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A Tale of Two

China's Century Babies

Online and in Fashion

00:Re-engineering the MBA

中南工业大学

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Bill总统和Bill首富

中国的世纪婴儿

网络时尚

新世纪重塑MBA

北京大学出版社

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A Tale of Two

比尔·克林顿位于权力的颠峰,比尔·盖茨是世界首富。他们个性迥异,似乎在走着不同的道路。但前不久却同病相怜,一个面临弹劾之险,一个官司缠身。



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When Bill Clinton and Bill Gates played golf on Martha's Vineyard a few years ago, they didn't click^①. The President gave Gates a heavy dose of the Clinton Treatment, oozing^② charm and seeking emotional common ground in the fact that both had recently lost their mothers.

- ①click: 情投意合,
(两人)一见如故
②oozing: 流出

Clinton must have been disappointed by the cool response of Gates, who saw the subject as unduly^③ personal. Gates, for his part, was put off that Clinton didn't engage him on his favorite topic, technology. When the golfing ended, the two men went their separate ways. Gates didn't take sides in the Clinton-Dole election a couple of years later. Clinton let his Justice Department pursue a potentially devastating^④ antitrust lawsuit^⑤ against Microsoft.

It's not hard to see why these two larger-than-life figures—one the world's most powerful man, one the richest—didn't become fast friends. The two Bills are as different as the two ends of the baby-boom generation they represent. Clinton, who entered college in 1964, is dripping^⑥ with Sixties values: a John F. Kennedy-style belief in public service as a calling^⑦; an Age-of-Aquarius^⑧ focus on emotional connection; and a countercultural^⑨ streak^⑩ of sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll. Gates, who came of age in the 1970s, has a Watergate-era detachment from politics, a mind-set more “megeneration” than “love-in,” and a passion for the great revolutionary force of his own decade: the personal computer.

But Clinton and Gates are remarkably alike in other ways, particularly in their flaws. Both have almost limitless drive and self-absorption^⑪, and a willingness to push the rules to the edge—or past it—to get what they want. When called to account, both have been dismissive^⑫ of the le-

③unduly: 不适当地

④devastating: 破坏性的

⑤antitrust lawsuit: 反托拉斯的诉讼

⑥dripping: 充满…

⑦calling: 对某项工作的爱好或使命感

⑧Aquarius: 宝瓶座(时出生的人)

⑨ countercultural: 反主流文化

⑩streak: (性格中显现的)气质,性情,倾向

⑪self-absorption: 只顾个人利益

⑫dismissive: 轻蔑的, 轻视的

gal process and have had a strained relationship with the truth. These qualities have landed both men in similar binds^⑬: Clinton is waiting to hear if he will be removed from office, Gates is fending off the Justice Department's effort to rein in^⑭, or even carve up^⑮, Microsoft. Their flaws will take center stage this week, as both men mount defenses in their respective trials.

The two Bills began life worlds apart. Clinton's childhood in small-town, 1940s Arkansas was shaped by a mother who worked as a nurse and played at the racetrack, and an alcoholic stepfather. Gates, by contrast, was born into the Seattle upper crust, his father a lawyer and his mother president of the Junior League. Gates was a skinny prep school kid who spent all his free time in the computer lab—a nerd^⑯ before the term was invented, a former teacher once said. Clinton, even in his schoolboy days, was the smooth saxophone^⑰ player who used his music to meet women.

Both men found their callings early. Clinton was elected a senator at Boys Nation at 16. On a Washington field trip that year, he shook hands with President Kennedy—an iconic moment captured in a photo. After Yale Law School and a Rhodes scholarship, Clinton, at 32, became Governor of Arkansas. The single-minded^⑱ rise to political power is a timeless story, but Clinton's came with the distinctive trappings^⑲ of his era: the scruffy beard and antiwar protests while at Oxford, the experimentation with pot, the

⑬ binds: 困扰; 困境

⑭ rein in: 控制

⑮ carve up: 瓜分, 划分

⑯ nerd: 讨厌的人, 卑微的人

⑰ saxophone: 萨克斯管

⑱ single-minded: 全身心的

⑲ trappings: (表示职位的) 饰物, 服饰

civil rights movement sensibility and the feminist wife who kept her name—at least initially.

