PUB/POS 140

Response Paper #1

Due: Feb. 22\textsuperscript{nd} at 12noon – Political Science Office – Humanities B16

You have been called in to analyze the strengths and weakness of the roles that official and unofficial actors play in immigration policy. In a coherent essay (3-4 pages double spaced, one inch margins, 12 point Times New Roman font), use concepts from Birkland’s chapters three and four, the New York Times article below, and at least one credible outside source (e.g., NY Times article, Government Report, Journal Article) to examine the immigration issue.

Please use consistent citation for all references used in your paper. See the university library website for examples: \url{http://library.albany.edu/usered/style/main.html}.

Immigration and Refugees

\textit{Updated June 28, 2007}

Since the early 1800's, immigration has been both a crucial component of America's growth and a periodic source of conflict, and in recent years it has become one of the most contentious issues on the nation's political agenda.

In 2003, President Bush called for a comprehensive overhaul of the nation's immigration laws, the first since the mid-80's. His proposal focused on creating a guest worker program that would allow immigrants to legally enter the country temporarily to fill jobs that employers say would otherwise go unfilled. The plan was overshadowed by the opening of the Iraq war and was set aside during the campaign season of 2004.

By the time legislation had worked its way through to the floor of the House of Representatives in late 2005, it was clear that the mood had shifted on immigration, particularly among Republicans. In December 2005 the Republican-controlled House passed a bill that rejected Mr. Bush's plan for a guest worker program, and instead called for the deportation of all illegal immigrants and proposed making it a felony to offer them any assistance.

Church groups and organizations representing immigrants and Hispanics reacted angrily, and organized large demonstrations through the spring of 2006.

Meanwhile, a bipartisan group of senators reached an agreement on a bill that would create a guest worker program and give many illegal immigrants a path toward citizenship. President Bush gave his support, but the effort collapsed after many conservative Republicans denounced it as an "amnesty" plan.
Negotiations resumed in the spring of 2007, with members of the Senate, now controlled by Democrats by the slimmest of margins, discussing a plan that would focus on the national security concerns and law-enforcement concerns raised by conservatives first, before moving on to elements addressing guest workers and creating a route for illegal immigrants to gain legal status.

The plan, the product of a bipartisan group, collapsed under the weight of conservative objections. It was revived after an agreement was reached among Republicans to limit the number of amendments, then collapsed again on June 28, when a proposal to end debate and move toward final passage was defeated. Senators on both sides of the issue said at the time that it was unlikely a bill could be passed before the 2008 elections. - Updated June 28, 2007