

Scranton Bans Testimony By State Police at Probe

By Saul Kohler

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HARRISBURG, Pa., March 15—Gov. William W. Scranton succeeded today in choking off testimony by troopers at a legislative investigation of the Pennsylvania State Police.

The hearing room was virtually empty as policemen, from Commissioner E. Wilson Purdy on down, ignored subpoenas and avoided the inquiry itself in line with an executive order by Scranton banning all further testimony by any state employe.

As a consequence, the committee took a week off to ponder its own future.

Must Decide Action

Committee Chairman Ronald G. Lench must consider whether to continue hearings without cooperation of the State police or seek contempt citations or criminal indictments against those who refused to testify.

Det. Angelo Carcaci admitted on the witness stand that he tapped telephones under orders of his superiors, bought wire-tapping equipment with falsified vouchers drawn for "informers' fees,"

and attended a "spy school" in San Francisco.

A 1957 Pennsylvania law makes wire-tapping illegal under any circumstances by anyone, including the police.

After Carcaci's statement, the Governor ordered the State Police to investigate Carcaci's allegations.

A report to the Governor from the Commissioner denied Carcaci's charges.

Maj. W. J. Stanton, detective bureau Commander, signed a statement before Purdy declaring that he neither ordered, aided or knew about wire-tapping.

Invokes 5th 77 Times

Then he appeared before the committee and, on the advice of his personal attorney, invoked the Fifth Amendment 77 times. He was relieved of his command and re-assigned to the State Police Academy.

The Republican Governor then called the hearing by the committee, dominated by Democrats, an "incredibly improper" reincarnation of McCarthyism. He indicated he feels the investigation is politically inspired. He urged committee members to take evidence to a district attorney, the State Attorney General or the U.S. Attorney and said failure to do so would be "tantamount to the crime of concealing evidence."

No matter what happens—whether the hearings continue or die on the vine because of the Governor's order—their disclosures already may well be a major issue in Pennsylvania's 1966 campaign.