

# WASHINGTON DATELINE

By Trude B. Feldman  
ISRAELITE'S WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT

## John William McCormack

The growing trend of isolationism in America has to be countervailed immediately, says John William McCormack on his retirement this month as Speaker of the House of Representatives.

"I don't like the feeling of isolationism that is developing in our country," he said, because "to the potential enemy it is a sign of weakness on our part."

"If we make peace at any price in South Vietnam, it will be the worst psychological defeat our country could sustain. We have too much appeasement in America and I don't like it."

"We had isolationism in the Hitler days," he added. "People didn't believe in Nazism but believed that 'We can live with him'. I find the same feeling today. People say communism isn't so bad. 'We can live with it'. But we should keep our guard up. I believe in hoping for the best but I want my country to be prepared for the worst, because we no longer have the Atlantic as our first line of defense."

After 42 years of service in the nation's House of Representatives--eight of them in the exalted position as Speaker, the Democratic



JOHN MC CORMACK, RETIRING SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE, REVIEWS HIS 42 YEARS IN CONGRESS IN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH OUR WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT TRUDE B. FELDMAN, AT WASHINGTON'S MAYFLOWER HOTEL... PHOTO BY WARREN MC CALL

leader reviewed his past service to the country in an exclusive interview on his 79th birthday this week.

He said he would like to see a "united America, a strengthened America and a progressive America that looks ahead in coming decades and a strong America capable of preserving itself".

In looking back on his career, McCormack

views with greatest satisfaction the progressive legislation he sponsored that "means so much to the hopes and aspirations of human beings such as the old-age pension, minimum wage, medicare, the voting rights act, and the 18-year-old vote".

Although the Speaker refused to play favorites when asked which Administration did the most for America -- he's been in Congress since Calvin Coolidge-- he singled out the Roosevelt Administration as the most challenging.

"America was in despair when Roosevelt was elected," he recalled. "Had he wanted to, he could have become an absolute dictator, but he did not. He was an amazing man. He gave strong leadership. He electrified the people and gave them hope and confidence in their government."

Asked for the advice he would give to freshmen Congressmen, John McCormack said that his 42 years on Capitol Hill proved that a member of the legislative body should become a profound student of rules of the House of Representatives.

"In time he will be recognized as a very able parliamentarian and immediately his prestige increases in the minds of his colleagues without regard to party."

He also said that being a legislator is hard work and one must drive hard. "No matter how long one is in Congress, he can always learn," he said. "Even with all my years here, and I've been a student of it all my life, I still learn each day."

Although McCormack has never traveled outside of the United States, he has had a decided influence on American foreign policy. His greatest concern in the world arena today is in the Middle East. He sees the Moslems, blinded by their hatred of Israel, becoming captives of Russia.

"The issue is not just of Israel, but the fact that the Arab States may awake to find themselves imprisoned as Russian satellites," he said. "They should remember what happened to Czechoslovakia when it attempted to assert its independence."

"The Russians are gradually breaking down the Arabs' historic desire for freedom, which is rooted in their religion, by sending military aid and assistance, technicians and fighting forces to the Middle East under the guise of anti-Zionism."

"The real goal of communism is to dominate the world. Their whole purpose is to isolate America from the rest of the world."

McCormack sees Soviet expansion in the Middle East as a threat to the United States, because it seals off a large and important part of the world from Western influence.

He is of the opinion that American response should be action which continuously assures the integrity and safety of Israel, and makes clear America's determination to thwart Soviet expansion.

"The best chance for peace in the Middle East lies with direct negotiations between the adversaries," he said.

He envisions viable agreements between the Arab states and Israel resulting from territorial concessions by Israel in exchange for meaningful Arab actions reflecting peaceful intentions towards the Jewish state.

"Until peace comes," he said, "it's in our national interest to see Israel strong just as it is in the national interest of the State itself."

(Continued next week)

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