

Scramble to avert state worker strike

By CLARENCE D. BASSETT

ALBANY, N.Y. (UPI) — The Public Employment Relations Board, hopeful of averting a strike threatened for Monday, is trying today to get the state and its largest public employes union back to the bargaining table.

The agency said Friday night it will send telegrams asking the state Office of Employee Relations and the Civil Service Employees Association to meet at the State Police Academy to resume talks that broke off Friday evening.

PERB said it did not know whether either side would respond. The state said Friday it would send representatives to a PERB-sponsored meeting, but the union said it did not want to take part in three-way talks.

The CSEA, which claims a membership of 119,000 state employes, has threatened to strike at 6 a.m. Monday.

Talks ended abruptly Friday night with union spokesmen saying they were "prepared to stay out a couple of weeks

if it is necessary." The strike would be the first against the state since a 40-hour walkout by the CSEA on Easter weekend 1971.

A court order barring the walkout will be the subject of a hearing today before State Supreme Court Justice Robert Williams. The union challenged the order as "over-broad," saying it would forbid informational picketing and other activities "protected under the constitution."

The state's Taylor Law bars strikes by public workers and provides for fines of two days' pay for each day off the job. Violation of a court order could subject CSEA officers to 30-day jail sentences and fines and cost the union fines and a loss of dues checkoff privileges.

State employes average \$10,600 a year. CSEA members have not had a raise since 1974.

State police and prison guards are represented by other unions and are not among those threatening to strike.