Foreign Policy
Theories, Actors, Cases
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Edited by
Steve Smith
Amelia Hadfield
Tim Dunne

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Contents in brief

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Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield, and Tim Dunne

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Reader's guide

For more than two centuries, liberal countries have tended to maintain peaceful relations with each other. Liberal democracies are each other's natural allies. They tend to respect and accommodate other democratic countries and negotiate rather than escalate disputes. This provides a positive incentive to try to preserve and expand the liberal zone of peace. And that is the fundamental postulate of liberal foreign policy. But liberalism has also proved to be a dangerous guide to foreign policy, often exacerbating tensions with non-liberal states. Expanding liberalism can sometimes provoke danger and war. This chapter thus addresses a large and perplexing foreign policy question central to all democracies: Can the liberal peace be effectively preserved and expanded without provoking unnecessary danger and inflicting unnecessary harm? The chapter also addresses how scholars have analysed liberalism's effects, distinguishing three key interpretations of liberal foreign policy: individualist, commercial, and republican.  

Introduction

Liberalism contributes to the understanding of foreign policy by highlighting how individuals and the ideas and ideals they espouse (such as human rights, liberty, and democracy), social forces (capitalism, markets), and political institutions (democracy, representation) can have direct effects on foreign relations. It contrasts with the assumptions of structural realists regarding the determinative role of system structure (unipolar, bipolar, or multipolar) and the consequent assumption of state homogeneity (rational, material, and unitary actors). By opening the box of state action and allowing for the effects of varying ideas,
interests, and institutions, liberalism complicates the study of international politics. But it also produces better predictions of foreign policy behaviour and incorporates modern conceptions of ethical foreign policy (Doyle 1997). This chapter begins by defining what scholars have meant by liberalism, describes the major features of liberal foreign relations, and then shows how the three schools of liberal foreign policy analysis have connected liberal principles and institutions to foreign policy outcomes. It concludes with reflections on preserving and expanding the zone of liberal peace—while avoiding war with the wider non-liberal world.

Liberalism

Liberalism is identified with an essential principle—the importance of the freedom of the individual. Above all, this is a belief in the importance of moral freedom—of the right to be treated and a duty to treat others as ethical subjects, and not as objects or means only. A concern for this principle generates rights and institutions.

The challenge within liberalism is how to reconcile the three sets of liberal rights (see Box 3.1). The right to private property, for example, can conflict with equality of opportunity, and both rights can be violated by democratic legislation. The liberal tradition has evolved two high roads to individual freedom and social order: one is laissez-faire or 'neo-conservative' liberalism, and the other is social welfare or social democratic (or in US terms 'liberal') liberalism. Both reconcile these conflicting rights (though in differing ways) by successfully organizing free individuals into a political order.

The political order combining laissez-faire and social welfare liberals is marked by a shared commitment to four institutions. First, citizens possess juridical equality and other civic rights such as freedom of religion and the press. Second, the effective sovereigns of the state are representative legislatures deriving their authority from the consent of the electorate and exercising their authority free from all restraint apart from the requirement that basic civic rights be preserved. Most pertinently for the impact of liberalism on foreign affairs, the state is subject to neither the external authority of other states nor the internal authority of

**Box 3.1 The foundations of liberalism**

A commitment to a threefold set of rights forms the foundation of liberalism. Liberalism calls for freedom from arbitrary authority, often called 'negative freedom', which includes freedom of conscience, a free press and free speech, equality under the law, and the right to hold, and therefore to exchange, property without fear of arbitrary seizure. Liberalism also calls for those rights necessary to protect and promote the capacity and opportunity for freedom—the 'positive freedoms'. Thus such social and economic rights as equality of opportunity in education and rights to health care and employment, necessary for effective self-expression and participation, are among liberal rights (Berlin 1969). A third liberal right, democratic participation or representation, is necessary to guarantee the other two. To ensure that morally autonomous individuals remain free in those areas of social action where public authority is needed, public legislation has to express the will of the citizens making laws for their own community.
special prerogatives held, for example, by monarchs or military castes over foreign policy. Third, the economy rests on the recognition of the rights of private property, including the ownership of means of production. Property is justified as a stimulus to productivity and a limit on the monopoly of state authority. The institution of private property excludes state socialism or state capitalism, but it need not exclude market socialism or various forms of the mixed economy. Fourth, economic decisions are predominantly shaped by the forces of supply and demand, domestically and internationally, and are free from strict control by bureaucracies.

