

IN COLD WAR ECHO, OBAMA STRATEGY WRITES OFF PUTIN

FAVORING CONTAINMENT

White House Looks Past Ukraine to Restrict Russian Influence

By PETER BAKER

WASHINGTON — Even as the crisis in Ukraine continues to defy easy resolution, President Obama and his national security team are looking beyond the immediate conflict to forge a new long-term approach to Russia that applies an updated version of the Cold War strategy of containment.

Just as the United States resolved in the aftermath of World War II to counter the Soviet Union and its global ambitions, Mr. Obama is focused on isolating President Vladimir V. Putin's Russia by cutting off its economic and political ties to the outside world, limiting its expansionist ambitions in its own neighborhood and effectively making it a pariah state.

Mr. Obama has concluded that even if there is a resolution to the current standoff over Crimea and eastern Ukraine, he will never have a constructive relationship with Mr. Putin, aides said. As a result, Mr. Obama will spend his final two and a half years in office trying to minimize the disruption Mr. Putin can cause, preserve whatever marginal cooperation can be saved and otherwise ignore the master of the Kremlin in favor of other foreign policy areas where progress remains possible.

"That is the strategy we ought
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Sending Alerts, G.M. Delayed Recall of Cars

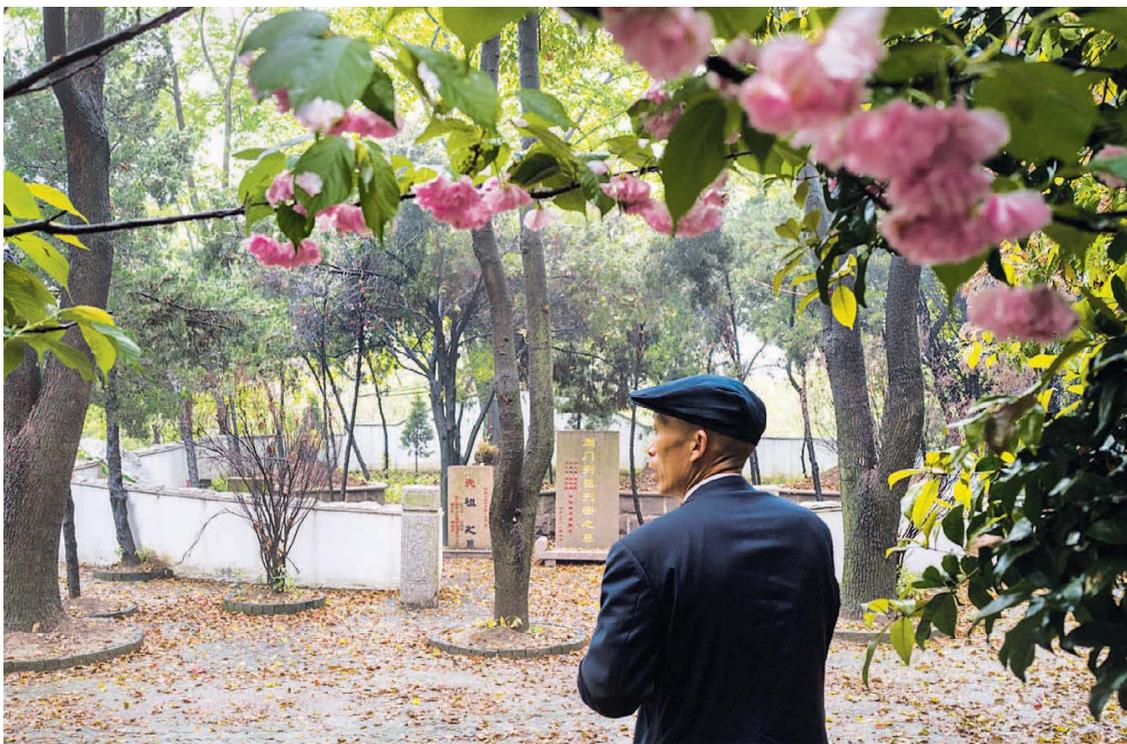
This article is by Danielle Ivory, Rebecca R. Ruiz and Bill Vlasic.

The first word from General Motors that the Chevrolet Cobalt had a dangerous safety problem came nine years ago, in a letter to dealers warning them that the cars could suddenly stall because of faulty ignition switches.

