

short run." This is especially true under the administration's proposals, which call for reducing assistance to the working poor, thereby penalizing them economically for their efforts. Since most public service jobs are "make work" jobs with no realistic future, they are not meaningful or satisfying enough to provide any psychological rewards to welfare families.

Finally, opponents of work requirements argue that they punish the victims of injustice or discrimination for their poverty or unemployment, holding them responsible for social conditions for which they are not to blame. Norman Daniels, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Tufts University, argues that in a society that is seriously unjust, as he takes ours to be, "the assignment of responsibility—even blame-worthiness—to those who fail to work seems highly problematic. It is certainly problematic when jobs are scarce or unavailable, and it remains problematic when available jobs are hard, burdensome, unrewarding, and often dead-end. . . . We may be making the worst-off members of a society pay twice for their circumstances."

Rotherham agrees. The poorest groups in America—blacks, Hispanics, and women—are the groups most discriminated against in our society. "The fact that welfare is a form of compensation to victims of discrimination [becomes] increasingly evident. Viewed from this perspective, the emphasis on work requirements . . . may be misplaced. An extreme categorization of the work features . . . is that they blame the victim for the crime."

Conclusions

Many defenders of work requirements hold that welfare is a privilege for which payment is owed in return; opponents claim it is a right. But it may be the case that welfare is both a right *and* that something is owed for it in return. Many rights are contingent upon one's respecting the rights of others. The right to be assured a minimal level of well-being may likewise be contingent upon the responsibility to assist others in need if able to do so. Henry Aaron, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, explains: "The argument that a work requirement constitutes

'forced labor' rests on the presumption *both* that the government ought to provide a guarantee against destitution *and* that nothing should be expected in return from the beneficiaries for that guarantee. . . . The idea that . . . nothing is expected in return for such a guarantee seems to me to have very little justification."

The second charge, that work requirements don't work, seems more serious. If work requirements are to meet the goals of benefiting needier individuals and allowing workers to become self-sufficient, steps must be taken to ensure that the work performed is indeed of some genuine worth and that revenues received from it are indeed returned to the welfare pool. Manpower programs like WIN are specifically designed to meet this first condition, by aiding in the development of marketable skills, and a full 20 percent of AFDC recipients leave the rolls as a result of increased earnings. The second condition is not met at present, thus considerably undermining the justice of current work requirements. Surely at the very least, work requirements should not be imposed at the same time that job training programs are cut or curtailed, and workers should not be financially penalized for their contributions.

Finally, it seems indisputable that the poorest members of our society are all too often the victims of racial, sexual, and linguistic discrimination. But work requirements constitute a *punishment* for society's victims only if work itself is a punishment. But this need not be the case, unless the work required is exceptionally soul-wearying. The Spanish philosopher and theologian Miguel de Unamuno wrote, "That saying, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,' does not mean that God condemned man to work. . . . It would have been no condemnation to have condemned man to work itself, for work is the only practical consolation for having been born."

The views of Baruch Brody, James A. Rotherham, Martha H. Phillips, Norman Daniels, and Henry Aaron are drawn from their contributions to Income Support: Conceptual and Policy Issues (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1981), a collection of essays by philosophers, social scientists, and policymakers on issues in the recurring welfare-reform debate. To order, see p. 15.

Book Review

Duties Beyond Borders: On the Limits and Possibilities of Ethical International Politics by Stanley Hoffmann (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1981).

Duties Beyond Borders is a book about compromise. Confronted with the grim realities of contemporary international relations, Stanley Hoffmann raises Kant's question: can one be a moral politician, "who

employs the principles of political prudence in such a way that they can coexist with morals"? His response is a cautious, qualified optimism. In every area of international diplomacy, the statesman is caught in a vicious web of incompatible obligations and interests. But "the duty of the moral politician is to turn the evil circle gradually into an ascending spiral."

Two compromises emerge from Hoffmann's discussion as central. The first bridges the idealistic demands of morality and the realities of international competition, the ends toward which we aspire and the means of attaining them. In the domain of inter-

national policy, Hoffmann warns, "the best is the enemy of the good, and the good is measured by the possible. . . . It is not enough to state what our duties are. Moral politics is an art of execution; principles unaccompanied by practical means or by an awareness of possible trade-offs remind one of Péguy's famous comment about Kant—his hands were pure, but he had no hands."