In order to protect the opportunity of the citizen to exercise freedom, laissez-faire liberalism has leaned towards a highly constrained role for the state and a much wider role for private property and the market. In pursuit of the same goal of freedom, welfare liberalism reverses its approach, and instead has expanded the role of the state and constricted the role of the market. However, both perspectives accept the four institutional requirements and as a result contrast markedly with the monarchical regimes, military dictatorships, and single-party governments, including communist dictatorships, with which they have shared the political governance of the modern world. Not even overwhelmingly liberal countries are purely liberal. Liberal principles and institutions sometimes vie with autocratic or racist rivals for the allegiance of the public (Skowronek 2006). There are also domestic variations within liberal regimes. For example, Switzerland was liberal only in certain cantons; the US was liberal only north of the Mason-Dixon Line until 1865, when it became liberal throughout. These lists also exclude ancient 'republics', since none appear to fit modern liberal criteria of individualism (Holmes 1979).

The domestic successes of liberalism have never been more apparent. Never have so many people been included in, and accepted the domestic hegemony of, the liberal order; never have so many of the world's leading states been liberal, whether as republics or as constitutional monarchies. Indeed, the success of liberalism as an answer to the problem of masterless men in modern society is reflected in the growth in the number of liberal regimes from the handful of semi-liberal regimes that existed in the first half of the nineteenth century (e.g. Britain, France, and the USA) to more than 100 that exist today. But we should not be complacent about the domestic affairs of liberal states. Significant practical problems endure: enhancing citizen participation in large democracies, distributing 'positional goods' (for example, prestigious jobs), controlling bureaucracy, reducing unemployment, paying for a growing demand for social services, reducing inflation, and achieving large-scale restructuring of industries in response to growing foreign competition (Hirsch 1977). While these domestic problems have been widely explored, they are by no means solved. Liberalism's foreign record is more obscure and warrants greater consideration.

Liberal foreign relations

The historical record of liberal international relations includes incentives for a separate zone of peace among liberal states, but also, unfortunately, for imprudent aggression against non-liberals and complaisance in vital matters of security and economic cooperation.
The liberal zone of peace

The first and most important of the effects of liberalism on the foreign relations of liberal states is the establishment of a peace among them. Medieval and early modern Europe served as the cockpit of warring states, with France, England, and the Low Countries engaged in nearly constant strife. Then in the late eighteenth century there began to emerge liberal regimes. At first hesitant and confused, and later clear and confident as liberal regimes gained deeper domestic foundations and greater international experience, a zone of peace became established among the liberal states.

One key example of this peace was Anglo-American relations. During the nineteenth century, the USA and Great Britain engaged in nearly continual strife, including one war, the War of 1812. However, after the Reform Act of 1832 defined representation as the formal source of the sovereignty of the British parliament, Britain and the USA settled their disputes diplomatically despite, for example, British grievances against the North’s blockade of the South, with which Britain had close economic ties. Nearly a century later, despite severe Anglo-French colonial rivalry, liberal France and liberal Britain formed an entente against illiberal Germany before the First World War. In 1914–1915, Italy, the liberal member of the Triple Alliance with Germany and Austria, chose not to fulfil its treaty obligations to support its allies. Instead, it joined in an alliance with Britain and France that prevented it from fighting other liberal states, and then subsequently declared war on Germany and Austria. And despite generations of Anglo-American tension and Britain’s wartime restrictions on American trade with Germany, the USA leaned towards Britain and France from 1914 to 1917, before entering the war on their side. Nowhere was this special peace among liberal states more clearly proclaimed than in President Woodrow Wilson’s War Message of 2 April 1917:

Our object now, as then, is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as against selfish and autocratic power and to set up amongst the really free and self-governed people of the world such a concert of purpose and of action as will henceforth ensure the observance of those principles. (Wilson 1924: 378)

Beginning in the eighteenth century, a zone of peace, which the liberal philosopher Immanuel Kant called the ‘pacific federation’ or ‘pacific union’, was slowly established among liberal societies. Today, more than 100 liberal states with at least three years of consolidation make up this zone of peace. Most are in Europe and North America, but they can be found on every continent (see Map 3.1).

Of course, the outbreak of war in any given year, between any two given states, is a low-probability event. The occurrence of a war between any two adjacent states, considered over a long period of time, is more probable. Thus the near absence of war between liberal states, whether adjacent or not, for almost 200 years may have significance. More significant, perhaps, is that when states are forced to decide on which side of an impending world war they will fight, liberal states will tend to wind up on the same side, despite the complexity of the paths that take them there. These characteristics neither prove that the peace among liberals is statistically significant nor that liberalism is the peace’s sole valid explanation. But they do suggest that we consider the possibility that liberals have indeed established a separate peace—but only among themselves.