Gates was, in his own field, just as much the boy wonder. He started his first computer company, Traf-O-Data, in high school. After dropping out of Harvard to build Microsoft, he hit the big time at 25 when IBM made an epic blunder^{②①} in letting him retain the rights to the operating system Microsoft developed for IBM's PCs. Gates, who spent most of his waking hours among computers, turned as inward as the glad-handing^{②②} Clinton turned outward. New acquaintances traded tales of his bad haircuts, dirty glasses and odd rocking motion. His early reluctance to give to charity^{②③}—which he's recently begun to abandon—added to a perception that he lacked the Clintonian ability to feel other's pain.

During their meteoric^{②④} ascents, both Bills came to be regarded as unstoppable forces of nature. Clinton turned setbacks—being voted out as Governor at 34, “bimbo eruptions” that threatened to derail^{②⑤} his campaigns—into triumphs. Gates crushed his competition, to the point that his dominance of the software field began to seem godlike. (Cyberjoke: How many Microsoft employees does it take to change a light-bulb? A: None. Bill Gates just redefines Darkness as the new industry standard.) In the end both landed at the top of the world. Clinton was elected and re-elected President; Gates' software controls more than 90% of the world's PCs, and his personal fortune tops \$ 73 billion.

②① blunder: 大错, 失误

②② glad-hand: 表示过分热烈或虚伪地欢迎, 招呼

②③ charity: 慈善, 施舍, 慈善团体

②④ meteoric: 疾速的

②⑤ derail: 出轨, 脱轨

But now each man's indomitable^{②⑦} drive may have taken him too far. Clinton's passion for connecting with other people drew him into an affair with a White House intern^{②⑧}. Gates' need to plant himself at the top of the computer world may have led him to create a monopoly and use it to illegally beat down the competition. What has hurt both Bills most, though, isn't what they did but their similarly flawed responses to the charges against them. Clinton's seemingly false statement in a sworn deposition^{②⑨} that he did not have sexual relations with Monica Lewinsky seemed to his critics to show contempt for the judicial process—and it now lies at the heart of his impeachment^{③①} trial. The government's case against Microsoft has, in much the same way, found its greatest traction not from testimony about Gates' business practices but from excerpts^{③②} of his own videotaped deposition in which he claimed not to recall key meetings and e-mails sent under his name. In their respective depositions, Gates and Clinton both diminished themselves with evasive^{③③}, lawyerly responses—Gates claiming confusion about the meaning of the word “ask,” Clinton saying his answer depended on the meaning of “is.”

Both Bills have been survivors all their lives, and for now that pattern seems to be holding. Clinton's approval ratings have risen since the Lewinsky scandal broke. And Gates' personal wealth has increased over 500% since the antitrust case was filed. After months of being

②⑦indomitable: 不屈
服的, 不屈不挠
的

②⑧intern: 实习生

②⑨deposition: 宣誓证
词

③①impeachment: 弹
劾, 指摘

③②excerpts: 摘录,
剪辑

③③evasive: 逃避的,
推托的

maligned^① by prosecutors^②, both men will have a chance this week to put forth their defense. Clinton will deny that he engaged in perjury^③ and obstruction of justice, and argue that the charges against him do not rise to the level of impeachable^④ offenses. Microsoft will contend that it is not a monopoly, that its seemingly dominant position in software could quickly collapse and that hardball business practices are the norm in this highly competitive field.

