

ILGA coverage continues

Argentina anti-gay crackdown

Harassment of gay men and lesbians in the South American nation of Argentina has worsened to such an extent in recent months that the 260 delegates to July's International Lesbian and Gay Association 11th World Conference in Vienna staged a colorful, noisy and multi-lingual demonstration outside the Argentine embassy in downtown Vienna.

According to activists with the *Comunidad Homosexual Argentina* [CHA], police now routinely back paddy wagons up to the front doors of gay bars and discos and haul away the patrons—holding them for up to 72 hours.

Gay men face additional harassment in the streets, where authorities charge that they are "publicly soliciting for the purpose of sex."

"All it takes," said CHA's Emmanuel Valido, "is to be standing on the corner with your hands in your pockets. The police say you were playing with yourself through your pocket and inviting sex. Or, if you scratch your ear, they say it was a signal to another man."

The Vienna protest began on a small side street one-half block from the central plaza. Activists carried signs in their own languages denouncing the Argentine laws used to harass gays, and chanted pro-gay slogans in English, Spanish and German.

"*Gays y lesbianas, unidos, jamás serán vencidos*," they yelled, altering slightly the slogan of Latin American people's revolutions. ["Gays and lesbians united will never be beaten."]

The protest then moved into Vienna's cen-

tral square surrounding St. Stephen's Cathedral. Activists linked hands and formed a large circle some 35 yards in circumference. Passers-by were perplexed by the multi-lingual protest signs, but realized that gays were upset about something since "homosexual" looks the same in most all Roman-alphabet languages.

Troubles multiplied

The police harassment of gays and lesbians in Argentine cities has only complicated the severe economic and social problems facing CHA and the country's homosexual movement. CHA is U.S. \$600 behind on its rent, electricity and taxes; and a dramatically soaring inflation rate has placed condoms out of reach for more than 99% of the country's citizens.

"We would like to keep our correspondence up," said Valido, "but the financial crisis can make us unable to answer because of the high price of postage. We've discontinued our magazine, *VAMOS A ANDAR*."

