

2 Ex-POWs May Sue Colonel

Washington

Two former prisoners of war said yesterday the dismissal of charges of collaboration with the enemy comes too late and they are considering filing a libel suit against Colonel Theodore W. Guy for bringing the charges.

Army Sergeants John A. Young, 27, of Grayslake, Ill., and King D. Rayford Jr., 27, of Chicago, held a news conference in Denver after the charges of collaboration were dropped by the Army and Navy.

Another of the accused POWs, Specialist 4 Michael P. Branch, said from Fort Knox, Ky., that he is dropping plans for a \$1 million libel suit which he had announced before the charges were dropped.

Eight POWs were charged with aiding the enemy and misconduct by Guy, the senior POW officer at the Plantation, a prison camp near Hanoi where the men were held.

Rayford and Young were among six of the men who attended the funeral Monday

for Marine Sergeant Abel Larry Kavanaugh, 24, another of the eight. Kavanaugh killed himself June 27 in what police said was apparently a suicide.

"We were glad to hear that these charges had been dismissed and that the Army does not contemplate any kind of administrative board action in our cases," the two said in a prepared statement.

"However, we believe that this dismissal of charges comes a little late. It comes late because the actions of the Army and Colonel Guy have caused a needless death of our close friend Larry Kavanaugh."

"I think he (Guy) is going to have to live with this on his conscience the rest of his life," Branch added in explanation for his decision to drop plans for his suit.

Guy said yesterday that he had brought the charges because he had promised other POWs he would "do all that was legally possible to see that an investigation was carried out."

Associated Press