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Moynihan and the Neocons

Greg Weiner

IN HIS BIOGRAPHY of Norman Podhoretz, Thomas Jeffers reports that one St. Patrick's Day—Podhoretz could not recall the year—United States senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan alighted unannounced on his old friend's Manhattan doorstep to offer an accounting of himself. The precise content of the conversation is unrecorded, but tension over Moynihan's senatorial record—on policy toward the Soviets especially—was generally understood to have strained the men's years-long friendship.

Today, more than a generation after that encounter, and more than a decade after the senator's death, many neoconservatives still want an accounting from Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Their dispositions are at once admiring and aggravated; the intellectual kinship is often celebrated, though sometimes mixed with accusations of ideological betrayal. I was at a recent conference of political scientists, presenting a paper on Moynihan, when one audience member, perfectly pleasant and seemingly admiringly disposed toward the scholar-statesman, exclaimed: "Reagan could have used Moynihan's help, but he didn't get it because Moynihan liked being a senator!" The accusation is not uncommon. Neither is the underlying assumption: Moynihan was one of us, but his politics trumped his principles.

Yet the veracity of the charge hinges on to whom the "us" refers. Some tenets of neoconservatism—at least as its "godfather," Irving Kristol, elucidated it—reasonably describe Moynihan. But Moynihan always rejected "neoconservatism" as a label, and what neoconservatism eventually became, a political movement, never enticed him. He always felt that the goals that he did share with Kristol—what Kristol

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described as a “conservative welfare state” that rejected the Great Society model, for example, appears to be close to what Moynihan understood to be the ethic of the New Deal—were properly described as liberal.

And a liberal is what Moynihan was through and through: a New Dealer for whom the Democratic Party was as much a Burkean platoon politically as his local Catholic parish was ethnically. His essential principles remained unchanged between the first ballot he cast in the basement of St. Raphael’s Church in Hell’s Kitchen in 1948 and the last vote he cast in the chamber of the United States Senate 52 years later. The pandemonium of the 1960s distressed but never disillusioned him—a distinction that is decisive for understanding why he declined to join the neoconservative defection from the Democratic Party. Moynihan, a self-aware thinker entitled to self-description, resisted the neoconservative label with emphatic consistency.

And yet: Some of his most important writings were published in the pages of *The Public Interest*, including on the cover of its first issue half a century ago. Some of his most cherished friends and intellectual partners were named Kristol, Himmelfarb, Podhoretz, and Decter. Some of his closest aides—Elliott Abrams, Checker Finn—enlisted in the Reagan revolution. Moynihan was a fervent anti-totalitarian, an impassioned defender of Israel, and a career-long welfare reformer. His affinity with and appeal to neoconservatism were real.

But the claim of a conversion of convenience—that Moynihan the neocon intellectual became Moynihan the New York liberal in order to retain his Senate seat—is belied by the clear evidence of Moynihan’s liberalism in the public record well before he took the senatorial oath in 1977. This is not to say he never changed his mind, but the only truly major change—his evolution regarding U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union (not a small matter, to be sure)—is much more explicable by shifting information than by crass politics. But Moynihan’s consistency is more difficult to see because the character of American liberalism changed around him. Moynihan’s singular strain of liberalism—what I have called “Burkean liberalism,” a liberalism of locality and limitation—renders him inescapably vulnerable to co-optation. These elements of his thought constitute a woven figure that cannot be undone if he is to be coherently understood. If its Burkean and liberal components are detached, Moynihan easily appears to belong to either the traditionally conservative or conventionally liberal camps, rather than being properly located on his own distinctive ground.

Ultimately, of course, understanding Moynihan's thought on its own terms is more important than choosing which label to give it. But there is something in a name, and something in the fact that Moynihan so emphatically resisted this one. That may have to do with the evolution of neoconservatism from an intellectual current in its exile years to a political power in its ascendant period. Moynihan's dispute was not so much with the *ideas* of the gifted New York circle of intellectuals who became the neoconservatives, though such disputes would emerge. It was with the fact that, as he put it in 1988, they had "gone over" — having concluded that these principles would be best pursued in the Republican Party. This Moynihan never accepted.

WHAT IS NEOCONSERVATISM?