How will these two epic^⑤ biographies end? When Gates built his sprawling \$ 60 million mansion^⑥, he had a quote from *The Great Gatsby* inscribed in the library: "He had come a long way to this blue lawn, and his dream must have seemed so close that he could hardly fail to grasp it." It was an odd choice, and the software magnate^⑦ may have missed its tragic import. In the end of the novel, Jay Gatsby *does* fail to grasp his dream, and success destroys him. The two Bills are already modern Gatsbys of a sort, having achieved their very different versions of the American Dream. Whether their flaws, like the original Gatsby's, pull them down remains to be seen.

[Selected from Time, January 25, 1999,
written by Adam Cohen]

- ①maligned: 诽谤
- ②prosecutors: 起诉人, 检举人
- ③perjury: 伪证, 假证词
- ④impeachable: 可控告的, 可弹劾的

⑤epic: 史诗(般的)

⑥mansion: 宅邸

⑦magnate: 大亨, 巨头

A Cautious Revolution

联合国秘书长安南试图在联合国内进行一场“静悄悄的革命”，但困难重重，前途未卜……

The job of secretary-general at the United Nations is not unlike that of a medieval^① pope^②. In one sense, you are the leader of Christendom^③. Yet, at the same time, your power is limited; You have no battalions^④ of your own (all those peace-keeping troops are only on loan); your own organization is a hodgepodge^⑤ of feuding bishoprics; and you are normally broke^⑥.

In such a job much depends on character and momentum^⑦. Kofi Annan has shown that he has plenty of the former. Since becoming secretary-general in January, 1997, Annan has quieted criticism in the U. S. Congress, won \$1 billion from Ted Turner, started holding meetings with the private sector, and made a series of encouraging appointments.

Until recently Annan also seemed to have momentum on his side. But his successful diplomatic crusade in Iraq is in the sad process of unraveling^⑧. UN monitors have been hustled out of Congo, and the hard-won peace in Angola is at vanishing point. The United Nations High Commissioner^⑨ for Refugees faces unexpected allegations of corruption.

Such setbacks reflect basic flaws. The UN

① medieval: 中世纪的

② pope: 罗马教皇

③ Christendom: 基督教界

④ battalions: 军营, 军队

⑤ hodgepodge: 大杂烩

⑥ broke: 一文不名的

⑦ momentum: 冲力

⑧ unraveling: 拆开

⑨ Commissioner: 委员, 专员

remains a place where a senior official can still compare the bureaucracy^⑩ unfavorably with that of the old Soviet Union; where discord^⑪ between the South (as less-developed nations are known) and the North paralyzes^⑫ decision making; and where the U.S. still owes nearly \$1.5 billion in dues. These failings are largely attributable to the membership, not to Annan. Yet they underline the fundamental challenge facing him.

Last year, Annan began what he likes to call his "quiet revolution." Part of this meant letting Joseph Connor, the UN's administrative chief, continue to slim down^⑬ the central bureaucracy. Having reduced the head count by 14 percent since 1994 to 8,800, Connor now wants to cut back the administrative portion of the central budget from 38 percent to 25 percent. Some \$200 million saved should go to front-line economic development.

Annan has also tried to streamline the chain of command while creating what he calls "a more collegial approach." He has marshaled^⑭ the central part of the UN into five "executive groups" and formed these department heads into a cabinet^⑮ that makes most of the important decisions. He has promoted the idea of UN houses in various countries to bring together the different agencies and programs. Insiders say that the cabinet does indeed seem to have increased coordination. Yet, overall, there is plainly still not enough coordination and too much administration.

⑩ bureaucracy: 官僚作风

⑪ discord: 分歧

⑫ paralyzes: 使瘫痪

⑬ slim down: 精简

⑭ marshaled: 整顿

⑮ cabinet: 政府内阁

This is not Connor's fault. Most of the duplication^⑮ occurs among the various funds, programs, and agencies, many of which raise their own money or have their own governing bodies. The reforms thus far have been largely restricted^⑯ to the few parts of the UN that Annan controls. And the General Assembly, which includes all 185 UN members, has messed^⑰ around with Connor's plan to transfer \$ 200 million in administrative savings to field operations, and stopped several fairly painless reforms. But the real issue for both Annan and the General Assembly is whether his quiet revolution went far enough in the first place. Sooner or later, more radical change will be demanded by the 15 or so richer countries that pay virtually all the UN's budget^⑱.

