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世界政坛焦点漫谈

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第一篇 国际政坛人物篇

1. Queen Elizabeth II—A Royal Row

伊丽莎白女王二世——王室内的纠纷

Queen Elizabeth's reign has been marked by great changes in the lives of her people and in the power and prestige of her nation. Although she is only a formal head of state in the United Kingdom and a symbol of historical ties in the Commonwealth of Nations, Queen Elizabeth has established herself as a popular and respectable monarch with her remarkable abilities.

By Anne Senior

Forty years ago, a freshfaced 25-year-old woman took charge of the oldest secular institution in Britain, the monarchy. She also had two small children and a family of nations to look after. Britain may not be throwing a big party or hanging out many flags, but Queen

Elizabeth has good cause to celebrate the anniversary of her accession to the throne.

She has kept her crown, and her dignity, where other dynasties have fallen to the forces of republicanism. She is popular, respected and very, very rich. Which is no small feat for the *diminutive*, soft-spoken woman who was propelled onto the throne by the sudden death of her father King George VI on February 6, 1952.

Some wondered then, when the news was broken to the new queen during a visit to Kenya, whether she was really up to the challenge of an imperial reign.

But the queen has revitalised the 1,000-year-old monarchy and shown diplomatic skill in smoothing the transition from British-ruled empire to Commonwealth.

The queen, now 65 and a silverhaired grandmother, has been on the throne longer than any British monarch since her great-great-grandmother, Victoria, who reigned from 1837-1901.

Cynics¹ may say she has little else to sow for her reign and point to trouble brewing, but the royal House of Windsor² has at least survived and has plenty of young males to continue the line.

In the world at large, Queen Elizabeth has seen empires and ideologies fall during a reign covering some of the most *convulsive* events of the 20th century. But at home, she kept alive the ancient principles of hereditary monarchy³ even as Britain began to shake off its class structures and create a more *egalitarian* society.

She may have lost an empire, but the monarchy under her stewardship has found a glittering new role—as the best royal show on earth.

She made clear that she sees her service to Britain and the Com-

monwealth as a lifelong duty.

Commonwealth Secretary-General Chief Emeka Anyaoku said in a tribute to the queen that she had visited and earned the admiration of their peoples. "The humanity, warmth and friendship for which the Commonwealth stands are the qualities which she has above all displayed in her 40 years as its head."

The queen has been long regarded as the glue binding together this multiethnic group of democracies and one-path states with its array of religions. "The queen considers her role as head of the Commonwealth as being of immense importance. She has an enormous fund of knowledge on how it works and of the personalities involved," said Judith Brown, professor of Commonwealth History at Oxford University. "She has had a very important behind-the-scenes role, especially at Commonwealth summits, in soothing over differences and keeping the heads of government talking."

Not everyone is cheering, however.

Although the queen is held to be a paragon of virtue, thrift and restraint, some of her family members are not. The exploits of the royal super-rich are *tarnishing* the British crown and turning the monarchy into a cheap soap opera, critics say.

The royals have been rebuked by an increasingly irreverent press for going shooting while British forces were at war in the Gulf and talking skiing holidays in luxurious Swiss resorts while Britain struggles through a severe recession.

The tide of criticism has even reached the queen, with an outcry over the tradition which allows the monarch to pay not a penny in income tax on her fortune.

But the queen, hitherto thought of as the richest woman in the

land—perhaps in the world—is now reported to have suffered a sharp drop in her personal wealth. The Economist magazine said last week her private investment portfolio⁴ is worth less than £ 50 million—only a tenth of earlier estimates.

“She has spent the dividends and dug deep into the capital, mainly to help other members of her immediate family,” the weekly magazine said. It argued that she should not pay tax on her annual income of between one and five million pounds (two to nine million dollars).

Perhaps appropriately in these recession times, the government of Prime Minister John Major has decided that the queen’s 40th anniversary will be a sedate affair compared with the razzmatazz of her Silver Jubilee⁵ celebrations in 1977.

The queen will spend the day quietly on her Sandringham country estate, Buckingham Palace aides say. It will not be a national holiday and no state celebrations are planned.