In 1976, the year Moynihan was first elected to the Senate, Irving Kristol set forth five principles of neoconservatism. Moynihan at this point had been a prominent public intellectual for over a decade. It is as likely that Kristol's neoconservatism was influenced by Moynihan's liberalism as the other way around; almost certainly the reality is that the men influenced each other. In any case, the mere fact of compatibility between their ideas does not prove that Moynihan was a neoconservative any more than it proves that Kristol was a liberal. But some likenesses are striking.

First, Kristol argued that "[n]eoconservatism is not at all hostile to the idea of a welfare state, but it is critical of the Great Society version of this welfare state." The problem was that the Great Society intruded into subsidiary social institutions. This view, as we shall see, was entirely compatible with concerns Moynihan had been voicing about the Great Society since the mid-1960s.

The question is how to describe the welfare state that remains when the micromanaging superstructure of the Great Society is removed. Moynihan simply called it the New Deal. Kristol repeatedly described it as a "conservative" welfare state. Kristol, to be sure, emphasized the need for a fiscally sustainable welfare state; on the other hand, one of Moynihan's last major bills sought to mitigate Social Security's solvency crisis, including by addressing benefit growth and adding a private account, and one of his last public acts was to serve on George W. Bush's Social Security commission. In his correspondence, Moynihan described the private Social Security accounts as a means of spreading ownership of assets. He never regarded this position as anything other than liberal.

Second, Kristol stated, neoconservatives “ha[d] learned to have great respect” for markets and preferred, when it was necessary to interfere with them for social purposes, to do so within a market framework. Reserved judgment is the better part of prudence on this score as regards Moynihan; his writings do not delineate a comprehensive economic doctrine. He did say a guaranteed income would allow the poor to make their own market choices, and he lamented the “radical disjunction” in liberal thinking “between the production of wealth and its distribution.” But it is also fair to say his Senate votes were probably more conventionally liberal than what Kristol had in mind.

Next, “[n]eoconservatism,” Kristol wrote, “tends to be respectful of traditional values and institutions: religion, the family, the ‘high culture’ of Western civilization.” Moynihan had been expressing this view, too, for a decade—including firm and principled opposition to the radical left of the 1960s—and understood his view as, properly speaking, the liberal one. He repeatedly and admiringly invoked the Catholic doctrine of subsidiarity, the idea that a problem should be addressed by the closest competent social institution; he was a lifelong crusader for the family; his favorite quotation of Burke was the *Reflections*’ “little platoons.”

Fourth, and perhaps the greatest point of tension, Kristol said neoconservatism rejected “equality of condition” as “a proper goal for government to pursue.” Moynihan, by contrast, had said in *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* in 1965 that equality of condition was the next step in the fight for racial equality. It is unclear to what extent Moynihan and Kristol would disagree on policy on this front, but certainly the rhetorical inflection differed.

Finally, “neoconservatism believes that American democracy is not likely to survive for long in a world that is overwhelmingly hostile to American values.” Kristol noted, however, that there was only a “weak” consensus among neoconservatives about what precisely this meant. They had gone “every which way” on Vietnam, for example, a war Moynihan had opposed. Within the broad parameters of this description, certainly Moynihan—again, describing himself as liberal—conforms to it.

The challenge of description lies in the fact that what Kristol forecast next did occur—but only half of it: “[I]f the political spectrum moved rightward and we should become ‘neoliberal’ tomorrow, I could accept that too.” The spectrum *did* move rightward, but the neoconservatives

did not become neoliberals, at least not as the term is usually understood. Many, to Moynihan's dismay, moved rightward with it.

Moynihan wrote in 1988: "I was by this time [1984] a bit estranged from a greatly gifted circle of New York writers who first came together in dismay at the 'liberal' politics of the 1960s. Many had gone over to the Republicans: many had entered the new administration or assertively supported it. I hadn't, didn't, wouldn't, don't."

But even Kristol's description — "neoliberal" — Moynihan likely would not apply to himself, for it suggests something new, a reaction to the 1960s that caused a mutated strain of liberalism to emerge. Moynihan felt his feet were planted in one place the whole time. It was the left that split from liberalism. The gifted circle of neoconservatives reacted to the "liberal" policies (the qualifying quotation marks are Moynihan's) of the 1960s. Moynihan did not regard them as *actually* liberal. Kristol famously described a neoconservative as a liberal mugged by reality. This was a liberal *changed*, a liberal who became something else. Moynihan was never thus assaulted. He thought it was the New Deal that had been mugged — by the Great Society.

