

RAHALL

Weekly Report

"LABOR & MANAGEMENT IN THE COAL INDUSTRY"

by Congressman Nick J. Rahall

Recently, I had the honor and pleasure to participate in an historic event between coal labor and coal management.

For the first time since John L. Lewis, a president of the United Mine Workers of America attended a Board of Directors meeting of the National Coal Association. At this gathering, I introduced to the N.C.A. Board, UMWA chief Richard Trumka.

In my remarks, I told the labor and management representatives that, "Togetherness is needed, for you both are fighters for coal."

Granted, differences between the organizations exist, but the issues of agreement are even greater, I believe.

Through a united push by both coal labor and coal management, the issues of waterway improvement for coal transport, opposition to controls on coal burning, and efforts to bring about fair railroad shipping rates can be addressed.

I told the N.C.A. Directors that, "Richard Trumka has brought reform, respect, reason and reliability to the UMWA. These attributes, in my mind, can lead to a better working relationship between both organizations.

The future of the coal industry, not only in West Virginia but throughout the nation, rests on the ability of labor and management to work together. The historic presence of Mr. Trumka at the recent N.C.A. Board meeting signals that the prospects for such a relationship will continue to improve. Without a doubt, this is good news for southern West Virginia.