



IMMIGRATION

Children test Obama policy by swarming the border

Estimated 60,000 likely to double

By **STEPHEN DINAN**
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Children traveling without their families, including an "overwhelming" number younger than 12, are flooding across the southwestern border in the latest test of the Obama administration's immigration policy.

Homeland Security officials predict that 60,000 minors will cross the border this year and that the number will double next year, accounting for an astonishing percentage of people trying to jump the border — braving the tremendous perils of crossing Mexico and trying to evade border authorities, hoping to eventually connect with family in the U.S.

The administration seems powerless to stop most of the border breaches and instead has searched for ways to manage the flow of vulnerable, and politically sympathetic, immigrants.

On Thursday, Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson will raise the issue with Congress. He will recount his trip this month to the border in Texas, where he saw such children, which the government calls "unaccompanied alien children," or UACs.

"I have been closely following this emerging issue since coming into office, with a particular focus on the Rio Grande Valley," Mr. Johnson will tell the House, according to his prepared testimony. "I traveled to McAllen, Texas, to view the situation and saw the children there firsthand — an overwhelming number of whom were under 12 years old."

Officials are grappling with how the U.S. should handle children inside the border and whether there is any way to stop the flow.

Under U.S. law, the children are entitled to special protections and can't be put straight into deportation proceedings, as adults are.

Instead, they are screened for trafficking concerns. Once processed, they are placed with either foster families or sent to their own families in the U.S.

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Cantor takes heat on immigration push

Challenger says GOP leader is "the No. 1 cheerleader in Congress for amnesty." A12



Obama's decision delay on deportation angers advocates of immigrant rights. A10



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TO THE FUTURE: West Point cadets celebrate commencement Wednesday after a foreign policy speech by President Obama, who noted that they were the first graduates since Sept. 11, 2001, who may not be sent into combat in Iraq or Afghanistan. Members of the 2014 class say they are prepared for the president's plans to build alliances. Story, A5.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Obama defends troubled foreign policy at West Point graduation

Says U.S. remains ready for present, future threats

By **DAVE BOYER AND BEN WOLFGANG**
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

WEST POINT, N.Y. | President Obama on Wednesday defended his actions on national security and offered something of a reboot of his foreign policy in an attempt to define America's role as the war in Afghanistan comes to a close and he looks to the final years of his presidency.

Responding directly to detractors who argue that he has surrendered American leadership, the president said that with Iraq and Afghanistan behind it, the U.S. is firmly positioned to deal with new threats.

"By most measures, America has rarely been stronger relative to the rest of the world. Those who argue otherwise — who suggest that America is in decline or has seen its global leadership slip away — are either misreading history or engaged in partisan politics," the president said in a speech to the graduating class at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

"Think about it. Our military has no peer. The odds of a direct threat against us by any nation are low and do not come close to the dangers we faced during the Cold War," Mr. Obama said.

Despite the strong words, some critics and analysts say the president lacks a guiding doctrine on foreign policy, leaving the rest of the world guessing about U.S. interests and when they might count on American action.

"I think what was interesting about this speech is that it was a methodological speech: how we're going to work on various problems. But it didn't go very far in defining what the challenges are," said Blaise Misztal, director of the Foreign Policy Project at the Bipartisan Policy Center. "The crises and the challenges are so widespread, from Ukraine to Syria to coups in Thailand, I would've liked to see some attempt to encapsulate that. But instead we got this

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"It is absolutely true that in the 21st century, American isolation is not an option, but to say that we have an interest in pursuing peace and freedom beyond our borders is not to say that every problem has a military solution."

— President Obama

ACCOUNTABILITY

1,700 vets in VA scheme never would see doctors

Shinseki starts to lose support of Democrats

By **JACQUELINE KLIMAS**
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Staff at the Phoenix VA hospital doctored their records, keeping hundreds of veterans off the official waiting lists and ensuring some would never get to see a doctor for treatment, according to a preliminary audit released Wednesday that confirms some of the worst accusations in the burgeoning scandal.

The report from the Department of Veterans Affairs inspector general was even worse than many lawmakers expected, and it spurred another round of calls for VA Secretary Eric K. Shinseki to resign.

Joining those calls were three Senate Democrats, who became the first to break with President Obama, who has steadfastly defended his VA chief.

The inspector general's report said Phoenix VA officials kept 1,700 veterans off the official books, allowing the officials to lie about waiting times and making themselves eligible for bonuses. The scathing report also suggests that VA headquarters in Washington was aware as far back as 2010 of many of the schemes VA offices were using to doctor the books.

Top VA officials told Congress on Wednesday that they first thought the secret lists were part of an initiative to reschedule canceled appointments, and

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DISTRICT

D.C. tax relief plan may offset costs of living

Streetcar project would be all but defunded

By **ANDREA NOBLE**
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The D.C. Council on Wednesday gave its blessing to the first significant package of tax cuts in the District since 1999, providing relief to residents of a city whose coffers have swelled in recent years along with its cost of living.

The tax package, which will run the city \$165 million annually, will be phased in over five years and includes the creation of a 6.5 percent tax rate for middle-income residents who make between \$40,000 and \$60,000 annually and an increase of the threshold for the city's estate tax from \$1 million to \$5.25 million.

The plan, which D.C. Council Chairman Phil Mendelson announced Tuesday night, was approved in an initial vote on the same day lawmakers passed the city's \$10.7 billion fiscal 2015 budget.

"Very rich people were paying a lower effective rate on their income than middle-income people

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MAYA ANGELOU 1928-2014

The 'caged bird' who sang to generations of readers

By **DEBORAH SIMMONS**
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Maya Angelou could not be pigeonholed.

A girl of many voices, she silenced herself following a domestic rape and lived to make a new name for herself by writing about it in "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings."

A single mother of many talents, she broke away from the shackles of racism,

Poet crafted her own life narrative

sexism and prostitution and then sang and danced about it.

One of her brothers in the civil rights movement, Martin Luther King Jr., was assassinated on her 40th birthday, but she never wavered.

Always the memoirist, historian and

social commentator, a woman of many perspectives, she left liberals shaking their heads when, in 1991, she explained why blacks should support the nomination of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court.

An uber social commentator of many perspectives, she was adorned with awards and accolades, and she wore

them all well.

In her wake, hardly an unkind word has been said of this Southern woman who, more than two decades after creating a literary storm with "I Know" — which was colored with the Great Depression and the twin bigotries of

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Maya Angelou

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VOLUME 32, NUMBER 107