MOYNIHAN AS LIBERAL

We can begin to understand Moynihan's liberalism by starting where he did: with ethnicity. It is too strong, but not by much, to describe his affinity with the Democratic Party in those terms. He used to tell students that the most important datum in ascertaining a person's political affiliation was the year he was born. Moynihan thus wrote Jane Perlez of the *New York Times* in 1983 that his "'ideological roots' [were] not, and in truth could not be, in the 'neo-conservative movement.' I am a 56 year old man: my ideological roots are in the Democratic party of Franklin D. Roosevelt." He spoke of government as "the instrument of the common purpose" and admiringly of the New Deal as "an ethic of collective provision." Moynihan would even use the "liberal" moniker for several dispositions other commentators might describe as conservative: what he called the liberal belief in "restraint" and the "persistence of sin," for example; similarly, "the doctrines of liberalism are derived from experience, rather than right reason."

Moynihan was acutely aware of the emergence of neoconservatism — it engaged some of his closest intellectual and personal friends — but his decision not to join the revolt was equally deliberate.

That he was associated with the movement, often by mere dint of his friendships, often annoyed and sometimes amused him. In his United Nations memoir, *A Dangerous Place*, he wrote of the early to mid-1970s, when socialists attempted to influence the Democratic Party:

The Straussians would now presumably resume their critique of liberalism, allied with a point of view that was coming to be known as “neo-conservative,” a term that had first appeared in [Irving] Howe’s journal, *Dissent*, and was now being applied with no very fine distinction to persons such as Kristol, who was indeed one, to [Daniel] Bell, who demanded the right to remain a socialist, and to persons of the center such as myself, resigned to the fate of personifying, at one and the same time, “neoconservatism” to Michael Harrington and “left-liberalism” to William F. Buckley, Jr.

Moynihan here described himself as a man of the “center,” but elsewhere when he spoke of the center, he specified the “liberal” center. This liberal center — as opposed to the liberal left — subscribed to New Deal liberalism, not Great Society liberalism. In Moynihan’s understanding, New Deal liberalism was ameliorative; Great Society liberalism was transformative. New Deal liberalism operated macroeconomically; Great Society liberalism functioned micromanagementally. The crowning triumph of New Deal liberalism was thus Social Security, a massive program of redistribution that enlisted government in its core competence of collecting funds and cutting checks, and in the process turned the poorest class of citizens into the wealthiest. The characteristic failure of Great Society liberalism was the Community Action Program Moynihan chronicled in his book *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding*; it sought to insert the federal government into neighborhoods and to finance both political upheaval and social transformation.

The Great Society years inspired Moynihan’s most searching and systematic thinking about politics, and he wrote in *Coping*, his collection of essays from that era, that “[t]he Federal government is good at collecting revenues, and rather bad at disbursing services. Therefore, we should use the Federal fisc as an instrument for redistributing income between different levels of government, different regions and different classes.”

The Great Society could be said to have done this in a sense, but not the sense one would wish. In one of his characteristic bursts of insight, Moynihan observed that the actual effect of the Great Society—which for a time taxed the poor to pay middle-class social workers to minister to them—was probably to redistribute income upward. Godfrey Hodgson’s seminal biography *The Gentleman from New York* recalls that Moynihan once told a group of Harvard students who accosted him about Nixon Administration education cuts that they were “defending a class interest”: As future teachers and education bureaucrats, they were going to receive the funds they sought to protect. Social workers, Moynihan noted on another occasion, should beware of sanctimony. It was fine for them to claim they chose their profession in order to do good, but they were also compensated for the service. Meanwhile, “[s]hoe-factory workers in Manchester, almost certainly earning considerably less than social workers in the same city, are not permitted to declare that they have chosen their profession for humanitarian reasons.”

