

# RAHALL Weekly Report

## UNEMPLOYMENT IN WEST VIRGINIA

HON. NICK JOE RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 25, 1983*

● Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, last Thursday marked the second anniversary of the Reagan administration coming to power. The President used this date to observe:

My biggest regret is that because the accumulated damages piled up so high for so long, putting America's house in order has been a tough and painful task.

Little does Mr. Reagan know how truly painful his programs have been on the American people—and especially on the people of my home State, West Virginia.

According to the most recent statistics compiled by the West Virginia Department of Employment Security, over 86,000 State residents are out of work. A figure of 15.3 percent, which places West Virginia in the unfortunate position of being No. 1 in the United States in the rate of unemployed persons.

Nearly every aspect of the State's business employment picture has shown a decline in the 24 months of the Reagan administration. Manufacturing jobs are down—14 percent, mining jobs are down—16 percent, and now our Governor has announced the need to lay off 1,600 State employees to stem the tide of a growing economic crisis.

The unemployment rate in all eight counties that make up my congressional district is well above the national average—with the high being in McDowell County—approaching an astronomical 40 percent.

It is hard to believe that just 12 months ago, the unemployment rate in West Virginia was 7.4 percent. Thereby in just 1 year, Reaganomics has doubled the number of out-of-work West Virginians.

Tonight in this Chamber, the President will stand before us and the American people, to give us his assessment of the state of the Union. He will no doubt tell us how successful his administration has been in bringing down the rate of inflation; and he will delight in informing us that the prime interest rate is coming back into reality; and he will certainly predict that economic recovery is just around the corner.

While President Reagan will do his best to maintain his winning reputation as the "Great Communicator," it will be made even clearer to the American people that his policies are not as wise and fair as his campaign rhetoric of 2 years ago led the American people to believe.

Back in West Virginia, my constituents will not be surprised either, because they were not in the first place—in 1980, West Virginia voted Democratic, and will again in 1984.●