

No Coppola Rackets-Link Charge Due

By BILL LYNCH
(States-Item Bureau)

BATON ROUGE—The state Ethics Commission has decided there is no basis for a charge against State Police Capt. Roland F. Coppola because of his relationship with rackets figure Carlos Marcello, the States-Item learned today.

Coppola was ordered suspended from his duties as commander of Troop I in Lafayette last September by Gov. John J. McKeithen after he was linked to Marcello by Life magazine.

M'KEITHEN TOLD the States-Item that he did not have any information from the Ethics Commission but when he received it he would have a statement to make.

Coppola was suspended for 30 days by the Ethics Commission after a hearing last week into charges that he accepted favors from a transportation firm and an oil well equipment company. However, there was no connection between those charges and the alleged Marcello connections.

The Ethics Commission has decided that after its investigation into the Marcello charges it could find no justification for a formal charge against Coppola in that regard.

IT HAS therefore completed its investigation of the Marcello relationship and marked finish to that aspect.

McKeithen ordered Public Safety Director Thomas Burbank to suspend Coppola. At the time McKeithen said there was no hard evidence against Coppola but the fact that he was associated with Marcello was enough to cause his suspension.

Coppola, who has denied any wrongdoing, was ordered reinstated to his position by the state Civil Service Commission prior to the action by the Code of Ethics Commission.

Coppola's attorney has declared his intention to appeal the Ethics Commission ruling on the other matter.