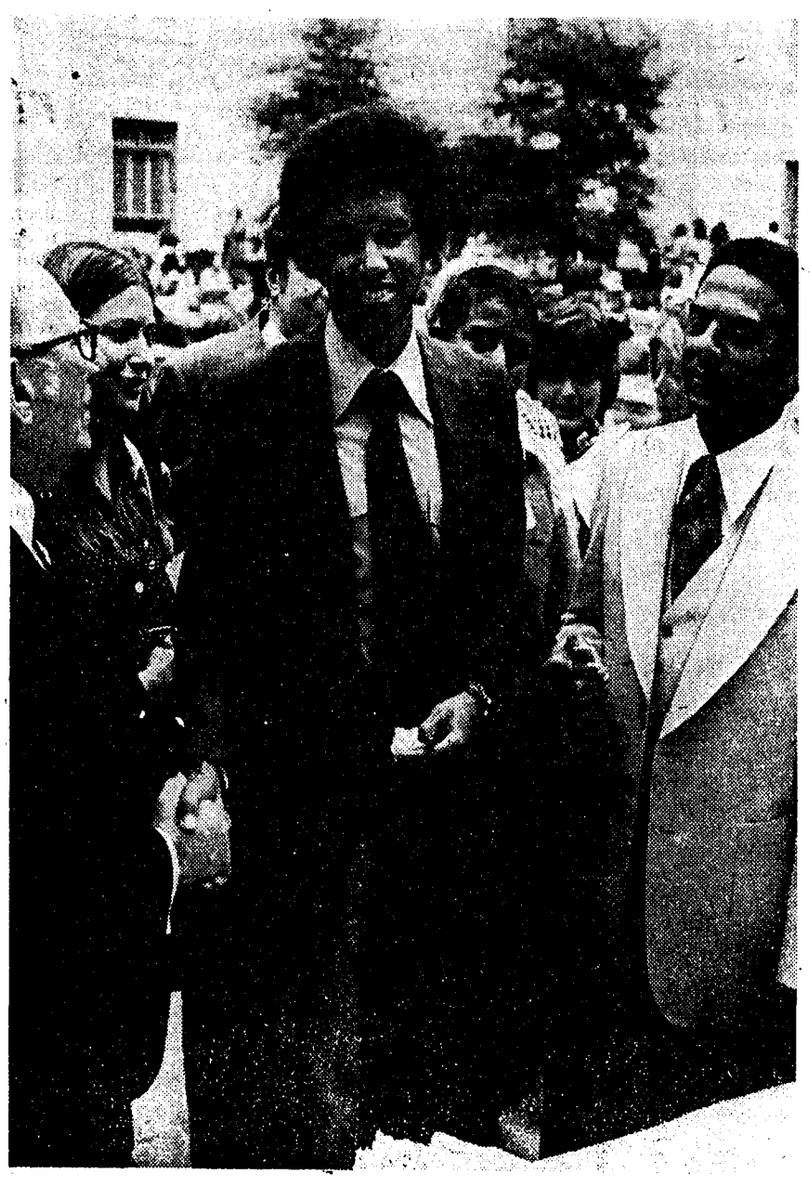


By Joe Heiberger—The Washington Post

Arthur Ashe, center, with Rep. Claude Pepper, left, and Rep. Andrew Young at a reception honoring him for his recent Wimbledon tennis championship.

Arthur Ashe: Center Court Again

By Pam Lambert

Arthur Ashe should have felt right at home last night—after all, he was on the Center Court. This time, however, the Center Court was not Wimbledon's but at the Rayburn House Office Building, where Ashe was the guest of honor at a party hosted by Rep. Andrew Young (D-Ga.).

The coincidence was not accidental. When Young, who first met Ashe at the Robert Kennedy Pro-Celebrity Tournament in 1973 and last year accompanied him on a tour of South Africa, found out that the open area in the center of the Rayburn Building was known as the Center Court, he decided that the opportunity was too good to pass up.