In particular, the UN will have to change from a body that tries to do everything everywhere into a "narrower, deeper organization." What should it concentrate on? One answer would be global problems that nobody else can tackle. In general, the UN's core political activities pass this test more easily than its economic and social ones. Nongovernmental organizations not only compete for dollars that might otherwise go to UN bodies but often assume^⑳ their role.

Taking responsibility for refugees^㉑ and peace keeping is something the UN should be able to do. It is also a natural forum for debates on global problems, from asteroid collisions to

⑮ duplication: 重复

⑯ restricted: 受限制的

⑰ messed: 弄乱, 弄糟

⑱ budget: 预算

㉑ assume: 取代

㉒ refugees: 难民

drug trafficking^②. The extremely controversial^③ idea of the UN having a small standing army (so that it can put peace keepers on the ground quickly) fits more neatly into the concept of a narrower, deeper UN than does, say, environmental research.

Annan is nervous about the idea of a much narrower UN: "Governments are always demanding that something must be done, and that something always ends up at the UN," he says. But he has in theory left the door open for another more fundamental wave of reform. Last year he persuaded the General Assembly to give him permission to examine the system of specialized UN agencies with their own governing boards^④. He would dearly love to bully^⑤ the Assembly into reorganizing its chaotic agenda.

Why not be bolder? Conventional wisdom within the UN is that reform must be gradual^⑥. "You have to remember," says Annan's deputy, Louise Fréchette, "that this is a universal organization that has to reflect its members' wishes". Many members see Annan as more of a secretary than a general. Reform scratches^⑦ all four of the Assembly's deepest wounds. The first wound is the chasm^⑧ between South and North. Virtually any sensible rethink of the UN would involve the organization concentrating more on political projects than economic and social ones. But the latter is the part of the UN that three quarters of its members hold most dear.

The second wound is America's nonpayment

② drug trafficking: 毒品交易

③ controversial: 引起争论的, 有争议的

④ boards: 委员会, 理事会

⑤ bully: 威吓, 威逼

⑥ gradual: 逐渐的, 逐步的, 渐进的

⑦ scratches: 抓, 挠, 搔

⑧ chasm: 裂口

of its debt to the UN "Reforming the UN" is the excuse that Congress gives for delaying payment of its dues. It is difficult to overestimate^② the disgust^③ with the United States, even among its allies, at the UN. Many doubt that America really wants to see a more efficient UN—just a smaller one.

The third awkwardness is the Security Council and the politicking^④ about its anachronistic^⑤ composition. One of the most difficult countries when it comes to almost all reform issues is Pakistan. The reason? Any meaningful reform would include a proposal to widen the permanent membership of the Security Council, probably bringing in India, which Pakistan does not want.

The fourth tender area is the way the budget is parceled out. Ten countries pay more than three quarters of the current \$1.3-billion budget. Although nobody begrudges^⑥ the fact that the world's poorest nations contribute only \$13,000 each, many fairly prosperous countries escape lightly.

If the UN does eventually bicker itself into oblivion^⑦, the central responsibility will lie with its members, not its secretary-general.

On the other hand, the excuse that Annan is purely the club secretary does not wash. As the late Dag Hammarskjöld, the only outstanding secretary-general so far, stressed repeatedly, the post is not just about fulfilling mandates^⑧, but also about representing the world's broader

② overestimate: 估计过高

③ disgust: 厌恶; 憎恶

④ politicking: 竞选活动

⑤ anachronistic: 时代错误的

⑥ begrudges: 嫉妒, 羡慕

⑦ oblivion: 遗忘, 湮没

⑧ mandates: (书面) 命令

interests. That surely includes a healthy UN. Put another way, if he wants to change the UN, the diplomatic Annan will have to try to force his club members to accept changes that most of them do not want.

