

CIA

Saigon Peace Candidate Released After 5 Years

**Truong Dinh Dzu, Rival
of Thieu in '67, Urged
Talks With Vietcong**
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By The Associated Press

SAIGON, South Vietnam, March 26 — Truong Dinh Dzu, a peace candidate in the 1967 presidential election, was released from jail today after nearly five years in which he was one of South Vietnam's best-known political prisoners.

Mr. Dzu, a 56-year-old lawyer, was reported by his daughter to be sick and weary on his return home from Chi Hoa Prison in Saigon. He remained in seclusion.

The release was viewed as an attempt by President Nguyen Van Thieu to improve his public image before his visit next week with President Nixon and United States Congressional leaders in San Clemente, Calif., and Washington.

Among the prominent figures still held as political prisoners is Tran Ngoc Chau, 48, who has been serving a 10-year sentence, imposed in 1970, for having had "treasonable" contacts with his brother, a spy for the North Vietnamese. Mr. Chau, an anti-Communist, was a principal architect of the pacification program.

During the 1967 campaigns, Mr. Dzu advocated negotiations with the Vietcong, arguing that such talks eventually would



Associated Press

Truong Dinh Dzu

lead to a type of coalition Government in South Vietnam. He polled a surprising 18 per cent of the vote against Mr. Thieu.

President Thieu has been criticized heavily over the years, particularly by some American Congressmen, for keeping political opponents in jail. Mr. Dzu's name has been mentioned frequently.

Early in 1968, Mr. Dzu was arrested on charges involving check fraud and sentenced to a brief prison term and fine. In May of that year, he was brought before a military tribu-

Continued on Page 7, Column 1

Continued From Page 1, Col. 7

nal on charges of advocating neutrality and negotiations with the Vietcong.

He was sentenced to five years at hard labor for what the court deemed "an action that has weakened the anti-Communist will of the people and the army."

That sentence was reduced to four years in 1971. He was eligible for release on May 1, 1972. According to Mr. Dzu's wife, authorities at Chi Hoa Prison arranged for his release and turned him over to the national police, in line with administrative procedures.

Mrs. Dzu said that her husband was detained at the national police center on May 1, 1972, then returned to Chi Hoa for "temporary detention." She maintains that police authorities told her that her husband had to wait for a decision from Mr. Thieu.

About two weeks ago, Mrs. Dzu sent letters to the President and to several legislative leaders, appealing for her husband's release by pointing out that his term was up and that the Thieu regime had negotiated with the Vietcong.

Future Role in Question

Before his 1967 campaign and his imprisonment, Mr. Dzu was not too well known. He is said to have no real political base. His participation in the political confrontation expected after United States troops withdraw thus remains an open question.

Two dozen South Vietnamese political factions have been forced to combine into three potentially powerful anti-Communist groups in anticipation of the political struggle. Mr. Dzu has not played a prominent role in any.

Two other key political forces lay low while the deadline passed for political parties to register under last year's strict and controversial presidential decree.

Seven Parties Combine

Seven anti-Communist parties beat the deadline by joining forces yesterday in the Socialist Democratic party. It is not expected to be strongly anti-Government. Two other technically legal groups are the predominantly Roman Catholic Freedom party and Mr. Thieu's own Democracy party, which has been recruiting vigorously in recent weeks.

Conspicuous by their inactivity so far are the An Quang Pagoda militants, who say they represent the majority of Buddhists in South Vietnam, and former President Duong Van Minh and his supporters. Both groups believe they should have a place in the "neutral third segment" of the National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord, which the Paris agreements say should organize elections.