The second central compromise concerns the significance of national boundaries in determining the scope and object of moral rights and obligations. Is the statesman's duty to promote the national interest or to work instead for the betterment of the world community? Does international justice deal with the rights and duties of states, or only of the individual human beings who compose them? Hoffmann defends an intermediate view. The goal is a more cosmopolitan world order; the reality is still clearly nationalistic. Thus, "a policy that aims at protecting the nation's interest while minimizing the risks for all others is morally preferable to a more ambitious attempt at transcending the game, which weakens the international order and leaves all states less secure." Likewise, "international justice is a matter both of rights of states and rights of individuals. . . . States have rights and duties as the main actors in world affairs . . . [but] states exist only as communities of people." We are currently in a time of transition toward a cosmopolitan morality, and ours must be an ethics of transition.

Hoffmann illustrates this strategy of compromise in three crucial areas of international policy: the use of force, the protection of human rights, and worldwide distributive justice.

Just War

The justification of war goes to the heart of Hoffmann's second compromise. If individuals alone are the bearers of rights, then states have no right of self-preservation, and it is permissible to intervene in an internally unjust state on behalf of its victimized citizens. If states themselves have rights as members of international society, however, then some principle of non-intervention must be respected. Hoffmann rejects the first view as "blissfully unpolitical," and defends the second on the grounds that "it is only in and through the state that (so far) individuals can assert and exert their own rights." He argues for a qualified principle of non-intervention, on pragmatic grounds: "the impartiality of the foreign sword is dubious." But he mitigates the rigor of this principle in various ways—most importantly, by advocating nonmilitary intervention in the service of an international human rights policy.

Human Rights

There are, on Hoffmann's view, powerful legal, moral, and political arguments in favor of human rights as a foreign policy concern. The most serious argument against a human rights policy, however, is its likely ineffectiveness. Inconsistent administration

of a human rights policy may actually erode morality, and inconsistency seems inevitable if we also seek to protect American business and security interests abroad. The alternative is to weaken our own strategic position by entering into conflicts with allies as well as enemies: "When a nation asks for a government to improve human rights, . . . it really strikes at the heart of the other country's political legitimacy . . . and its economic system." A human rights policy thus faces the dilemma of concern for individual rights within a framework of sovereign states.

Hoffmann counsels "modesty in purpose" and "generality in action." Our demands should be limited enough that a wide coalition of countries can join us in pressing them. We cannot insist on "the whole bag." Instead, Hoffmann asks for "a common floor and a moveable ceiling— . . . because different countries have different cultural traditions, are at different stages of economic and institutional development, and face different realities." Better to win a cautious struggle against torture and starvation than to lose a strident crusade for universal democracy.

Distributive Justice

The debate over international distributive justice is formed by the problem of cosmopolitanism. One camp argues that sovereign states, as states, have a right to greater equality in wealth and power—regardless of how that wealth and power is distributed among their citizens. The opposing view is that the crucial inequalities are precisely those among individuals, feasting in one hemisphere, starving in another. On this view, "the problems of state inequality . . . are either irrelevant or subordinate."

Hoffmann, unsurprisingly, defends a middle view. State sovereignty is not absolute or impermeable. Wealthy nations are obligated to share their wealth with poorer nations "only if that wealth is used toward justice for those communities of people." But the claims of states cannot be irrelevant in the world as we know it: "we cannot reach those poorer people directly: we have to work through the states as they are."

Hoffmann repeatedly denounces extreme political positions as unattainably idealistic, utopian, even frivolous. He then proposes his middle course of gradual movement from the real to the ideal. The reformist approach he recommends juggles the competing claims of what is and what ought to be, while recognizing as well that there is no consensus on either of these. At times, Hoffmann's own solution of a calm, clearheaded, resolute sorting out of all contemporary confusions in all their complexities begins to sound as utopian as the utopian visions he dismisses. It is easier to idealize moderation than to show how moderate programs are to be implemented. But to have presented the grim and often dull business of political compromise as a challenge is perhaps the greatest contribution of *Duties Beyond Borders*.