JULY 26--Much to the embarrassment, if not surprise, of the American officialdom here, the trial of Truong Dinh Dzu, who had publicly advocated "talks" with the Viet Cong, began at ten a.m. before a five-man military tribunal and an understrength ^{company} battalion of ca television cameramen and ~~jounrias~~ journalists reporters.

Dzu, the 51-year-old "peace" candidate who lost the Vietnamese Presidential election to Nguyen Van Thieu last fall, sat confidently on the front row of wooden benches beside his pink-robed wife ^{HE WAS,} ~~and~~ became symbolic of the immensely tangled, ~~mainstream international relations~~ ^{if not conflicting,} relations between the American and Vietnamese officialdoms since the Honolulu Conference ended last week-end.

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dzu 2 (normass/deepe)

The man-in-the-street Saigonese did not appear very interested in the trial, since Dzu is widely regarded in Vietnamese circles as a "corrupt opportunist," as one explained. But, the repercussions in Saigon may be quite different—and open to exploitation from Viet Cong pop propagandaists or the leftist nationalists. But, ~~Dzu's~~ ^{prot} the Vietnamese government's "protective custody" of Dzu in a Saigon police station and ~~this~~ today's trial session court session charging ~~trying~~ him for advocating "talks" with the National Liberation Front—or the Viet Cong—have drawn criticism from pressure from the American officialdom, ~~info~~ ^{infor} informed sources report, as well from liberal circles abroad. *for BEING UN-democratic.*

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Ironically, the Vietnamese government appears to be applying a two-fisted policy: it has recently become much more liberal in its domestic affairs by granting relatively significant degrees of more freedom internally, ^{FRAT} while at the same time using a steel glove to draw the line where ~~the~~ freedom ends in ^{FR} on the ~~inter~~ highly explosive issue of its relations with the Viet Cong. Government sources report that Prime Minister Tran Van Huong has ordered reviews of many political prisoners detainees and that they must immediately be ²either be tried ^{AND "HUNDREDS" HAVE BEEN RELEASED} or s released, rather than allowed to remain for long periods in government jails, as was the previous ~~notre~~ notorious practice.

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dzu 4 (normass/deepe)

The courtroom, inside a heavily sentried compound, on the Saigon waterfront, was extremely austere, and dilapidated. The room was stuffy; three of the five fans pirouetting from the ~~paste~~ plaster-board ceiling worked. And it was ~~a~~ dimly-lighted; only four of the twelve neon lights were in working order. Six Vietnamese military policemen, with ~~M-16~~ new M-16's pointed ~~oil~~ ceiling-wards, moved through the room. ~~xxxx~~ Then the judge, Major Trieu Khao ~~Ng~~ Huynh, entered the room, flanked by a captain, two lieutenants and one master-sergeant, all of whom took seats ~~in the~~ ^{at} ~~on~~ the ~~bench~~. ^{BENCH.}

Then, the charge against Dzu was read: "activities that weaken the anti-Communist will of the South Vietnamese ^{armed forces} army and people." Specifically, that on April 14 and 15, after being released from protective custody, ~~Dzu~~ ^{SPIN} Dzu had told ~~Western~~ ^{armed forces} correspondents of United Press International and the Times of London he advocated "talks" ~~x~~ with the National Liberation ^{SAYING A Coalition Government with them WAS UNAVOIDABLE} Front. Then on April 29, an ~~appropriate~~ judge signed an order for Dzu's ~~detent~~ ^{He} detention and the next day, the lawyer was ~~temporarily detained~~ ^{Sent to} at the Police Directorate. On July 18, Dzu was then sent to Chi Hao Hoa ^{NATIONAL} prison on the outskirts of Saigon on charges of swindle and embezzlement. Then, on July 23, ^{Brought to} these charges were dropped and the next day Dzu was ~~on~~ trial for ^{the new CHARGE of} weakening the anti-Communist spirit of ~~the~~ in South Vietnam.

