Dylan Frank 10/8/14

Mao’s Yan’an Army Red Base – PMUNC Committee Application:

1. What interests you about China?

As a multi-racial, Asian-American (Caucasian/Chinese), who has family in both the China and the US, I have always been fascinated by China’s history and culture. I started studying Mandarin Chinese in 6th grade, and I am currently taking a Chinese History course at my school. What I find most interesting about China is its transformation into a modern-day, economic superpower. China’s history was fraught with numerous rebellions, conflicts, and wars; many of which have profoundly effected its development. As a country, China has been invaded, completely defeated, and occupied twice in history (first by the Mongols in the Yuan Dynasty, and later by the Manchurians in the Qing Dynasty). Believing they were the most advanced country in the world, China became increasingly isolationist during the Ming Dynasty. After the Opium War, however, the once great Chinese Empire had effectively been brought to its knees before Britain. China was forced out of isolation, and its conflicts with foreign powers since the Opium War (and the resultant war indemnities it was made to pay) led to its continual economic oppression for years to come. Though China’s conflicts with Western powers were profoundly influential, it is arguably China’s adaptation of Communism that had the greatest effect on the development of modern Chinese society. The country’s modern-day economic success, which brought on by Deng Xiaoping’s Socialist economic reforms in 1978, exists in stark contrast to China’s dire economic state before Deng Xiaoping’s reforming Communism.

2. What interests you about Communism?

The concept of Communism originated in Russia with Leninism, and was adapted by Stalin around WWII. Stalin took Lenin’s concept of Communism, and changed it from a common-people oriented ideology to an authoritarian one. European Communism envisioned a post-industrial society, focusing on the Proletariat rising up against the bourgeoisie. However, China did not have an Industrial Revolution, and used Communism to fuel its own industrialization. Because of this occurrence, China’s economic development has resumed to this day.

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

I have never done role-play for Model UN before, but I participated in a few theatrical productions (in middle school).

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

As the founder of the Republic of China and Kuomintang Party, I am especially interested in Sun Yat-sen as a historical figure (specifically in his attempts to establish republican government in China), and in Yuan Shikai. Through Sun Yat-sen’s Four Phases of Revolution, Sun Yat-sen had detailed his plan for ousting the Qing Dynasty, and restoring China to its former lost glory. Had Yuan Shikai not betrayed Sun Yat-sen, taking absolute power over China and destroying Sun’s newfound republic, China may have remained a republic. The end of the Qing Dynasty, brought on by Sun and Shikai’s takeover of the throne, represents the end of China’s Imperial history. The power vacuum created by Yuan Shikai’s death paved the way for later competition between different revolutionary groups for influence, most notably between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party.