Foreign relations among any other group of states with similar social structures or with compatible values or pluralistic social structures are not similarly peaceful.

Feudal warfare
was frequent and very much a sport of the monarchs and nobility. Civilizations may clash, but there have been as many wars within Islam or Christianity as between them. There have not been enough truly totalitarian fascist powers (nor have they lasted long enough) to test fairly their pacific compatibility, but fascist powers in the wider sense of nationalist military dictatorships clearly fought each other in the 1930s in Eastern Europe. Communist powers have engaged in wars more recently in East Asia, when China invaded Vietnam and Vietnam invaded Cambodia. Equally, we have not had enough democratic socialist societies to consider the relevance of socialist pacification. The more abstract category of pluralism does not suffice. Certainly Germany was pluralist when it engaged in war with liberal states in 1914; Japan as well in 1941. But they were not liberal. Peace among liberals thus appears to be a special characteristic.

Here the predictions of liberal pacifists are borne out: liberal states do exercise peaceful restraint and a separate peace exists among them. This separate peace provides a solid foundation for the crucial alliances of the USA with the liberal powers (NATO, the US–Japanese alliance, the alliance with Australia and New Zealand), and it appears impervious to the quarrels with allies that have bedevilled many US administrations. It also offers the promise of a continuing peace among liberal states, and with increasing numbers of liberal states, it announces the possibility of a self-enforcing global peace without establishing a world state.

Imprudent aggressiveness

Aside from restraint in warring against other liberal states, liberalism carries with it a second effect—what David Hume called 'imprudent vehemence' or aggression against or enmity towards non-liberals (Hume 1963: 346–347). Peaceful restraint seems to work only in liberals' relations with other liberals; liberal states have fought numerous wars with non-liberal states.

Many of these wars have been defensive, and thus prudent by necessity. Liberal states have been attacked and threatened by non-liberal states that do not exercise restraint in their dealings with liberal states. Authoritarian rulers both stimulate and respond to an international political environment in which conflicts of prestige, of interest, and of pure fear all lead states towards war. Thus war and conquest have characterized the careers of many authoritarian rulers and ruling parties—from Louis XIV and Napoleon to Mussolini's fascists, Hitler's Nazis, and Stalin's communists.

But imprudent aggression by the liberal states—liberal imprudence—has also characterized many of these wars. Both liberal France and liberal Britain fought costly expansionist colonial wars throughout the nineteenth century. The USA fought a similar war with Mexico in 1846–1848, waged a war of annihilation against the Native Americans, and intervened militarily against sovereign states many times before and after the Second World War. Liberal states invade weak non-liberal states and display exceptional degrees of distrust in their foreign policy relations with powerful non-liberal states.10

Nonetheless, establishing the statistical significance of Hume's assertion appears remarkably difficult. The best statistical evidence indicates that 'libertarian' or 'democratic' states appear to be more war-prone.11 War-proneness is not, however, a measure of imprudent aggression since many wars are defensive. But that does not mean that we can simply blame warfare on the authoritarians or totalitarians, as many of our more enthusiastic politicians would have us do.12 Liberal states acted as initiators in twenty-four out of the fifty-six
interstate wars in which they participated between 1816 and 1980, while non-liberals were on the initiating side in ninety-one out of the 187 times in which they participated in interstate wars (Chan 1984: 636). Liberal metropoles (imperial centres) were the overwhelming participants in extrasystemic wars, colonial wars, which we can assume to have been by and large initiated by the metropole (see below). Furthermore, the USA intervened in the Third World more than twice as often in the period 1946–1976 as the Soviet Union did in 1946–1979 (Clemens 1982: 117–118). Further, the USA devoted one-quarter and the Soviet Union one-tenth of their respective defence budgets to forces designed for Third World interventions, where responding to perceived threats would presumably have a less than purely defensive character (Posen and Van Evera 1980).

We should recall as well that authoritarian states have a record of imprudent aggression. It was not semi-liberal Britain that collapsed in 1815, but Napoleonic France. It was the Kaiser’s Germany that dissolved in 1918, not republican France and liberal Britain and democratic America. It was imperial Japan and Nazi Germany that disappeared in 1945, not the USA or the UK. It is the contrast with ideal rational strategy and even more the comparison with liberal accommodation with fellow liberals that highlight the aggressive imprudence of liberal relations with non-liberals. Moreover, most wars seem to arise out of calculations and miscalculations of interest, misunderstandings, and mutual suspicions, such as those that characterized the origins of the First World War. Yet we still find expressions of aggressive intent and apparently unnecessary vehemence by liberal states characterizing a large number of wars.14

In relations with powerful non-liberal states, liberal states have missed opportunities to pursue the negotiation of arms reduction and arms control when it has been in their mutual strategic interest, and they have failed to construct wider schemes of accommodation that are needed to supplement arms control. Prior to the outbreak of the First World War, this is the charge that Lord Sanderson levelled against Sir Eyre Crowe in his response to Crowe’s classic memorandum on the state of British relations with Germany.15 (see Box 3.2).

