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In order to get a clear picture of how Plato would respond to this dilemma, it is important to establish the facts about this case. A woman named Lisa Krawchuk qualified for welfare assistance because of her low income. The welfare authorities required her to report any changes in her income for the period that she received the benefits. She agreed to that condition, reported an increase in her income after her husband got a part-time job and the welfare office reduced her payments accordingly. Lisa failed to report that she was benefiting from a student loan and the welfare office withdrew her benefits, charged her with fraud, and demanded her to repay all the money she had been receiving. This case would be of great interest to Plato because it bears on issues about justice. It is a question of rights, as well as controversies on whether the actions of the parties mentioned in this case were right or wrong. In response to this dilemma the responses Plato would offer can be obtained from his own reactions, as well as the reactions of Socrates (who was Plato's teacher), and Aristotle (Plato's most famous student) to similar or related dilemmas. In this paper, I will explain how Plato would respond to such a situation, the questions that will come to his mind and what he would think about the idea in general.

Alongside Socrates, his mentor and Aristotle, his student, Plato laid the foundations of science and Western Philosophy. He was, therefore, a very reputable figure who questioned issues in the society with a bid to ensure that justice prevailed. Having gotten mentorship from Socrates, Plato would have the same opinion as Socrates during his (Socrates' dialogue with Euthyphro) (Plato, John & Hutchinson, 1). Socrates tried to relate whether Euthyphro's prosecution of his father was pious (holy) or not. Although

Euthyphro tried his best to give Socrates answers to the issue of piety, he would not convince Socrates and for each response, he gave, Socrates had a refutation. Notably, all of Socrates' refutations sounded valid and justifiable. When Euthyphro saw that he could not give Socrates any satisfactory answer, he left in the pretext that he was attending to some businesses elsewhere. As Socrates pointed out, he wanted to learn about the pious and the impious so that he comes up with a model that fits every case in life. As he asked questions such as " what is piety? What is?" Questions, Socrates wanted a single " model" or " standard" that gave clear, unconflicting and unambiguous answers" (Plato, John & Hutchinson, 1).

In response to the dilemma, I must establish the issues that would interest Plato. The first part of the dilemma is the establishment of an absolute definition of income. The second part of the dilemma would have Plato seeking examples of income in addition to seeking an absolute response to the timeframe within which one is supposed to report something to a higher authority. Plato would question the issue of time and benefits. He would ask why it would or would not be prudent for one to repay benefits s/he was receiving because they erred in one of the conditions set by the beneficiary givers. Plato would also use his philosophical arguments to investigate whether Lisa was greedy in failing to report her student loan to the welfare office. These among several other issues pertinent to the case would for the core foundation of Plato's philosophical arguments about this case.

Since Plato was a student of Socrates, it is safe to state that he too could have followed in the views and assertions of his mentor in responding to this dilemma. In this case, Plato would raise several issues that would require the

response of people at the welfare office. Plato would direct the questions at the welfare officials because they have the upper hand in the decisions and the events that transpire in the stated case. Plato would seek an unquestionable, unconflicting, and unambiguous definition of income since it is the source of controversy in this case. First Plato would ask the officials, "What is income?" The officials would probably state that income is all the money that one earns. This response would not satisfy Plato and he would ask, "Would the money one borrows qualify as income?" The officials would try to justify that the money one borrows would qualify as income so that they feel that indeed they made the right decisions in terminating Lisa's benefits. They would try to justify that the student loan that Lisa took eased her needs and that she ceased being needy to the point of requiring welfare support. The officials would state that upon getting the money one stops being needy and that the money they have borrowed is disposable income. I think Plato would not be convinced by this, and he would state that if a person owed the other money then that person is still in need. He would maintain that for as long as a person owes money then that person is needy.

Plato would ask for examples of income or situations that can suffice as income. "What are examples of income?" He would do this so that he gets a better understanding of what constitutes income and what does not. Plato would also question the issue of time in regard to the benefits that one had made. "Is it justice to demand that one returns all he has benefited with if alleged to have erred in obtaining the benefits?" Plato would ask this question informed by his position that since the welfare officials never gave

a formal and absolute definition of income to Lisa then all else that builds on that issue should be of no consequence.

