

## Mao's Yan'An Red Base

### 1. What interests you about China?

I am interested in China because of its unique trajectory as a Communist country. China diverged from many other Communist governments in the 20th century after the Sino-Soviet split; its policies were not directly influenced by the USSR in the way many other countries were. Beyond that, China is still a Communist country, at least in name. In some ways it epitomizes what happened in most countries that attempted to become Communist: authoritarian rule. This control has continued even as China's economy has transitioned to more of a market economy. China also has a very different historical background from that of other Communist countries. This history has influenced many of the attempts of government to increase gender equality, among other policies, and makes China unique in another regard.

### 2. What interests you about Communism?

Communism is an inherently optimistic form of government, born from Marxism, which I would argue is an inherently idealistic philosophy. My interest in Communism stems from the blatant disregard seen for human nature in Marxism. I studied Marx in depth as part of an independent study last year looking at his work as well as the implementation of Communism in China. Not only does Marxism fail to account for human nature, its emphasis is on the revolutionary process rather than what follows. And I would argue this is why Communist governments have turned authoritarian so quickly. Marxist theory has been adopted by revolutionaries, but because it is so impractical and lacks a clear idea about how a post-revolutionary society will be structured, its adoption simply presents an opportunity for an authoritarian regime to take hold. Given that Communist governments very quickly become authoritarian it is then very interesting to see how they attempt to implement policy they believe are in keeping with Marx's ideas.

### 3. Explain your experience doing role-play, in Model UN or any other activity (including acting, etc.).

I have extensive experience doing MUN and crisis committees in particular: PMUNC will be my thirteenth conference. Many of the cabinets I've been on have forced me to put myself in other's shoes because I have been advocating for positions I haven't agreed with. A prime example of this was when I representing Mullah Muhammad Omar, leader of the Taliban. In particular, his views on women's rights sharply contrasted with my own, but I still had to advocate for them in committee.

### 4. Do you have a particular interest in a certain time period, type of government, etc.? If so, why?

In addition to Communism, I am interested in Republican government, in particular its structure and how that leads to more or less effective governing. My interest in the function of Republican government is aligned with my more general interest in politics, however from a purely objective standpoint, as we live in a time where a key part of our government is failing to function (that being congress, which is setting new lows for the number of substantive bills passed by congress since the 19th century), I find this area fascinating.