**Box 3.2 Relations with powerful non-liberal states**

In developing relations with powerful non-liberal states, evidence of deeply held suspicion appears to characterize US diplomacy towards the Soviet Union. In a fascinating memorandum to President Wilson written in 1919, Herbert Hoover (then one of Wilson’s advisers) recommended that the President speak out against the danger of ‘world domination’ which the ‘Bolsheviks’—a ‘tyranny that is the negation of democracy’—posed to free peoples. Rejecting military intervention as excessively costly and likely to ‘make us a party in re-establishing the reactionary classes in their economic domination over the lower classes’, Hoover proposed a ‘relief programme’ designed to undercut some of the popular appeal which the Bolsheviks were garnering in both the Soviet Union and abroad. Although acknowledging that the evidence was not yet clear, he concluded: ‘if the militant features of Bolshevism were drawn in colours with their true parallel with Prussianism as an attempt at world domination that we do not stand for, it would check the fears that today haunt all men’s minds.’ (Herbert Hoover to President Wilson, 29 March 1919, Paterson 1978: 95).

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1 The actual US intervention in the Soviet Union was limited to supporting anti-Bolshevik Czechoslovak soldiers in Siberia and to protecting military supplies in Murmansk from German seizure.
CHAPTER 3 LIBERALISM AND FOREIGN POLICY

In the post-Second World War period, and particularly following the outbreak of the Korean War, US foreign policy equated the 'International Communist Movement' (all communist states and parties) with 'communist imperialism' and with a domestic tyranny in the Soviet Union that required a Cold War contest and international subversion as means of legitimizing its own police state. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles most clearly expressed this conviction, together with his own commitment to a strategy of 'liberation', when he declared: 'We shall never have a secure peace or a happy world so long as Soviet communism dominates one-third of all the peoples that there are, and is in the process of trying at least to extend its rule to many others' (US Senate 1953: 5–6).16

Imprudent vehemence is also associated with liberal foreign policy towards weak non-liberal states, such as the many in the Third World. This problem affects both conservative liberals and welfare liberals, but the two can be distinguished by differing styles of interventions.

Protecting 'native rights' from 'native' oppressors, and protecting universal rights of property and settlement from local transgressions, introduced especially liberal motives for imperial aggression. Ending the slave trade and encouraging 'legitimate trade' (while protecting the property of European merchants) destabilized nineteenth-century West African oligarchies. Declaring the illegitimacy of suttee (self-immolation as practised by widowed women in India) and domestic slavery also attacked local cultural traditions that had sustained the stability of indigenous political authority. Europeans settling in sparsely populated areas destroyed the livelihood of tribes that relied on hunting. When the locals retaliated defensively in force, the settlers called for imperial protection (De Tocqueville 1945: 351). In practice, once the exigencies of ruling an empire came into play, liberal imperialism resulted in the oppression of 'native' liberals seeking self-determination in order to maintain imperial security, avoid local chaos, and preclude international interference by another imperial power attempting to take advantage of local disaffection.

Thus nineteenth-century liberals, such as British Prime Minister William Gladstone, pondered whether Egypt's proto-nationalist rebellion (1881–1882) was truly liberal-nationalist (they discovered that it was not) before intervening to protect strategic lifelines to India, commerce, and investment.17 These dilemmas of liberal imperialism are also reflected in US imperialism in the Caribbean where, for example, following the Spanish–American War of 1898, Article III of the Platt Amendment gave the USA the 'right to intervene for the preservation of Cuban independence, the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty ...' (Paterson 1978: Vol. 1, 328). (See also Box 3.3.)

