

For Lundine, Wednesday Will Long Be Remembered

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The signing of the long-sought West Valley cleanup bill, coupled with a trip back to Washington in Air Force One made Wednesday a day Rep. Stanley Lundine, D-Jamestown, is not likely to soon forget.

Lundine left Washington Wednesday while the House was still in session to attend the signing of the

West Valley bill by the president in Niagara Falls.

The congressman flew into Buffalo yesterday afternoon on a commercial flight and rushed to Niagara Falls so he could join the crowd of other political dignitaries who were also in town for the signing. They included New York Gov. Hugh Carey, Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan, D-N.Y., Sen. Jacob Javits, D-N.Y., and senatorial candidate Elizabeth Holtzman.

With the House holding marathon sessions in an attempt to pass as much legislation as possible before adjourning today until after the election, Lundine planned to return to the Capitol as soon as the ceremonies were completed.

Luckily for him, his plans meshed with those of the president, who was also returning to Washington, and Lundine was invited to fly back aboard the chief executive's plane, Air Force One.

"It was a great thrill," Lundine said today, noting that it was the first time he has ever been aboard the plane, which carries the nation's top executive all around the world.

Yesterday was Carter's 56th birthday, and the plane's stewards made him a birthday cake, Lundine said. Everyone aboard the plane, including the press, Lundine said, watched as the Carter cut the cake and joined in an impromptu birthday party.

During the flight, Lundine toured the plane, and had a look at Carter's private cabin and the communications system, which he described as "really remarkable."

Even more memorable than his flight on the presidential plane, he said, was the signing of the West Valley bill.

"I'm just delighted," he said. "Now we have authorization for the entire project at West Valley." He noted that the project will be subject to annual appropriations, but that he expects full support for the program.

"The most important thing is that we didn't have to trade anything to get the bill through," he said. "There were no deals to accept new nuclear waste or to accommodate any other state or federal programs in return for the West Valley program."

He was referring to plans speculated about in the past in which the federal government would approve the cleanup project only if the state promised to accept other nuclear wastes, Lundine said today will be the last day the House will meet until it reconvenes after the November election.

The only business expected to be considered is the possible expulsion of Rep. Michael Myers, D-Pa. He was convicted last month of accepting a bribe during the FBI's Abscam operation.