But a charity founded by royal fans, the Royal Anniversary Trust, has organised a series of celebrations throughout the year, including a show at London’s Victoria and Albert museum to commemorate the queen’s reign and a star-studded television extravaganza to be shown in October.

The anniversary day itself will mark a milestone in the ever closer relationship between the monarchy and the media.

The queen, who popularised the walkabout the broke with court protocol⁶ to invite cameras inside Buckingham Place, has allowed a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) film crew unprecedented access for a documentary to be shown on the evening of February 6.

Traditional royalists decry such intimacy between sovereign and subjects as stripping away the *mystique* which has sustained the monarchy for centuries.

Royal insights find a ready audience but can also breed envy of the family's wealth and aggravate traditional class divisions which, though more blurred these days, are still stubbornly rooted in British society.

Opinion polls register dissatisfaction with some jet-setting royals but show high regard for the queen, suggesting people want the family to look rich but act poor.

The antics of young royals, particularly the Duchess of York, the former publishing secretary who married the queen's second son Prince Andrew, have moved from the gossip columns to the front pages.

But even the most *roistering* royals are better behaved than many of their *forebears*, while expected to conform to Victorian standards of duty and morality widely abandoned by the rest of the populace.

In her Christmas Day speech to the Commonwealth the queen rededicated herself to her duties in a way that was seen as ruling out *abdication* in favour of her heir Prince Charles.

Charles, first of the queen's four children, has had a long apprenticeship but is viewed by some royalists as a possible threat to the institution of the monarchy, not least because of his reportedly rocky relationship with his glamorous wife, Princess Diana.

Eager to break with the royal soap opera image and find a positive role, 43-year-old Prince Charles has stepped perilously close to the forbidden territory of politics with his bleak assessments of

British society, drawing fire from traditionalists.

“As we prepare to celebrate 40 years of the queen’s reign, it might be worth asking another question,” said columnist Peter McKay in the London daily the Evening Standard. “Will the monarchy last 40 weeks after she’s gone?”

Notes:

1. cynic: 愤世嫉俗的人, 怀疑人的真诚 (或善意) 者, 好挑剔挖苦的人。
2. Windsor: 此处指英国王室住所温莎堡 (Windsor Castle)。
3. hereditary monarchy: 世袭君主制。
4. investment portfolio: 投资组合, 此处指女王所持有的财产目录。
5. Silver Jubilee: (重大事件的) 25 周年纪念。
6. break with court protocol: 打破宫廷的规定 (或传统)。

Comprehension Questions:

1. In what way is Queen Elizabeth a distinctive monarch in British history? What achievements has she made during her reign?
2. What social changes took place in British Empire in the 20th century? What changes did that bring to the British monarchy?
3. What criticisms have fallen upon the royal family?
4. How would the queen’s 40th anniversary to the throne be celebrated?
5. What evidences show that Queen Elizabeth is more aware of the modern role of the monarchy than her predecessors?
6. What is the royal row about?

2. Let the New Year Hold No Terrors for US

女王新年贺词

In her Christmas message, the Queen encouraged her nation and inspired her people to be armed with faith so that the new year should hold no terrors and the whole nation should be able to enter the new year undauntedly.

To look back is not necessarily to be *nostalgia*. When I come to Sandringham each year, I like to reflect on what Christmas must have been like when King Edward VII, my great grandfather, and Queen Alexandra first came here as young parents. I remember my own childhood Christmases here, with my father and mother, and a great family gathering, and now I delight in seeing my children and grandchildren enjoying the same traditions.

Christmas is the celebration of the birth of the founder of the Christian faith, an event which took place almost 2, 000 years ago; every year, at this time, we are asked to look back at that extraordinary story and remind ourselves of the message which inspired

Christ's followers then, and which is just as relevant today.

At Christmas I enjoy looking back on some of the events of the year. Many have their roots in history but still have a real point for us today. I recall, especially, a dazzling spring day in Norwich when I attended the Maundy Service, the *cathedral* providing a spectacular setting. The lovely service is always a reminder of Christ's words to His disciple¹: "Love one another; as I have loved you." It sounds so simple, yet it proves so hard to obey.

