

Sobukwe a true leader, say Black Americans

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By PATRICK LAURENCE

VISITING Black American Congressman Andrew Young, and tennis star Arthur Ashe, yesterday called on Mr Robert Sobukwe, the banned former Pan - Africanist leader.

Mr Young, a former leader of the civil rights movement in the Deep South, said: "There are people who shape history. I put Robert Sobukwe in that class."

Mr Ashe said: "He is a real leader of the African people. It is so evident, so obvious, after spending two days with him. It was the most fascinating two hours I have spent in South Africa — and that includes my trip last year."

Mr Sobukwe, who is banned, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in 1960 for his role in the anti-pass law campaign of that year which ended in the Sharpeville shootings. He spent nine years on Robben Island.

What struck both men particularly about Mr Sobukwe was his lack of bitterness and the complete absence of hostility.

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"There are people with limited or no physical resources who fight injustice through the sheer force of their personalities," Mr Young said.

"Like Martin Luther King, Robert Sobukwe is one. I was even thinking during my talk with him that one of these days the South African Government may have to go to Sobukwe like the British went to Kenyatta.

"There is a need for strong men to pull the people together around common goals.

Before leaving Durban for Kimberley, the two Black Americans had motored up to Nongoma to see Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, the Kwa-Zulu Chief Minister.

Mr Ashe said: "We were both deeply impressed by what Chief Buthelezi is trying to do for his people."

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