Brown Rejects Call for Use of Guard in Farm Strike

By ROBERT LINDSEY

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 22 — Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. today rejected a request from Oren Fox, the sheriff of Imperial County, to send National Guardsmen to the county to help quell growing violence in a 34-day-old strike by the United Farm Workers of America.

The Governor said that he did not believe National Guardsmen were needed, but authorized the deployment of 40 California Highway Patrolmen to the Imperial Valley, which is situated on the Mexican border 120 miles east of San Diego.

As Sheriff Fox was calling for help, the strike ended in its efforts to raise farm workers' pay to levels comparable to those won by older industrial unions that are involved in the processing of food.

The growers say that they have received information from below the border that agents of the union are intimidating nonunion members in Mexico to cross the border to take the jobs of the strikers. They say that several homes and automobiles belonging to people who have worked during the strike have been set afire. But aids to Mr. Chavez have denied that the union has any links to such violence.

The union is seeking to raise the basic hourly rate for farm workers to $2.52 an hour from $3.70. The growers have offered to raise the basic rate to $4.12 an hour, but the union rejected it as inadequate. Growers maintain that the hourly wage level is misleading because, they say, more than 80 percent of the farm workers are paid at piece-rate wages that frequently exceed $7 an hour.

3 Union Members Charged

Three members of the union were charged today with assault with a deadly weapon in the confrontation in the Imperial Valley yesterday. Earlier, three employees of one of the 10 growers that have been struck were charged with murder in the Feb. 12 shooting death of Rufino Contreras, a 27-year-old farm worker.

In all, 4,300 members of the union are on strike.