



U.S. Congressman

Nick Rahall

WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS

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**USE OF "RENT-A-GOONS" IN LABOR DISPUTES
BLASTED BY RAHALL, TRUMKA AND POLICE REP.
Remarks Made At AFL-CIO National Convention**

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) today joined United Mine Workers President Richard Trumka and International Union of Police Associations President Robert Kliesmet in condemning the use of private police forces, electronic surveillance and "rent-a-goan" squads during labor-management disputes.

"We thought workers were guaranteed the right to organize and engage in legitimate activities, including the strike, free from intimidation and coercion," Rahall stated during a meeting of the AFL-CIO's biennial convention. "Yet, now, in 1989, we see a new generation of armed, helmeted mercenaries confronting workers who are exercising their legal rights. We see a new crop of companies who make millions by providing scabs who take jobs from peaceful strikers, and storm troopers armed with mace, nightsticks and even firearms who threaten their picket lines."

United Mine Workers' President Richard Trumka echoed Rahall's concern. "Vance guards are the high-tech heirs of the Pinkerton and Baldwin-Felts detectives brought in by coal companies during the union organizing drives of the 1920's and 30's," he said in reference to the use of the firm Vance International by Pittston during the coal strike. The firm provides guards and other "services" to companies involved in labor disputes. Vance, and five other similar companies, were added today to the AFL-CIO's "union-busting Dishonor Roll."

According to the President of the policeman's union: "We do not believe that union busting efforts should include the engagement of abusive "rent-a-cops" as we in the professional law enforcement community so endearingly refer to them," Kliesmet said.

Rahall concluded: "I would hope that we will put an end to the unsavory business of moving armed troops around the country for such purposes."

- 30 -