Annan says with a wry smile^③ that "the UN is not a house in which revolutionaries flourish^④." But he is probably in a stronger position than he realizes. The fact that nobody else has any clear policy about the UN's future gives him a chance to set the agenda. Moreover, some individual reforms might be easier to push through if they are part of a wider plan. For instance, if Annan proposes merging^⑤ the UN's three food agencies(all of which are located in Rome), the Italians would probably object; put such a reform into a package where other governments lost perks^⑥, and the Italians might be more co-operative.

The parallel with the medieval papacy^⑦ should both inspire and frighten Annan. On the one hand, by using their bully pulpit effectively, some strong popes did manage to lead Christendom. On the other, the failure by most popes to face up to the abuses within their own organization opened the way to reformation of a far more devastating^⑧ type.

③ wry smile: 苦笑

④ flourish: 繁荣, 兴隆

⑤ merging: 合并

⑥ perks: 额外津贴

⑦ papacy: 教皇的权力和职位

⑧ devastating: 毁灭性的; 破坏性的

[Selected from World Press Review, December 1998]

China's Century Babies

确立“世纪婴儿”本是一个喜人的想法，谁料却产生了意想不到的后果。现在中国的许多夫妇都打算让孩子出生在千年之交的子夜，考虑到将会产生的问题，政府鼓励人们重新考虑自己的决定。

It started as a cute idea. Now, so many couples hope to deliver a child at midnight on the millennium^① that Beijing is urging them to think again.

The rumor^② started circulating^③ last December; babies born just past the stroke of midnight on Jan. 1, 2000, would win prizes, perks, even a “passport” from the World Health Organization. Soon the notion of having what the media dubbed^④ a Century Baby took off. “My husband and I got the idea from our teacher, who said, ‘Why not jump on the bandwagon^⑤? ’” says Ms. Sang, 30, a Beijing Yuppie who asked that only her surname be published. “At first we thought, ‘What fun!’”

That's what a lot of people thought. But officials of the WHO do not issue passports and were not terribly amused. The prospect^⑥ of a sudden baby boom would hardly advance their efforts to control the global population. Even as they denied the rumors, promoters around the world came forward with real offers. Millennium babies will win a car from a newspaper in Russia,

① millennium: 千年

② rumor: 流言, 谣言

③ circulating: 传播

④ dubbed: 起绰号

⑤ jump on the bandwagon: 赶时髦, 一窝蜂作风

⑥ prospect: 前景

and 100 francs from local authorities in France. Couples from Beijing to Paris are already aware that the best time to conceive^⑦ a Y2K kid is on or about April 9—an evening the British press has dubbed “bonk^⑧ night”. Only in China, what started as a silly rumor has put superstitious^⑨ parents on a collision course with officials, who fear that even one hyperfertile night could end up overwhelming delivery rooms, crowding schools and generally aggravating^⑩ the burdens of the world’s largest population.

The downside^⑪ didn’t occur to Beijing right away. At first, state-run media reported the millennial mania as a cute fad^⑫. In December, the government’s Health News reported cheerily on the “extraordinary excitement” among young couples who were hurrying to get married, and happily calculating when they should try for a child. The following month another newspaper printed advice on “How to Conceive a Century Baby,” suggesting among other things that husbands should avoid “cigarettes, alcohol and hot tempers.” By then, however, many parents were resorting to more desperate^⑬ measures.

Indeed, as the eve^⑭ of the millennium approaches, some Chinese are planning families more aggressively than the Communist Party. The political bosses have softened enforcement of the “one child” policy, first imposed in 1979. These days Beijing emphasizes education, and allows rural^⑮ parents to have a second child if the

⑦conceive: 怀孕

⑧bonk: 性交

⑨superstitious: 迷信的

⑩aggravating: 使恶化的, 加重的

⑪downside: 下降趋势

⑫fad: 时尚, 一时流行的狂热

⑬desperate: 铤而走险的

⑭eve: 前夜

⑮rural: 农村的