Last night many people in the area apparently decided that the chance to catch a glimpse of the tennis star was also too good to miss, for the area surrounding the court's central pool was thronged with many more than the invited number of guests. Said Ashe's father, Arthur Sr., who went virtually unnoticed in the mob, "They told me there were going to be 400 people; looks more like 600 to me."

As Young's two-year-old, Andrew III (otherwise known as "Bo") flirted with his new acquaintance Autumn Burke, the 1½-year-old daughter of Rep. Yvonne Burke (D-Calif.), the horde busied themselves by patronizing the several bars and refreshment tables—that is, when they weren't trying to get a closer look at their idol.

For Ashe the crush never let up, well-wishers pressed everything from formal invitations to paper plates into his hands for his autograph.

Although few could think of anything to say beyond "congratulations" (and some of the more shy youngsters, like one boy who came down in his tennis whites from Sidwell Friends Tennis Camp, couldn't manage even that), they all wanted to get close to him.

Most of the politicos present had shelved statesmanship for sports for the evening. Prominent members of the congressional tennis circuit present included Sens. Lowell Weicker and Jacob Javits.

Weicker congratulated Ashe on his Wimbledon victory, then said, "You made me a lot of money." It turned out that Weicker, a self-described "longtime Ashe fan," placed some bets with more skeptical members of his Greenwich, Conn., tennis club. He added with a grin, "Now even my tennis sneakers are worth two times as much—I wear Arthur Ashe Tennis Sneakers."

Sen. Javits was pleased at Ashe's victory for reasons of his own. He observed, "Arthur has vindicated all of us old tennis players and showed you never need to quit; what he has left undone I've finished."

Ashe, whose capturing the Wimbledon crown completed the goal he had set himself earlier in the year of winning both the World Championship Tennis and Wimbledon titles, has no special plans tenniswise other than continuing to play all he can.

"When you finish playing, they measure you by the number of titles you won, so I intend to go and play in as many tournaments as I can," he said. Ashe said his offcourt plans include helping Sargent Shriver, whom he described as a "very good friend," with his as yet undeclared presidential campaign.

At one point in the evening Ashe found himself trapped, with the barrier of a food-laden table in front of him, the pool behind him, and fans pressing in on him from both sides. Rep. Young, who had been hovering helpfully at his elbow, succeeded in extricating him and moving the crowd to the area around the microphone, where he gave Ashe an informal tribute.

Young ended the impromptu ceremony by pleading with the crowd, "I hope you won't make him sign any more autographs, just let him circulate and enjoy himself."

An hour later Ashe's date, Eastern Airlines stewardess Cherly Parks of Silver Spring, stood smiling at his side—and Ashe was still signing autographs.



By Joe Heiberger—The Washington Post

Rudy Sanchez and Rhea Mojica Hammer join Rep. Shirley Chisholm (D-N.Y.) at El Congreso' second annual Spanish Speaking Salute to Congress.

El Congreso's Salute

By Jeannette Smyth

Cesar Chavez, the United Farm Workers' president, is probably the most famous Spanish-American activist. But myriad other Spanish-American interest groups, while less well-known, have more members and political clout.

It was these groups who gathered last night to flex their muscles and celebrate their coming of age as political forces to be reckoned with.

El Congreso, the 4-year-old Spanish-American lobby, invited its board of trustees—Spanish-American activists with connections to practically every area of concern—to award citations to seven members of Congress at their Second Annual Spanish Speaking Salute to Congress at the Pentagon City Quality Inn.

Sen. Birch Bayh (D-Ind.) was not on the list for an award but made an appearance because he is a sponsor of the Senate bill to extend to Hispanos the protections of the Voting Rights Bill of 1965, which expires next month. Extension of the act to cover Mexican-Americans, who have trouble voting in the Southwest, was the No. 3 lobbying priority of El Congreso this year, according to El Congreso's legislative program as read into the Congressional Record by Sen. Joseph Montoya (D-N.M.).