In the Socratic Dialogue, Hipparchus Socrates and his friend try to find a definition of greed. Socrates' friend opines that greed is the inclination for one to profit from things, which a virtuous person should not exploit. Socrates concurs that indeed to be greedy is to intend to profit from worthless things. It is a foolish intention and that no sensible and is greedy (Plato, John & Hutchinson, 609). In this case, Plato would ask, " Does failure to report an alleged income amount to intention to benefit from that which remains unreported?" " Is the benefit mentioned in this case of no value?" Going by Socrates assertions, if the benefits were indeed of no value to her life, then Lisa would have looked foolish to fail to report the student loan. However, the welfare money and the student loan were of value to her life. Although the case does not state explicitly whether Lisa would have made it with the student loan only, it does state that the loan catered for expenses and tuition. As such, Lisa could have had no value for the welfare money and thus she would appear greedy and foolish in the eyes of Plato.

This case can draw from Plato's work Apology that presents an account of Plato's view on how Socrates was supposed to defend himself against charges impiety (Plato, John & Hutchinson, 17). Although Plato stated that Socrates acted piously he, does not set up human reason in his own person as the final arbiter of what is right or wrong. Plato would question the judgement the welfare office meted out on Lisa by declaring her actions as fraud and demanding that she repays the money she had obtained. In the Socratic dialogue Apologia, Plato notes that in democratic Athens, juries

were selected randomly, and they represented the people. Socrates made it clear that he was addressing the democratic people of Athens, and when the jury finds him guilty, they would do so on behalf of the people (Plato, John & Hutchinson, 18). As such, Plato would question the acts of the welfare office. He would ask, “ Do welfare offices qualify as representation of the people?” In case he obtains a favorable response, he would question the act by the welfare office in this case. Plato would try to match the judgement of the welfare office to that of the people in that society. He would draw his conclusion from the decision, which he deems would be made by the society.

Plato was a man who rectified issue he found to be wrong and misleading. In the Phaedrus dialogue where Socrates interacted with his friend Lysias, he did not like Lysias’s speech and, therefore, came up with a better one (Plato, John & Hutchinson, 506). Socrates concludes that writing cannot constitute or contain knowledge of any important matter. In this case, Plato would have rectified the welfare officials and suggested to them the ways through which they could avoid future controversies and ambiguities that affect welfare recipients negatively. Since a clear definition of the term “ Income” exists, Plato could have helped the officials to come up with the best definition. Moreover, it is possible for welfare officials to fix a period or deadline within which welfare recipients were supposed to report any changes to their incomes. These changes would suffice to avoid the current scenario where a welfare recipient is on the receiving end of unfair and ambiguous conditions. Plato would then raise the issue with the timeframes involved in the case. He would probably ask, “ Would there be lateness if there were no time frames

or deadlines?" An official from the welfare office would probably hesitate to answer this question knowing too well that they never gave Lisa the deadlines within which she was supposed to report changes to her income. Plato would state that there would be no lateness since time is what quantifies deadlines. Lateness is subject to time. He would do this based on his philosophical understanding that time is of the essence where justice and fairness are concerned. In this case, Lisa had just completed her first year in university and would as such; continue receiving her loan and income going by the interpretations of the welfare office. This notwithstanding, the fact that the office never set the timeframes or deadlines within which to report changes to her income disqualifies the actions taken by the welfare office. In addition to questioning the ultimate definition of income, Plato would relate the overall issue to the gods. He would try to understand who between Lisa and the welfare office acted piously. Since the parties in this case fell out, Plato would seek to establish the truth and whether the manner in which the Welfare Office acted was just. Plato believed that since there is no absolute right or wrong then the intentions for which one took a certain course of action justified that action. He would seek to establish whether Lisa took advantage of her situation and exploited the kind gesture of obtaining help from the state. Plato's cause of disagreement with the controversies in the case would be settled if, through his philosophical enquiries, he would get into the mind of Lisa and know her intentions for not declaring that she was benefiting from a student loan. Since Lisa was displeased and shocked with the welfare office's verdict that she repays all the benefits, Plato would interpret this as a situation where one Lisa never intended to steal or benefit

illegally from the state.

In reaching his conclusion, Plato would gather his evidence from the fact that the welfare office never satisfied him with the response of what income was. He would also conclude that since the welfare office never set timeframe within which Lisa was supposed to report any changes to her income, the welfare office was not justified to take away her benefits. Worse still, the office was not justified to ask her to repay all the money she had obtained from the state. Plato's conclusion would be that the Welfare office issued ambiguous terms and conditions, they should never have terminated Lisa's benefits or required her to repay the amount she had obtained.

Works cited

Plato, John M. Cooper, and D. S. Hutchinson. Complete Works. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Pub., 1997. Print.