

4 Antiwar Vets

Free of Contempt

NEW ORLEANS — (AP) — A federal appeals court has dismissed contempt charges against four antiwar veterans who were twice jailed in Tallahassee, Fla., for refusing to testify before a grand jury investigating protest plans for the Democratic and Republican national conventions.

The court said yesterday the government failed to deny it did use illegal telephone taps.

Won't Answer

The 42-page opinion handed down by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals cleared Robert Wayne Beverly, 27, of Austin, Tex.; John Chambers, 24, of St. Petersburg, Fla.; and Jack Jennings and William Bruce Horton, both 23, of Gainesville, Fla.

The four, all members of Vietnam Veterans Against the War, were jailed first in July and later in August

when they refused to answer questions before a U.S. grand jury probing the VVAW's plans for protests during the political conventions in Miami Beach.

Wiretaps Placed

The appellate court acted on allegations by two VVAW attorneys who said they heard noises and voices on telephones which led them to suspect wiretaps had been placed on telephones at the VVAW headquarters in Gainesville and the attorneys' residences in Tallahassee.

The 5th Circuit Court said the government could call the VVAW members again to testify before the grand jury, but added that if the illegal surveillance charge was brought up, "the District Court judge should require specific affirmations or denials . . ." of the charge.