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dzu 5 (normass/deepe)

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The judge, in reading the charge, reminded Dzu that the Vietnamese constitution, the two-house legislature and the President had outlawed the National Liberation Front, ~~which~~ on the grounds it was ~~in~~ simply a "tool" of the North Vietnamese Communists. The judge asked Dzu: "Do you admit the North Vietnamese are carrying out aggression standing in front of the judge, in the South?" Dzu replied that was only an hypothesis, or a theory, on which the Vietnamese government based its position. The judge replied that it was the position of the government and of the elected a two-house legislature, and hence the position of the Vietnamese people.

Dzu countered that he only proposed "talking" with, not negotiating with, the Liberation Front. It is a realistic way, ~~he said,~~ to end the war, he said.

Then the ~~pro~~ official prosecutor, also an ~~army~~ Vietnamese Army major, made an emotional speech against coalition governments, recalling the 1945 experience in Vietnam when the Communists made a coalition with the nationalists, and later a liquidated the Communists liquidated the ~~native~~ nationalists. He said Dzu's guilt was similar to that of a young student,

earlier this week
e sentenced earlier this week, to five years hard labor, for publishing
PRINTING false peace AND pro-Communist articles.
a Student paper calling for talks with the Liberation Front.
IN A STUDENT NEWS PAPER.

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dzu 6 (normass/deepe)

Then the defense lawyer, wearing a long black robe with fur necktrim, strode forward. The lawyer was Tran Ngoc Lieng, a former social welfare minister in the Nguyen Cao Ky government and a long-time friend of Dzu. At one time Lieng, ^{by} D and Dzu reported shared ^{the} the same law office with Nguyen Huu Tho, President of the National Liberation Front, and Dzu once defended Mr. Tho against charges ~~an indictment of helping the~~ similar to ~~the one facing Dzu~~ ^{those} Lieng was defending Dzu against this week.

The defense based his argument on five points. First, the law specified action must be taken to jeopardize the anti-Communist spirit of the country, but Dzu's interviews to the Western journalists were merely expressions of opinion protected by freedom of speech in the Vietnamese constitution. Second, Dzu had made an official statement to the Vietnamese police asking why the Vietnamese government advocated talks with the North Vietnamese regime, which was totally Marxist-Leninist Communists, while he, Dzu, advocated talks only with the National Liberation Front, which was part nationalist and part Communist in composition. He said he proposed to talk only with the nationalist elements in the National Liberation Front.

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Third, Dr. ~~Pham~~ Quang Dan, who was recently named to and then fired from his ministerial post in the present government, had expressed publicly the same view as Dzu—but Dr. Dan had only been dismissed from his job and was not brought to trial. Why was Dr. one Vietnamese free to express an opinion while another was ~~time~~ ^{stating} tried for ~~making~~ ^{view} the same opinion. Fourth, Lawyer Lieng said that according to a dispatch in the Christian Science Monitor (no date or dateline specified), ~~Ambass~~ American Ambassador Averill Harriman in Paris said, "If the National Liberation Front decided to lay down their arms then they would be accepted to participate in South Vietnam's political life." Dzu had made the same statement before, Lieng argued, adding "for this point we must agree that we, Vietnamese are quite intelligent people who could, on some occasions, predict things accurately."

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dzu 8 (normass/deepe)

Indeed, Lieng argued for his fifth point, President Nguyen Van Thieu had returned from the Honolulu Conference just last week and pledged ~~his~~ himself to ~~also~~ allowing a "one-man, one-vote" type of election for all the ^{South} Vietnamese as a solution for the war—but how could the Communists vote if the ^{GOVERNMENT DID NOT} ~~President didn't~~ talk with them. [?] So, President Thieu had just ~~repeatedly~~ said the same thing in a different way. ^{AS DZU BUT} On this refrain, the Dzu's defense rested his case.

The five military officers, serving as a ~~jury~~ the tribunal, left the room ^{and} ~~entered into~~ one hour and fifteen minutes deliberated the case. Each cast his decision by secret ballot.

Then, the five re-entered; the major read the verdict: five years of ~~12~~ hard labor in prison without an additional sentence of exile

~~from prison~~ upon completion of confinement.

^{THE VERDICT IS FINAL WITH}

At 12:45, Dzu was escorted to a ^{grey} paddy-wagon.

(HANKI THIS STORY WAS HEAVILY COVERED BY FOREIGN PRESS).

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