Rather than sending Moynihan searching for a new philosophy, either a conservatism or a neoconservatism, all this reinforced his faith in the old one: the basic ameliorative ethic of the New Deal. Witness his bold attempt to extend the insurance principle of the New Deal to the entire working population through the guaranteed income. To achieve this, he enlisted in the Nixon Administration, a move that is often misunderstood to reflect disenchantment with liberalism but that in fact reflects an immense confidence in it. That Moynihan joined forces with Nixon is undeniably significant but is in a larger sense also incidental to his policy aims. Moynihan wanted to pursue the guaranteed income—a project, he said afterward, of “political liberals”—and felt the Democratic Party was, as he put it, ideologically “exhausted” from the battles of the 1960s. Nixon, by contrast, was interested. James Q. Wilson would later observe that Moynihan served four presidents of two parties, Kennedy through Ford, “not because he had no views but because he persuaded the presidents in each case that their views should move toward his.”

That Moynihan adhered to the basic elements of the New Deal helps to explain why, to the consternation of later neoconservatives, he opposed welfare reform in 1995 and 1996. Moynihan’s objection was not to the concept of reform, a goal he had pursued for decades. He had, in fact, authored the legislation that unleashed the much ballyhooed gubernatorial experiments in welfare policy. Moynihan objected to

repealing the federal *guarantee* of welfare benefits for dependent children. This was a retreat from the New Deal—a repeal, not a reform, of what he saw as one of the New Deal’s greatest and most humanitarian achievements. Welfare reform was, to Moynihan, one more utopian enterprise—ironically reminiscent of the Great Society—accompanied by excessive promises and overly bold faith in the human capacity to predict the consequences of policy. “Scholars have been working at these issues for years now,” he implored, describing the bill as unconservative, “and the more capable they are, the more tentative and incremental their findings.”

During the course of that debate, as in earlier ones, it often fell to Moynihan to defend the Great Society against excessive calumnies. He wrote the Moynihan Report, which charted the disintegration of the African-American family, on the basis of datasets that preceded the first shot in the War on Poverty, so he had ample reason to reject claims of a causal connection between the Great Society and the social ills that followed—variations on which were occurring in all nations of the Atlantic world regardless of their welfare policies.

Other elements of the 1960s elicited his more explicit disgust. Violence became chic, words the handmaiden of will. This was no class revolution; it was elite anomie. “The president of Yale toyed with it,” he wrote; “the president of the AFL-CIO wouldn’t touch it.” Moynihan would later note that the platform of Students for a Democratic Society, the contented work of middle-class radicals, was silent on the topic of poverty. Though he opposed the escalating American involvement in Vietnam, Moynihan said he nonetheless could not “accept the great debasement of language and the fantasizing of politics that accompanied the reaction to the war.”

But this again was a derangement of liberalism, and thus no cause for Moynihan to abandon the doctrine itself. Indeed, in the culture wars of the 1960s that so strained his patience, Moynihan likely saw a cousin to, if not a twin of, the conflict that dominated the politics of his youth: the split between the mainstream and patriotic liberalism he espoused and the deluded faction of Stalinist enthusiasts on the hard left.

THE LIBERAL ANTI-COMMUNIST

Moynihan’s staunch opposition to communism led to perhaps his most striking affinity and most serious strain with the neoconservative

movement. As a veteran of the early battles between liberals and Stalinists, Moynihan knew that anti-communism was not sufficient to render one conservative. Moynihan and his Senate mentor, Henry “Scoop” Jackson of Washington state, stood in a long tradition of liberals who hewed simultaneously to unrelenting anti-communist and New Dealer beliefs. Indeed, the New Deal, many believed, had saved the country from having to face a significant Stalinist movement during the Depression years.

Moynihan first came to public attention on foreign affairs with the appearance of his seminal *Commentary* essay “The United States in Opposition,” which argued that the government should treat the United Nations General Assembly as a parliamentary body in which, as an opposition party, America’s most powerful weapons were rhetorical. As ambassador to the U.N., he thus thundered away against despots like Idi Amin and fought the seemingly trivial but cumulatively damaging resolutions of the anti-American nations that assailed the supposedly oppressive West while denying their own illiberalism.

His first Senate address opposed the nomination of Paul Warnke to head the 1977 SALT negotiations. Warnke’s 1975 *Foreign Policy* article “Apes on a Treadmill” had called on the United States to disarm certain weapons systems unilaterally in the hopes of Soviet reciprocation. Moynihan thought this foolish. Significantly, in the course of explaining himself, Moynihan reminded his colleagues of his opposition to the Vietnam War. He had been a board member of Americans for Democratic Action, he noted, and in that capacity had voted not to endorse Lyndon Johnson for re-election in 1968. But he had done so *because* he perceived an expansive totalitarian threat from which the Vietnam War was a distraction. The war was a mistake but not an ignoble one. He later chastised President Carter for his national self-flagellation over the war: “[W]hy describe our failure in terms that make us so culpable rather than merely fallible?”

