

s Coal, Election, CETA



REP. STANLEY N. LUNDINE
Prime GOP target?

The congressman focused on two major problems in CETA — the type of jobs funded and the potential for local politicians to build their own political power base from CETA.

CETA jobs can be dead-end ones, with a worker painting fence posts and thus getting no job training, Lundine noted. On the other hand, he suggested, CETA can also use its federal funds to pay for a "fireman who would have been hired as a fireman anyway."

About 20-30 percent of the city of Buffalo's employees are funded through CETA, Lundine estimated, "and that isn't the intent of the program."

Lundine emphasized that CETA jobs must be targeted where structural unemployment is located. Trying to knock the unemployment rate below 5 percent by manipulating demand just ups inflation and solves nothing, he said.

Lundine looks to the private sector for part of the solution. He would like to see groups like the National Alliance of Businessmen, which has a direct contact with the private sector, involved in the placement of jobs.

The congressman also suggested subsidies for private sector employers, allowing them to develop on-the-job training programs. Training should be on the job rather than in the classroom, he suggested. As an example of flaws in the current laws, he said Jamestown Community College's on-the-job skills upgrading program ran into problems because of the law's excessive inflexibility.

Lundine was less sure about what CETA changes could reduce its susceptibility to political abuse, a problem that has been mentioned in Chautauqua County.

This problem cuts through both sides of the political fence. Like Democrats in Cattaraugus and Steuben counties, Republicans in Chautauqua County have complained about the CETA office being used to discriminate against them, Lundine observed.

Wanting to champion local control in government programs, Lundine hopes CETA can remain a largely local function.

"But," he concluded, "as long as the control is local, I don't know how you avoid some degree of political base building potential."

Social Security

Such a public outcry has been raised over the new social security taxes slated to go into effect next Jan. 1 that an election-year Congress will return to the drawing board to soften the impact of the increased taxes, Lundine agreed with a questioner.

"I personally felt that the social security (bill) was an ill-advised solution," Lundine noted.

It would fly in the face of the economy's two fundamental objectives, to reduce inflation and unemployment, Lundine explained that the new payroll tax would be so burdensome that it would create more unemployment, particularly in small business, while also being inflationary.

When asked about possible solutions, Lundine mentioned the suggestions of some of the young turks on the House Ways and Means Committee who want to detach disability insurance and health insurance from the social security fund.

Lundine pointed out that he had thought the social security trust fund should be inviolate (untouched). But he also said that added to the original retirement program have been programs that really are welfare programs, like SSI (supplemental security income), Medicare and disability insurance.

Thus, he concluded, the original funding concept of social security has become unrealistic.

Reluctantly then, Lundine emphasized, he would propose one of two courses of action.

Either the trust fund should be preserved by equal contributions from general revenues, employers and employees, he suggested, or the so-called welfare programs in social security should be severed from the retirement program.

year ago.

"I have real hopes," he observed, "that in one fashion or another, we'll get a program in place this year."

CETA Outlook

"I fully agree that CETA can be improved," Lundine said and he plans to take an active role in the facelifting job when CETA comes up for congressional reauthorization.

CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act) is a federal program that provides up to \$10,000 in either the public or private sector to create a temporary job for the chronically unemployed worker.