The Liberal Perspective

I. Assumptions and Approach

II. Liberal Idealism

III. Neoliberal Institutionalism

IV. Problems with the Liberal Perspective
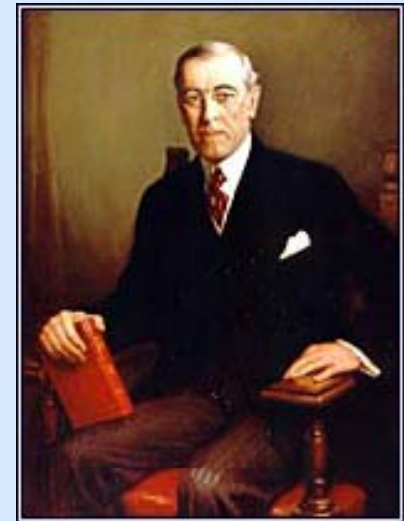
I. Assumptions & Approach

- **Non-State actors are important in IR**
- **States are not unitary actors**
- **States are not fully rational actors**
- **Agenda of IR more than just security**
- **Security dilemma not as overwhelming or pervasive as Realists contend**

II. Liberal Idealism

- **Problem: Power politics leading to WW I**
  - **Alliances**
  - **Secret Treaties**
  - **Arms Races**
- **Human nature essentially good**
- **Problems (i.e., Wars) from poor governance, not evil people (or nations)**
- **Solution: Create effective multilateral institutions to achieve collective security**

Liberal Idealist Reforms

- **Wilson's 'Fourteen Points'**
  - **International Institutions (i.e., League of Nations)**
  - **International Law (e.g., Kellogg-Briand Pact 1928)**
  - **Disarmament**
  - **National Self-Determination**
  - **General Rejection of Balance of Power Politics**

- **Failed because it could not prevent Second World War!**

III. Neoliberal Institutionalism

- **Anomalies to Realist perspective (i.e., Peace in Europe)**

- **Factors mitigating the security dilemma…**
  - **International Organizations**
  - **Trade/Interaction**
  - **Common Values/Goals and International Regimes**
    - <u>International Regime</u> = a set of principles, norms and rules governing behavior within a specified issue area (NOTE: slightly different from Nau)

- **Leads to 'positive sum' IR not based solely on power!**

Summary of Liberalism

- Anarchy and the security dilemma, but...
- International organizations, economic interdependence, common ideals ALTER the calculations of states within that anarchic framework
- All serves to increase trust and cooperation between states, creating a POSITIVE CYCLE of peace and stability

IV. Problems with the Liberal Perspective

- **The persistence of conflict under interdependence**

- **The limitations of international institutions**

- **The stubborn health of nationalism and separateness**

These guys can only do so much…