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Julianne Hazlewood

RED ROUTES

Soaring through the coastal rainforest,
Been following on the red routes for years,
That break like tributaries, swim like snakes,
Criss-crossing, split the paths that they once cleared,
While walking, sweating, within the shade of trees.

Red Roots holding sturdy,
Never sinking in the quicksand-like sludge and slosh.
Tightropes used like sidewalks,
Indicating where it is safe for little feet.
Implicitly understood to make their way easier.

The Chachis are accustomed to walking
These red roots, gnarled and worn.
The red routes....familiar ground.
Guiding the way back home
To their village along the Tululb í River.

October 23, 1997

Christina Gerken

Neo-Liberalism and Family Values in 1990s Immigration Reform Discourse

In response to the 109th Congress's failure to pass a comprehensive immigration reform law, Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff and Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez developed a series of harsh, enforcement-only reform measures the Bush Administration can take within the boundaries of the existing law. On August 10, 2007, President George W. Bush announced that it had become necessary to take immediate action and address the public's concern over illegal immigration. He publicly endorsed Secretary Chertoff and Gutierrez's plan to limit undocumented immigrants' ability to contest erroneous deportation orders, increase the number of detention facilities, expand the Basic Pilot employment eligibility verification program, and, most importantly, to continue the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border.¹ At the same time, President Bush also cautioned that this reform package was only a first step towards a more comprehensive immigration reform bill which needed to combine the aforementioned border security and interior enforcement efforts with measures that help legal immigrants reunite with their families and assimilate into American culture.

Throughout his presidency, President Bush has made it clear that family values and economic concerns are inextricably linked when it comes to the U.S. immigration system. In his State of the Union Address on January 20, 2004, for instance, President Bush argued that the U.S. government needed to "reform our immigration laws so they reflect our values and benefit our economy." Chief among these values was the institution of marriage, which he described as "one of the most fundamental, enduring institutions of our civilization." According to the President, traditional two-married-parent families were most effective in raising healthy, responsible children - children who would eventually develop into hard-working, law-abiding adults. On other occasions, President Bush has also expressed concern that the current immigration law was "unsuited to the needs of our economy and to the values of our country. We should not be content with laws that punish hardworking people who want only to provide for their

¹ This measure would add 18,300 border patrol agents, 370 miles of fencing, 200 miles of vehicle barriers, and 105 camera and radar towers on the U.S.-Mexico border by December 31, 2008.