It was not surprising, consequently, that admirers of Moynihan experienced more than a bit of whiplash when, in the early 1980s, he began supporting a less aggressive posture toward the Soviets. Critics have imputed this to partisanship: Either Moynihan was tacking left to prevent a liberal challenge in his 1982 re-election, or he was motivated by animus toward Ronald Reagan. Yet a simpler explanation, more charitable and more in character — with external evidence as support — is

available: Moynihan changed his mind because new information became available. In the late 1970s, demographic studies showed male life expectancy declining in the Soviet Union. Moynihan observed that such a decline was all but impossible in the modern world; something in the Soviet Union was going seriously wrong. “If demography is destiny,” Moynihan would later write, “this was a society growing ill. Or, if you like, breaking down.”

These considerations led Moynihan to his astonishingly prescient 1979 prediction, printed in *Newsweek*, that the Soviet Union could collapse along ethnic lines within a decade. By the early 1980s, the policy conclusion followed: Let them collapse. Attempting to accelerate the process—which was what Moynihan understood the Reagan policy to be doing—entailed actions that were prudentially and legally precarious. In a 1984 commencement address at New York University, he thus concluded: “Our grand strategy should be to wait out the Soviet Union; its time is passing. Let us resolve to be here, our old selves, with an ever surging font of ideas. When the time comes, it will be clear that in the end freedom did prevail.”

During this period, Moynihan grew increasingly alarmed at what he characterized as the Reagan administration’s challenges to, if not outright violations of, international law. The CIA’s mining of the Nicaraguan harbors was the most flagrant example; Moynihan called it an act of war. The invasion of Grenada, he argued, violated the charter of the Organization of American States. Neoconservatives and traditional conservatives have assailed these positions, but none of them were new. Moynihan had supported international law as a basis of relations among states his entire career. As early as his doctoral dissertation at Tufts, which explored the rise of the International Labor Organization in the aftermath of World War I, he had harbored hope for the system of international law emanating from the Treaty of Versailles.

The year before “The United States in Opposition” appeared, he gave an admiring, if complex, lecture on Woodrow Wilson on the 50th anniversary of the 28th president’s death. Moreover, far from being a summons to hard-nosed *realpolitik*, “The United States in Opposition” was a call to hold critics of the West to standards of law, including the U.N. Charter. Nor was the invocation of international law a partisan tool sharpened for Reagan alone: In 1980, Moynihan had gone so far as to oppose President Carter’s mission to rescue the U.S. hostages in

Tehran on the grounds that the nation was awaiting a ruling on the situation from the International Court of Justice.

Of course, Moynihan may have been wrong in some or all of this. But he was not a political opportunist. A superficial dichotomy that pits hawks against doves in foreign policy—a dynamic assuming that some were tough on the Soviets, others weak—may obscure this fact. By that measure, Moynihan might indeed be seen to have defected from the hawks to the doves. Senator Frank Church made that error in reverse in responding to Moynihan's Warnke speech with surprise, declaring that he preferred the Moynihan of a decade earlier, presumably the Moynihan who had opposed the Vietnam War. The suggestion was that one was either for war or for accommodation. But to Moynihan, one was either for effective and lawful opposition to totalitarianism or one was not. His changing votes arose not from changes in that principle but from changes in the facts to which it was applied.

Moynihan remained a principled defender of democracy but was never an advocate for assertive efforts to spread it. On the contrary, he explicitly warned against them:

[O]ur optimism, belief in progress, and the possibility of achieving human happiness on earth, combined with our considerable achievement in this respect at home, have led us to an increasingly dangerous and costly effort to extend our system abroad. We are in the grip of what Reinhold Niebuhr has called “The Myth of Democratic Universality.”