In June came Trooping the Color², a vivid reminder of this country's proud military tradition and of the discipline and dedication which our servicemen and women show in their taxing tasks of peace-keeping in many distant parts of the world.

Then, in October, I opened Parliament. This is not just a state occasion, but is also symbolic of the process of parliamentary democracy which we enjoy here in Britain and in so many countries of the Commonwealth. It is a process which seeks to express the ideal of the equality of all citizens under the law.

So, the past, with its traditions, has its lessons for us in 1996. This year, in our travels, Prince Philip and I have also been looking to the future. I and all my family have always felt that one of our most important duties is to express, in our visits overseas, the goodwill of our country towards friends abroad, near and far.

So, last spring, we visited Poland and the Czech Republic³, where we saw the development of democracy and prosperity in countries which only recently were communist-governed. And everywhere we received the best of welcomes.

In the autumn we went to Thailand, where we renewed old friendships and witnessed the blending of tradition with a dynamic

commercial spirit⁴.

There was also a happy visit to this country by the President of France. And I shall never forget the state visit of President Mandela. That most gracious of men has shown us all how to accept the facts of the past without bitterness, how to see new opportunities as more important than old disputes and how to look forward with courage and optimism. His example is a continuing inspiration to the whole Commonwealth and to all those everywhere who work for peace and *reconciliation*.

Each year brings its share of difficulties for many families. This year has, I know, been no exception. And during it some have suffered *bereavement* of a tragic and shocking kind. At such times, it is tempting for all of us, especially those who suffer, to look back and say "If only". But to look back in that way is to look down a blind alley. Better to look forward and say "If only". If only we can live up to the example of the child who was born at Christmas with a love that came to embrace the whole world.

If only we can let Him recapture for us that time when we face the future with childhood's unbounded faith⁵. Armed with that faith, the new year, with all its challenges and chances, should hold no terrors for us, and we should be able to embark upon it undaunted.

My family joins me in wishing each one of you a very happy Christmas.

Notes:

1. disciples: 耶稣的(十二)门徒。
2. Trooping the Color: 英国引以自豪的行军旗礼分列式。
3. the Czech Republic: 捷克共和国(欧洲中部的一个国家)。
4. witnessed the blending...commercial spirit: 目睹了传统与生机

活泼的商业精神的有机融合。

5. If only we can...childhood's unbounded faith: 要是我们在以后的岁月里都能像童年时那样满怀信任来面对未来, 让“他”再为我们欣喜的话……

Comprehension Questions:

1. How did the Queen spend her Christmas in Sandringham in her childhood?
2. What, in the eyes of the Queen, does the new event of opening Parliament mean?
3. What countries did the Queen visit in 1996 and what made her pleased?
4. Who have visited the UK in the year?
5. How did the Queen inspire her nation to look forward to a better new year?

3. Remarkable Margaret Thatcher

杰出的撒切尔夫人

By Paul Johnson

Here an eminent historian probes the

character of Britain's valiant Prime Minister and presents to us a great statesman as well as an ordinary woman, who not only has enhanced her nation but also played a world role with her boundless energy, her simple sense of rectitude and her courage.

The ascendancy of Margaret Thatcher isn't just a British Phenomenon; it's a global one. Not since Winston Churchill has a British leader been so admired throughout the world. In at least one respect—the way other countries conduct their economic affairs—she has had greater impact even than Churchill.

From the time she took office, she was determined to cut the wasteful state down to size by “privatization” —returning inefficient, publicly run industries to private ownership. She did this for gas, phones, airlines, steel and oil—and has the same plans for water, electricity, coal and railways.

As a result, the transformed industries no longer cost the taxpayer a penny. British Steel, for instance, which as a state-owned concern ran up one of the largest corporate losses in history, now ranks among the world's lowest-cost producers and is returning handsome profits. Even more important, the number of ordinary people who have bought shares in private corporations has leaped from three million in 1979 to nine million today.

This threefold increase is a giant step toward what the prime minister calls “democratic capitalism” —a concept that other countries which are burdened with vast, expensive governments would