But it was not until February that G.M. recalled millions of the Cobalts and other small cars for an ignition defect that it has now linked to 13 deaths.

G.M.'s chief executive, Mary T. Barra, has called the company's slow response an "extraordinary" situation. But an analysis by The New York Times of the automaker's recalls since it emerged from bankruptcy in 2009 shows its handling of the ignition problem was not an isolated event: G.M. has repeatedly used letters, called technical service bulletins, to dealers and sometimes to car owners as stop-gap safety measures instead of ordering timely recalls, The Times found.

In the past 15 months alone, G.M. has announced seven recalls for serious safety problems involving defects in electrical systems, air bags and power steering, among others, that were preceded by numerous bulletins identifying the problems
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SIM CHI YIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A visitor at the Zhou family's ancestral graves in Xiqiantou, eastern China. Intrigue surrounds the family after a spate of arrests.

Investigating Family's Wealth, China's Leader Signals a Change

This article is by Michael Forsythe, Chris Buckley and Jonathan Ansfield.

HONG KONG — His son landed contracts to sell equipment to state oil fields and thousands of filling stations across China. His son's mother-in-law held stakes in pipelines and natural gas pumps from Sichuan Province in the west to the southern isle of Hainan. And his sister-in-law, working from one of Beijing's most prestigious office buildings, invested in mines, property and energy projects.

In thousands of pages of corporate documents describing these ventures, the name that never appears is his own: Zhou Yongkang, the formidable Chinese Communist Party leader who served as China's top security official and the de facto boss of its

Taking On Corruption, and Taking Down a Political Rival

oil industry.

But President Xi Jinping has targeted Mr. Zhou in an extraordinary corruption inquiry, a first for a Chinese party leader of Mr. Zhou's rank, and put his family's extensive business interests in the cross hairs.

Even by the cutthroat standards of Chinese politics, it is a bold maneuver. The finances of the families of senior leaders are among the deepest and most politically delicate secrets in China. The party has for years followed a tacit rule that relatives of the

elite could prosper from the country's economic opening, which rewarded loyalty and helped avert rifts in the leadership.

Whether to wipe out Mr. Zhou's influence or to send an unmistakable signal to the entire party elite, Mr. Xi appears to be rewriting the rules. He has widened the inquiry into Mr. Zhou to include his wife, a son, a brother, a sister-in-law, a daughter-in-law and the son's father-in-law, all of whom have been taken away by the authorities in recent months, according to relatives and witnesses.

Zhan Minli, one of the few members of the clan who remain free, said her granddaughter — who is also Mr. Zhou's granddaughter — has been left in the care of a kindergarten in Beijing because the rest of the family is in custody. "It is too cruel for a

5-year-old child," she said in an interview in her home in Southern California. "The government needs to answer to the people as well as the leadership itself," she added.

Officially, the Chinese leadership has said nothing about the corruption investigation into Mr. Zhou or the detention of his immediate relatives, and Mr. Xi's ultimate intentions about how to handle the case remain a matter of speculation.

Some political analysts argue that a leader of Mr. Zhou's status would not face an inquiry of this kind unless Mr. Xi regarded him as a direct threat to his power. In other words, Mr. Zhou is the loser in a political struggle. His family's financial dealings lost their immunity only because Mr. Zhou fell from favor, not because elite
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AS G.O.P. WEDGE, THE COMMON CORE CUTS BOTH WAYS

ASSOCIATED WITH OBAMA

Education Benchmarks Once Backed by Party Now Divide It

By JONATHAN MARTIN

WASHINGTON — The health care law may be Republicans' favorite weapon against Democrats this year, but there is another issue roiling their party and shaping the establishment-versus-grass-roots divide ahead of the 2016 presidential primaries: the Common Core.

A once little-known set of national educational standards introduced in 44 states and the District of Columbia with the overwhelming support of Republican governors, the Common Core has incited intense resistance on the right and prompted some in the party to reverse field and join colleagues who believe it will lead to a federal takeover of schools.

Conservatives denounce it as "Obamacare," in what has become a surefire applause line for potential presidential hopefuls. Other Republicans are facing opprobrium from their own party for not doing more to stop it. At a recent Republican women's club luncheon in North Carolina, a member went from table to table distributing literature that called the program part of "the silent erosion of our civil liberties."

