

Striker Is Shot Dead, Bringing First Fatality In Lettuce Walkout

EL CENTRO, Calif., Feb. 10 (UPI) — A striker was shot dead today in the Imperial County lettuce fields, the first fatality in the United Farm Workers' three-week old strike against 10 lettuce growers in the Imperial Valley.

After the killing, the 28-member grower's association called for an immediate end to the strike and asked Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. to mobilize the California National Guard.

The police said Rufino Mijangos Con-

treras, 27 years old, of Mexicali, Mexico, was shot in the head after he and other union members approached a group of "replacement workers," many of them teen-agers recruited for weekend work.

Lieut. Richard Wilson of the Imperial County Sheriff's Department said that 15 to 20 witnesses to the shooting had been questioned and that a labor foreman, whose name was not disclosed, was being held. The officer said, however, that it had not been determined whether the foreman would be charged.

Tom Hubbard, a spokesman for the growers, said there was "no excuse or justification for the violence" and called on Cesar Chavez, president of the union, "to call an immediate moratorium on all picketing and an immediate end to the ill-conceived and ill-fated strike."

"As a result of the tragedy and in order to prevent any further incidents of confrontation and violence," Mr. Hubbard said, "we have this afternoon sent a telegram to Gov. Brown asking him to mobilize the National Guard immediately in order to protect the lives and property of all people involved."

Earlier in the day, sheriff's deputies used tear gas to disperse a group of 400 strikers at the Sun Harvest field near Holtville. Three strikers were arrested and charged with throwing stones at vehicles.

Some 4,300 members of the farm workers union are taking part in the strike, in which pay is the main issue.

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