

# What About Moynihan?

By James Reston

WASHINGTON, Jan. 29—The Ford Administration is in a pickle about how to handle Daniel Patrick Moynihan, its ambassador at the United Nations, but it has nobody to blame but itself.

He was sent to the U.N. to defend the United States against unfair attacks because he had argued as a private citizen that the time had come to "call a spade a spade," but when he got there, he called it a bloody shovel.

That's Pat. He didn't get where he is by using English understatement. He's an Irishman, a brilliant teacher, a vivid writer, and a non-stop talker: in short, a "character" and one of the last colorful personalities in American public life today. Precisely what we need in the Senate of the United States, where almost nobody is either eloquent or outrageously frank.

It seems a pity to waste Mr. Moynihan's talents for controversy at the United Nations, which was organized to compose the differences between nations. And it is ironic to hear him argue that it is a "basic foreign policy goal" of the United States to break up "the massive blocs of nations, mostly new nations, which for so long have been arrayed against us in international forums. . . ."

For while Pat was not around at San Francisco or at the skating rink in New York when the United Nations started, he is a good enough historian to know that the United States invented and organized the first "massive" voting bloc in the forties and fifties to support Washington's policies.

Moreover, his sense of humor must be as good as his sense of history, and he must remember that the men in charge of organizing the first bloc-voting in the United Nations, particularly in corraling the votes of the Latin Americans, were his old friends Nelson Rockefeller and Tom Finletter of New York, and Adlai Stevenson of Illinois.

So bloc voting in the U.N. may be a bad thing but it is not a new thing, and not an invention of the new nations. They just happen now to be the majority in the U.N., and like the OPEC countries, who have learned the laws of supply and demand, they are using the old political tactics of the West against the nations that used them in the first place.

Mr. Moynihan was the first to dramatize the dangers of this latest outrage of bloc-voting in the U.N. and to insist that the United States defend itself against the unfair attacks of the "new

majority." This is why he was appointed ambassador, but he has turned his appointment and his principle into a crusade, and has lately been challenging not only the anti-American bloc in the United Nations but his own Government and colleagues in the State Department.

There was something elemental about India, when Mr. Moynihan was ambassador in New Delhi, that moderated his turbulence; but in his embassy in the Waldorf Towers and in the cockpit of the U.N. General Assembly and Security Council, he seems to have let himself go, and almost provoked his mission to challenge not only the opposition governments but his own President and Secretary of State. When he was in Washington, Moynihan recommended that there were times when problems needed a little "benign neglect," but when he got to the U.N., he forgot to remember his own principle.

His long diplomatic dispatch to Mr. Kissinger, complaining that the minor

## WASHINGTON

officials of the State Department, but not Kissinger, were opposing his outspoken attacks on the anti-American blocs, was a little too clever, and the Secretary's public support of his mission was misleading.

Mr. Kissinger agrees with Moynihan's defense of American interests, but not with his style, his provocative rhetoric, his rambling off-the-cuff debating tactics, his self-concerning appeals to the rest of the U. S. Foreign Service, or his vicious attacks on the State Department bureaucracy.

But in the process of Mr. Moynihan's strictures, he has disclosed the sources of his information, particularly officials of the U.N. Secretariat, and spread his opinions so widely that, wise as he is in the ways of the press, he risked the almost certain chance that they would be made public.

Even so, Mr. Kissinger, who served with Mr. Moynihan at Harvard and knows him well, can scarcely be surprised. Pat's idea of confronting the U.N. was not only defensible but long overdue; however, leaving it to Pat himself almost certainly meant that it would be overdone, and that's what has happened.

Now Messrs. Ford and Kissinger support him in public and deplore him in private. Having put him in the job, they can neither tame nor repudiate him. He has always been the enemy of his best ideas, always used the most provocative phrases, but Mr. Kissinger knew all that before and is now having to deal with the consequences of his own regrets.