

Benefit concert for Olga Talamante

February 12, 1976

A benefit concert for Olga Talamante - 26-year-old Chicana from Gilroy, California, who is the only U.S. citizen imprisoned in Argentina - will be held at 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 20, in the Revelle Cafeteria, at the University of California, San Diego.

Talamante, who has been in prison for 13 months, is an honors graduate of the University of California, Santa Cruz. She was teaching English in the city of Azul when she was arrested in November 1974, under the special state of siege laws imposed by President Isabel Peron and the Argentine government.

She and several young Argentinians were convicted last September of being present in a home where subversive literature was found.

Shortly after her arrest, there were reports that Talamante would be deported but, since she is now appealing her conviction, all talk of deportation appears to have stopped.

Her legal counsel, civil rights attorney Leonard Weinglass, who traveled to Azul to investigate Talamante's reports that she had been tortured when arrested and to discover why there had been little action on the part of the U.S. government, claims to have substantiated the young woman's allegations.

Talamante's plight has become a cause celebre in the San Francisco Bay area, not just among Chicanos but with feminists and other political activists. Some Bay area newspapers refer to her simply as "Olga."

No small influence in focusing attention on the case have been Talamante's poignant letters from prison.

National columnist Jack Anderson refers to her as "an American Anne Frank."

According to the State Department, U.S. Embassy officials in Argentina are now visiting Olga regularly and thereby ensuring that she will not be mistreated.

Olga Talamante Defense Committee activists counter that U.S. officials could exert much more pressure on the Argentine government in order to secure Olga's freedom.

Attorney Weinglass has criticized the U.S. Embassy for its handling of the Talamante case, claiming embassy officials had never taken the time to research court records which included a report substantiating Olga's claims of torture during four days and nights after her arrest.

The Friday concert is sponsored by MECHA, the Chicano students' organization, Mujer, and Voz Fronteriza. It will feature Cuban folksinger Suni Paz, currently an instructor in sociology at Rutgers University; local poet Manuel Gomez and Talamante family friend Ed Escobedo. Weinglass may also accompany the group which has been making appearances at campuses throughout the state to raise money for Olga's defense.

Donations are \$1 for students and \$2 for others. For information call: Chicano Studies at 452-2136 or MECHA at 452-4450.

(February 12, 1976)