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STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE BY DR. A.B. XUMA

I am a medical practitioner residing at 85, Toby Street, Sophiatown, Johannesburg.

I am President of the African National Congress, the only national body representing African opinion in the Union. *Almost all African organisations are affiliated with to the Congress.*

My organisation has made representations to various commissions appointed by the Union Government to consider problems affecting the native people regarding the question of organising and recognising Trade Unions among the native workers.

The first representation was made in 1941 to the Kaffir Beer Commission. I gave evidence to the effect that the Government ought to grant recognition by the Department of Labour of organised native trade unions with rights, privileges and immunities pertaining to such organisations among Europeans.

I gave evidence on behalf of my organisation to the inter-departmental committee on the social, health and economic conditions of the urban natives on the 11th October, 1941, when I again urged the Government to grant recognition and registration of African trade unions by the Department of Labour, with rights, privileges and immunities pertaining to such organisations among Europeans.

On the 4th March, 1942, a deputation from the African National Congress interviewed the Deputy Prime Minister regarding recognition to African trade unions. I hand in a copy of the memorandum which was submitted to the Deputy Prime Minister at that time.

It is my definite opinion that had the Government taken steps to recognise trade unions organisations and to

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institute bargaining by trade unions with employers through the Labour Department, a great many incidents, such as the one in the Northfield Colliery, the recent sporadic strikes in Johannesburg, and the bloodshed at Pretoria, would have been avoided.

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