

FBI Followup on Court Gag Rule

Gainesville, Fla.

A federal judge said yesterday he had ordered FBI agents to investigate possible violations of his ban on statements to newsmen by persons involved in the antiwar veterans' conspiracy trial.

"I have some FBI agents checking out possible violations by everyone," U.S. District Judge Winston E. Arnow said during a hearing in his chambers.

Before the trial if the antiwar activists started July 31, Arnow issued an order banning all participants from making public statements.

TAPES

+Radio stations WRUF and WDVH in Gainesville said they had been asked by the FBI for tapes of interviews with witnesses, defendants or defense attorneys. A St. Petersburg Times reporter also said he was questioned about a story.

A spokesman for WDVH said FBI agents had asked to hear tapes of an interview with a witness. The spokesman said the station played only the section of the tape that was aired on news programs.

Arnow said earlier that his order against divulging information about the trial was not aimed at restricting the news media.

STORY

One of the defendants, William J. Patterson, asked the judge yesterday to investigate a story in Thursday's editions of the St. Petersburg Times to see if it violated Arnow's rule on silence.

Patterson said the article quoted a federal official as saying he believes the activity of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War in the Gainesville area since the trial was "good acting by a normally murderous group."

Arnow asked for a copy of the St. Petersburg Times' story.

Times managing editor Robert Haiman said, "Right now, knowing what I do

know about it, I don't believe it's a violation" of the rule.

CASE

Eight VVAW members are being tried on charges of plotting violent disruptions during the 1972 Republican National Convention on Miami Beach.

Yesterday, FBI informer William W. Lemmer, the key government witness, testified that he agreed to tow a rental trailer loaded with marijuana from Fayetteville, Ark., to Joplin, Mo., for \$5000.

Associated Press