The learning benchmarks, intended to raise students' proficiency in math and English, were adopted as part of a 2010 effort by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers to bolster the country's competitiveness. Some conservatives, in an echo of their criticism of the health care law, say the standards are an overreach by the federal government.

Yet there is an important distinction: Unlike the health care
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A 12-Year-Old's Trek of Despair Ends in a Noose at the Border

Noemi Álvarez Quillay took the first steps of the 6,500-mile journey to New York City from the southern highlands of Ecuador on Tuesday, Feb. 4, after darkness fell.

A bashful, studious girl, Noemi walked 10 minutes across dirt roads that cut through corn and potato fields, reaching the highway to Quito. She carried a small suitcase. Her grandfather Cipriano Quillay flagged down a bus and watched her board. She was 12.

From that moment, and through the remaining five weeks of her life, Noemi was in the company of strangers, including coyotes — human smugglers, hired by her parents in the Bronx to bring her to them. Her parents had come to the United States illegally and settled in New York when Noemi was a toddler.

Noemi was part of a human flood tide that has swelled since 2011: The United States resettlement agency expects to care for nine times as many unaccompanied migrant children in 2014 as it did three years ago.

For these children wandering



JOSÉ LUIS LLIVISACA

Noemi Álvarez Quillay in an undated photo. Her death in Mexico was ruled a suicide.

thousands of miles, it is a grueling journey, filled with dangers. The vast majority come from Central America. Noemi's trip was about twice as long. She had already tried once, leaving home last May, but was detained long before she even made it halfway.

"I went with a coyote and spent two months in Nicaragua and came back from there," she wrote in a school information sheet.

She got a little closer this year.

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In Slovakia, Real Lottery Prize Goes to Tax Man

By SUZANNE DALEY and RAPHAEL MINDER

BRATISLAVA, Slovakia — When Jozef Lazarcik, a 35-year-old factory worker, heard his number called on national television here recently, he pumped his fists, hardly believing his luck.

He had registered only nine receipts with Slovakia's new tax lottery, and yet he had just won a new car. "It's a heavenly feeling," he said before leaving the studio, ready to encourage all of his friends to register their receipts, too — which is exactly what Slovakian officials were hoping for.

Over the last 10 years, Slovakia's revenue from value-added taxes, a type of sales tax, has declined. But hiring auditors and pursuing individual merchants and service providers in court is expensive and slow. So last fall, the government decided to put a lottery in the mix.

The idea is to enlist average citizens to collect receipts from their purchases and register them with the government, creating a paper trail for transactions and forcing restaurant and shop owners to pay the sales taxes they owe. As Slovaks register their receipts for the lottery, a computer will also tell them if a merchant has issued a receipt with a fake tax identification



MACEK NABRDLAK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Jozef Lazarcik, left, won a car after registering only nine sales receipts with Slovakia's new value-added tax lottery.

number, so they can report suspected fraud.

For any purchase worth more than 1 euro, or about \$1.38, Slovaks can enter their receipts in a monthly lottery to win €10,000, a car or a chance to be a contestant on the Slovakian version of "The Price Is Right."

Tax officials say the lottery is already having a big impact, and other European countries that

are also struggling with the collection of value-added taxes have considered it — including Portugal, which started its own tax lottery on Thursday. In Slovakia, about 450,000 people have taken part, registering about 60 million receipts, officials said.

Complaints about merchants who will not give receipts have skyrocketed. In the six months
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INTERNATIONAL 5-10

U.N. Cholera Struggle in Haiti

Remaining silent about whether it is responsible for the epidemic, the United Nations must cope with a lack of resources. PAGE 5

Rough Currents, Rookie Pilot

The third mate at the helm of a South Korean ferry that sank had never before negotiated the treacherous waterway in which the boat ran into trouble. PAGE 6

METROPOLITAN

The Fair to End All Fairs

A look back to the 1964 New York World's Fair and how it changed some lives and at readers' enduring memories of it. PAGE 1

SPORTSSUNDAY

N.B.A. Battles Begin

The Nets, the subject of a Raptors executive's obscene taunt, won their playoff opener, and the Warriors beat the Clippers in a contentious game. PAGE 1

SUNDAY REVIEW

Thomas L. Friedman

PAGE 1



Treating a friend to lunch treats you to 2x ThankYou® Points.

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