Bayh reported that he thought the extension would be reported out of the Senate Judiciary Committee today for floor discussion next week. "When I left tonight, [Sen.] Bill Scott [R-Va.] was filibustering it. He was reading the history of the Indians in Virginia. I think that's just for home consumption, and we'll report it out of committee tomorrow."

Montoya was among the award recipients. Because of his surname and Watergate Committee exposure, he serves as a lightning rod for the problems of Spanish-Americans. He said he gets 600 letters a week "from every state," most of which are concerned with the problems and funding of bilingual education. Montoya, who introduced the original bilingual education bill in 1966, said the other major trends in mail and phone calls are requests for grants and federal jobs for Spanish-Americans.

House Minority Leader John Rhodes (R-Ariz.), another award recipient, said most of his contacts were with the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the oldest and largest (95,000 members) group of its kind. In Arizona, he said, the voting rights problem was not lack of access but apathy. "It's not voter registration, it's lack of interest," he said. "If we could get Spanish-Americans interested in voting, things might be different. A bilingual ballot could help."

The newly elected LULAC president, Manuel Gonzales, likened the position of his group to the moderate NAACP, and distinguished his group from Cesar Chavez's forces. "We have sympathy with the fact that the United Farm Workers are in dire need," he said, "but LULAC's constitution forbids us to participate in demonstrations which could lead to violence. We believe in recourse through the courts." Gonzales admitted, with a sense of humor, that the more radical forces among Spanish-Americans have been calling LULAC "Tio Taco" (Uncle Tom) lately.

Manuel D. Fierro, president of El Congreso's board of trustees, led the celebration. In addition to Montoya and Rhodes, awards were presented to Reps. George Mahon (D-Tex.), Edward Roybal (D-Calif.), Shirley Chisholm (D-N.Y.), Don Edwards (D-Calif.) and Herman Badillo (D-N.Y.).

No 'Ho-Hum' Women's Conference

By Dorothy McCardle

Despite the allegedly "ho-hum" reports of the International Women's Year Conference, which ended two weeks ago in Mexico City, three leading U.S. delegates to the conference pronounced it a success last night.

These firsthand reports were given at a meeting of the Washington Press Club at the Sheraton Carlton Hotel under the overall question: "Was the conference a fiasco or a feminist triumph?"

Jill Ruckelshaus, head of the U.S. National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year, was emphatic that it was "not a fiasco."

"It couldn't possibly have been a fiasco," said Mrs. Ruckelshaus, wife of former Deputy Atty. Gen. William Ruckelshaus, and a leader in many causes.

She got a laugh when she added indignantly, "I have never been associated with a fiasco. I say that, period."

She continued: "It was an enormously significant event. It must have inspired women from all over the world. The conference was a very significant step for women."

Patricia Hutar, head o the U.S. delegation to Mexcio City and a member o the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, was enthusiastic, too She praised the "World Plar of Action," a 49-page document, issued at the end of the conference.

"The world plan of action developed by delegates from 132 nations was very strong," said Mrs. Hutar. "I think that great things will develop from that plan."

Ronnie Feit, a New York lawyer and activist in the women's movement, added that she felt the conference gave the women delegates "a feeling for the first time that the movement is legitimate."

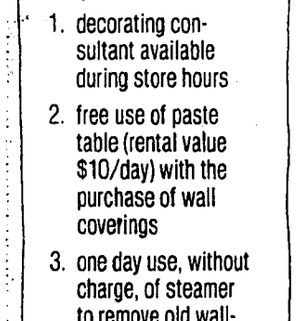
"After all, the women did take over," she said. "They were not manipulated."

Newspaper coverage of the conference came in for questions from the floor. The speakers agreed that much of the reporting of "conference confrontation and strife" had been unfair. They complained of what they called the "ho-hum" attitude of the media toward the conference.

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