

Kim Jung-Un, Evil Despot?
Remember Donald, He's Just a Boy
(A Requisite look)

7-2018

Recent side by side images of heads of state provide a simplistic juxtaposition and contribute to a confusion of capability and a personification of issues and conditions. Application of Stratified Systems Theory¹ and Requisite Organization² principles would suggest the possibility, nay, the likelihood, of significant differences in information processing capability with the inevitable effect on the management and operation of a state. It is understood that complexity of information processing matures reliably with age, regardless of education and life circumstances.³ Arguably the lower the capability, the greater the reliance on the decisions of existing infrastructure (sometimes fondly referred to as deep state).

Suppose, just suppose, that upon taking office, Kim's goals were to a) improve the condition of the citizens, b) make provision for a strong defense of the country, c) deal with human rights abuses, d) bring North Korea into the world community, and e) survive. What is a reasonable time horizon for such plans? A U.S. presidential term – four years? That seems pretty short - dangerously short. But even if that were the “by when” for the “what,” Kim would have had to have been mode 8⁴ when he assumed the office at age 26. He is now, in effect, into his second term but he is the age of many American's who are still living with their parents.⁵ How much time would you give your 26 year-old child to end human rights abuses in North Korea?⁶

Okay, just for fun, let's say that Kim and President Trump are in the same capability mode and for more fun - let's say mode 8 - where you

¹ SST and RO represent the application in managerial science of Elliott Jaques' discovery (with Kathryn Cason) and half century of development of a method for evaluation of potential individual capability and the maturity of complexity of information processing.

² Ibid.

³ Attached is a Potential Progress Data Sheet from Jaques, *The Life and Behavior of Living Organisms*.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Cheap shot at millennials for playful illustration purposes only.

⁶ We don't really know the decision/authority milieu for taking out the half-brother and the uncle. And yes, I understand that the buck stops with the boss.

might find someone like Bill Gates. What we saw in Singapore, then, was a handshake between a stratum 5 and a stratum 8 head of state. And even if we apply a different mode than 8, the disparity in cognitive power still exists. How does a boy king deal with that disparity? If he were French (or maybe Canadian – smile), I would be looking for a high capability courtesan in his entourage – perhaps a Diane de Poitiers. As it is, there are a couple of senior advisors who are likely providing higher stratum guidance.

Vis-à-vis North Korea, the appellation “evil despot” would seem to be part of the job description. The characterization often comes up in relation to the disposition of enemies of the state – those that are involved in what we might refer to as treasonous behavior including fraternizing and sharing intelligence with foreign agents. North Korea is certainly not the only state to invoke a zero tolerance approach to espionage and sedition.

It is reasonable to assume that a boy king, almost two decades younger than the youngest U.S. president, initially relies on existing infrastructure for governance and survival and must tread carefully and patiently. Of course, there is the consideration that he may be mentally ill – in which case, SST and RO do not apply. Then, too, there is the old “-T/RB”⁷ factor. Perhaps an evil despot is simply someone unable to bring the required behaviors to the role.

Respectfully submitted,

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⁷ In Elliott Jaques’ development of Requisite Organization (RO), he initially used the term negative temperament (-T) and later required behavior (RB) when considering whether a candidate can apply behaviors required by the role.

Figure 3.3
Maturation of Potential Capability in Adults