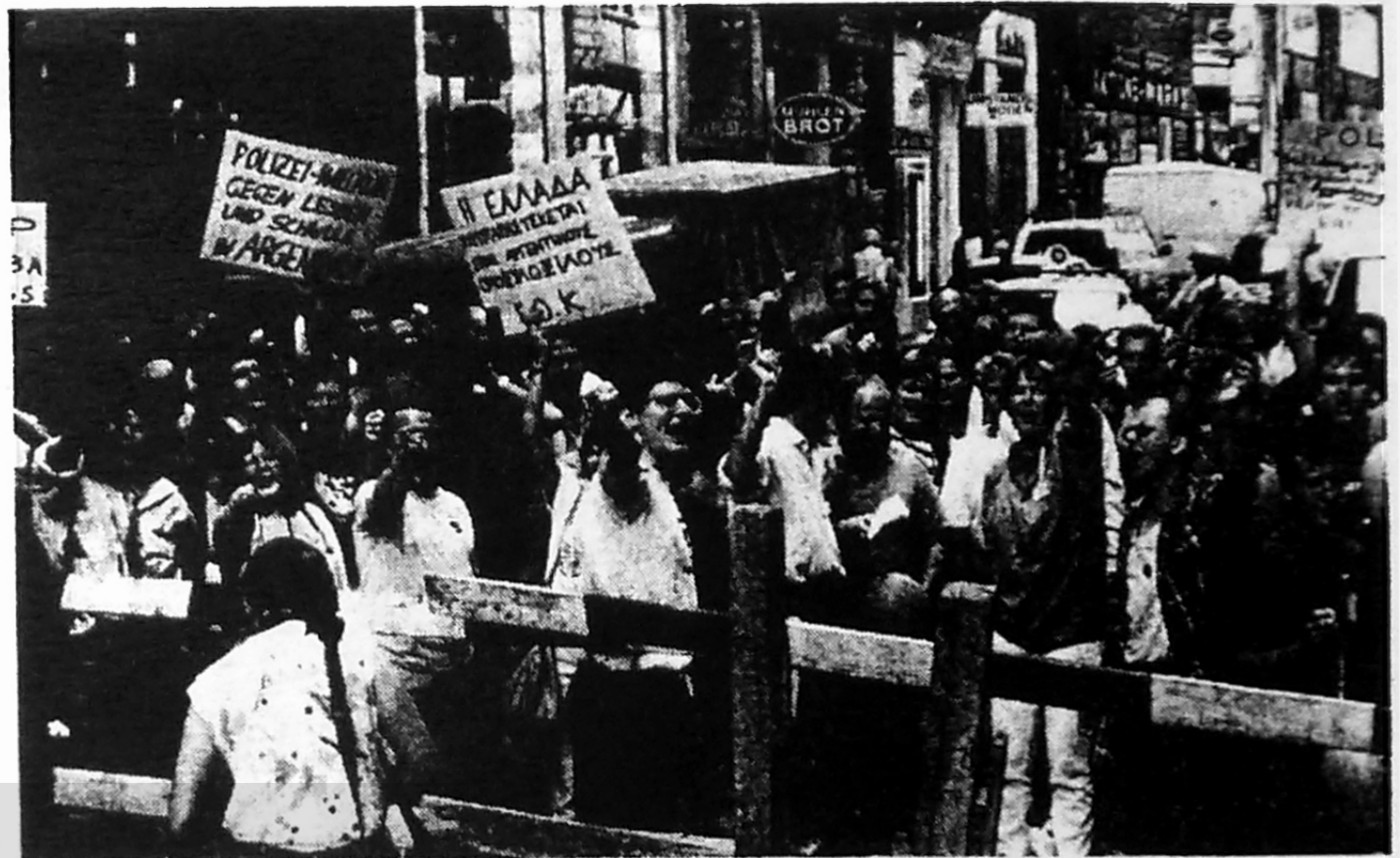
CHA made an emergency plea in Vienna for international assistance and support. Financial donations should be in the form of an American Express international money order made out to CHA president Alejandro Zalazar. The address is: Casilla de Correo 45, Sucursal 37, C.P. 1437 Buenos Aires, Argentina. *Do not put CHA's name on the envelope or the money order.*

CHA also requests protest letters to Argentine President Carlos Saul Menem at: Balcarce 50, C.P. 1064, Buenos Aires; and to local Argentine embassies, with photocopies to CHA. Writers should demand the abolition of the fifth article of the first paragraph of Law 333/58, the "law on access to personal data" and its amendment concerning "publicly soliciting for the purpose of sex."

"Our situation is desperate," Valido said. "We're frightened to go in the streets, the bars and discos are being permanently closed and it's not safe for us to protest on our own behalf."

laxed about their social situation at home but said they needed letters and protests from outside the country. Yugoslavian delegates were chic and sleek, exuding confidence in their own abilities. Polish delegates were playful, confident and sassy, seemingly reflecting Poland's rebirth. No one came from Rumania.

The East Germans and the Hungarians



Pictured above and below: Delegates descend on the Argentine embassy to protest bogus arrests of gay men and lesbians in Buenos Aires and other Argentine cities.

East bloc gay life opens

ILGA delegates quarrel

The 21 Eastern European delegates to July's 11th World Conference of the Interna-

of interest. The border with Austria is wide open, which has caused East Germany to restrict travel to Hungary for East Germans. A stroll down the main streets of Budapest reminds one much more of Vienna or Barcelona than Havana or Moscow. And news broadcasts, translators assured this reporter, are presented without Communist bias.

ceived extensive media coverage. Address: AG Homosexualität Courage (FDJ), PSF 21, DDR-1058 Berlin, German Democratic Republic. Gay community telephone contact: Peter Sedler at 011-37-4-376428.

Lesbians have formed separate organizations within the Evangelical Church in several cities. Activist Birgit Neumann from the city of Halle says the "exodus of the