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War Games 2 Personal Reflection

After our first War Games, I felt much more confident going into the meeting; I felt like I had a better grip on what to expect. However, when the war games were over, I was more confused than when I had started. The entire process was much more complex and dynamic than the first one. Honestly, I felt like we were all a bit unprepared for the range of topics that were discussed. Despite this, I felt like I learned much more this time around.

I was assigned the topic of “New, Entrepreneurial India” in the context of China. Once again, I was relieved to be researching something less engineering-intensive. My research proved to be quite fruitful. From comparisons of China’s homogenous, well-funded market to India’s heterogeneous, domestic market, I was blessed with much information. I found articles of Xi’s meeting with Modi and how a railway was planned to be built linking Chennai and Bangalore. Moreover, many articles highlighted what India could learn from China and how India could move forward, focusing less on low-cost models and more on innovation and globalization. However, with all of this information, I felt a bit lost in how this research would tie into the context of a War Game akin to the first one we experienced earlier in the dialogue.

Upon bringing this information to my group, I realized that we were all a bit confused on how to build a case for China and what direction we wanted to head. What

were we going to ask for? What can China really gain from these other countries/organizations? What incentives can we truly provide that would reflect what China would really do? In our group meeting, we attempted to answer these questions. We emphasized education for women as a means of empowerment and economical progress. Honestly, I believe that our personal values muddled with China's and confused our group meeting.

During the overall war games process, I do not know if we appropriately took on the role of being a bully. We were providing 5% concessions for debt to the United States, asking them to invest in renewable energy. We praised an American system, asking other countries to model their affirmative action policies after the United States. This was definitely not something China would do. Thankfully, Professor Ganguly suggested for us to emphasize for the United States to use that money to hire Chinese labor and to use solar energy, based after China's "superior alternative energy methods." This was more like China, according to the press. I believe our group did not know how to be stern and inflexible; we were a group of liberal, flexible, and generous students. We simply had to take on the role of China, and I believe we did a better job after meeting with Professor Ganguly.

One way in which we took on the role of the bully was when we discussed the dam on the Brahmaputra River. Upon researching about this dam, I came to realize that China really did not have a chance in justifying its secretively deceptive plans to build a river that would truly negatively impact Northeastern India's water flow. However, we had to ignore that this dam would be immoral and unsupportable in many ways. Because of China's reputation to keep other nations in the dark, we decided to dismiss any

opposition and to basically say, “What are you going to do about it?” We had to learn how to be uncompromising. It was also difficult to understand how this serious international issue would happen in the real world.

Finally, I feel as though our overall discussion focused too heavily on concepts such as education. This could help the economy of the region in the long run, but we were ignoring things that would have a more immediate impact on climate change. We were simply misguiding each other about which topics to discuss. However, when we were talking about the curved carbon cap and trade system, I felt as though we were finally talking about something of substance. We did not want GDP-based as it would favor countries such as the United States, and we did not want per capita either. It was extremely cumbersome to come to a conclusion, as all of us were students not well versed in economics and policy. Although such a system could provide strong benefits for reducing carbon emissions, we did not understand the dynamics of the implementation and complications/disadvantages for certain countries. Our policies were too vague and idealistic.

After the war games were over, I had a few regrets. I felt like we all of the groups could have invested more time learning about things like carbon cap and trade and GDP, etc. But to be fair, I do not think we could have known that these topics were going to be discussed. All in all, I feel like I learned about the struggle of deciding and implementing policy. In addition, without the right experts in the room, the entire policy process can be aimless and pointless. Those making policy should be knowledgeable about all of the subjects that could be potentially discussed. In addition, maybe prior communication between the groups could have helped us prepare for our debate and negotiations.