Instead, the United States, he believed, should fight battles of ideas in ideological forums. It should maintain a posture of nuclear deterrence. And, once he concluded the Soviet Union was doomed, he said it should be allowed to die. That this latter position happened to align his votes with those who had always sought accommodation with the Soviets, even in the heyday of totalitarianism, does not suggest a realignment of his ideas. Michael Barone later explained: “Moynihan began voting with the foreign policy doves, but for different reasons: They believed that the Soviet Union was dangerous but not evil... Moynihan believed that the Soviet Union was evil but not dangerous.” Accordingly, concerns both about offensive weapons systems like the MX missile and budgetary concerns in an era of expanding deficits took precedence.

There is of course room for reasonable criticism of Moynihan on this score, as on others. Whether the Soviet Union was careening toward a cliff of its own disintegrative accord or whether Reagan shoved it over the edge remains a subject of debate. But Moynihan's views were consistent, not expedient. Moreover, since his youth he had considered them liberal. He told the *New Republic* in 1977, at his muscular Cold Warrior peak: "I'm a member of the [Americans for Democratic Action] generation: people who got out of the services after the Second World War and wanted to get into liberal politics. In New York, and I expect a lot of other places, the central struggle of the time was with the Stalinist left. ADA organized us, and upheld us."

WHAT IS A MOYNIHAN LIBERAL?

What, then, shall we make of Moynihan's pungent critiques of liberals, critiques accompanied by his frequent praise of conservative thinkers ranging from Burke to Oakeshott, Kristol to Strauss?

This, after all, is someone who said that after the Great Society he "had considerably scaled down my expectations of what government could do about most things—in the early 1960s in Washington we thought we could do anything, and we found out different—and had acquired the discipline of not being too much impressed by clever-seeming people." Liberalism in that era, he complained, "lost a sense of limits." He lectured Democrats in 1968—in a volume edited by a Republican congressman, and, to add insult, entitled *Republican Papers*—that "somehow liberals have been unable to acquire from life what conservatives seem to be endowed with at birth, namely, a healthy skepticism of the powers of government to do good."

Citations to conservatives, meanwhile, pepper his writings. Moynihan studied at the London School of Economics around the time Michael Oakeshott arrived there, and he appears to have attended at least some of the latter's lectures. Significantly, he deployed Oakeshott against both parties, such as when he accused each of excessive scientism in the formation of social policy: "A larger possibility is that we are seeing at work in both 'liberal' Democratic and 'conservative' Republican administrations the demon that Michael Oakeshott has identified as Rationalism—the great heresy of modern times." (Again the quotation marks framing "liberal" and "conservative" are suggestive.) He quoted Burke at least two dozen times in his writings. He invoked Podhoretz against liberal doomsaying.

Part of the explanation for all this is that he believed liberalism needed to be nourished by an internal critique from which, especially amid the moralism of the 1960s, it had insulated itself. About his 1976 run for Senate, he said, “I ran as a liberal willing to be critical of what liberals had done. If we did not do this, I contended, our liberalism would go soft.” Moreover, some conservatives have mistaken Moynihan’s capacious intellectual curiosity, which spanned not only a diversity of topics but also a diversity of perspectives, for political compatibility. Instead, his particular proclivity for associating with, reading, and quoting conservative thinkers arose from a suppleness and habit of mind that actively sought disagreement—an aptitude largely, and sadly, lost not merely among statesmen but among scholars, a similarly insular profession.

In assessing Moynihan’s relationship to neoconservatism, the issue of party is inescapable as well. Whether because the movement has shifted, because the major political parties have realigned, or both, neoconservatism is more monolithically Republican today than when Kristol wrote in 1976. There is also no question that the second generation of neoconservatives is less Burkean and more Wilsonian than the first.

But the explanation, ultimately, distills to this: Moynihan was neither a neoconservative nor a paleoliberal. Moynihan was Moynihan. He believed in government as an agent of good, but also in limitation as a condition of life. As he wrote in 1973: “Increasingly, it is what is *known* about life that makes it problematical. . . . The unexpected, the unforeseen: the public life of our age seems dominated by events of this cast.” He believed in a politics rooted in empirical circumstance rather than theoretical abstraction. He championed the subsidiary units of society—family, ethnic group, neighborhood. He respected society’s complexity, but also believed some problems required political and national solutions.

I have called this “Burkean liberalism.” But if the issue of Moynihan and the neoconservatives comes down to labels, perhaps a time may come when individuals of a certain bent, with a certain combination of beliefs, will describe themselves as “Moynihan liberals.” This would be as good a time as any.