

RAHALL *Report*

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

by Congressman Nick Rahall

January 30 marks the 100th Anniversary of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's birth, and it is a day for all Americans to look back over the preceeding century to examine F.D.R.'s impact on this nation and its people.

In 1932 the United States was bankrupt in every way. With millions out of work and unsheltered from the bitter winds of the depression, the government was at a loss to deal with the crisis. But, under F.D.R.'s leadership the country transformed itself into a working and workable democratic society, with the means and the will to provide its citizens with a decent life.

Indeed, Roosevelt brought America to the realization that the immediate and direct interest of the government in the welfare of all its citizens was also a democratic principle.

Under his stewardship we saw institutions come into being, like--social security, unemployment insurance, the modern labor movement, and the minimum wage. All these programs of the New Deal came about because of Roosevelt's fearless experimentation, and it was he who deserves the credit for their accomplishments.

While Roosevelt had his opponents, and does still to this day, the popular verdict of his life and career is one that puts him on a par with Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln as a creator of American democracy.

More important than any particular goal, more important than any particular program, will be the largeness of democratic spirit that was Franklin D. Roosevelt's distinctive and effortless gift to the American people.

West Virginians have always felt a special closeness to F.D.R., and as his 100th birthday is observed, his spirit will still be alive throughout our State and all over our Nation.