The record of liberalism in the non-liberal world is not solely a catalogue of oppression and imprudence. The North American West and the settlement colonies—Australia and New Zealand—represent a successful transplant of liberal institutions, albeit in a temperate, underpopulated, and then depopulated environment and at the cost of Native American and Aboriginal rights. Similarly, the twentieth-century expansion of liberalism into less powerful non-liberal areas has also had some striking successes. The forcible liberalization of Germany and Japan following the Second World War and the long covert financing of liberal parties in Italy are the more significant instances of successful transplant. The covert financing of liberalism in Chile and occasional diplomatic démarches to nudge aside military threats to non-communist democratic parties (as in Peru in 1962, South Korea in 1963, and the Dominican Republic in 196218 and again in 1978) illustrate policies that, though less successful, were
Box 3.3 The 2003 invasion of Iraq: geostrategic and liberal factors at work

The invasion of Iraq in 2003 illustrated another intervention, one widely regarded as imprudent. US and UK hostility stemmed from factors that any great power and any state committed to the international rule of law would have found provoking. These included Saddam Hussein’s record of aggression against his neighbours (particularly Kuwait), the implicit threat he posed to the security of oil supplies in the Persian Gulf, and his unwillingness to assure the international community that he had eliminated programmes to acquire weapons of mass destruction as he had been required to do as part of the settlement of the first Gulf War in 1991 (UN Security Council Resolution 687). Visibly liberal factors and goals were also at work. Saddam’s genocidal campaigns against the Kurds and his record of flagrant abuses of the Iraqi population shaped his international reputation.

But the particular circumstances of the run-up to the 2003 invasion appeared more significant than either of the longer trends in hostility. The Bush administration, aware that the American public held it responsible for preventing another 9/11 attack and benefiting from a public that politically rewarded a ‘war on terror presidency’, read—and presented to the public—almost every piece of pre-invasion intelligence according to the most threatening interpretation. The Bush administration attempted to justify the war by denouncing alleged Iraqi programmes to build weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and alleged Iraqi ties to 9/11 and al-Qaeda (for which no support could be found afterwards), and it promised to induce a transformative spread of democracy in the region, beginning with Iraq.9

Reacting to the insurgency that greeted the invasion, the poor planning that characterized the occupation, and the mounting US and Iraqi casualties, by 2005 a majority of the US public, and publics of other democracies earlier, had turned against the war. The long-term results of the invasion and effort to democratize Iraq were far from clear. Iraq had experienced a referendum on a constitution and national elections, but splits among its three major communities (Shia, Sunni, and Kurd) threatened an escalating civil war. Even aggressive liberals who might have welcomed a democratic transformation of the region questioned the method in light of the disputed legality of the invasion and the long-run costs expected by some to amount to two trillion dollars.8

1 One instance was the neglect of information widely available in the Bush administration that Niger was very unlikely to have sold uranium ore to Iraq. The charge that it did nonetheless wound up as the notorious sixteen words in the President’s 2003 State of the Union Address justifying the march to war (Lichtblau 2006).

8 For an informative collection of speeches by President Bush and Secretary Powell justifying the war and by Senator Byrd and others criticizing those rationales see ‘Why Attack Iraq?’ (Gutmann and Thompson 2005: 45–60, 88–95), Goldsmith (2002) and Frank (2003) offer thoughtful pro and con legal analyses, while Pollack (2002: Chapters 5 and 11) and Kaufmann (2004) provide pro and con policy analyses.

9 Blimes and Stiglit (2006) estimate one trillion dollars as the low figure and two trillion the high, taking into account the long-term medical and other indirect costs associated with the war.

directed towards liberal goals. These particular post-war liberal successes are also the product of special circumstances: the existence of a potential liberal majority, temporarily suppressed, which could readily be re-established by outside aid, or unusually weak oligarchic, military, or communist opponents.19 (See Box 3.4.)

Elsewhere in the post-war period, when the USA sought to protect liberals in the Third World from the ‘communist threat’, the consequences of liberal foreign policy on the non-liberal society often became far removed from the promotion of individual rights or national security. In Vietnam and elsewhere, intervening against ‘armed minorities’ and ‘enemies of free enterprise’ meant intervening for other ‘armed minorities’, some sustained by oligarchies and others resting on little more than US foreign aid and troops. Indigenous liberals simply
CHAPTER 3 LIBERALISM AND FOREIGN POLICY

BOX 3.4 President Obama's grand strategy? 'A just and lasting peace'

In his Nobel Peace Prize lecture in December 2009, less than a year after taking office, President Obama modestly acknowledged that his prize seemed designed more to reward aspiration than accomplishment. He then outlined his aspirations for a just and lasting peace in words that resonated with liberal theories of foreign policy. Separating himself from Gandhian pacifism, Obama acknowledged that war was sometimes necessary. Separating himself from George Bush's militarism, he also saw international law and just war doctrines of self-defence as applicable to all states. Obama then joined Clinton and Blair in insisting that just wars must be broadened to include humanitarian wars that protect a people from massacre, and concluded by outlining what it takes to make a just and lasting peace practicable: first is adequate deterrence and sanctions against aggression and massacres; second is not merely an absence of conflict, but a positive commitment to the 'inherent rights and dignity of every individual.' For, argued Obama, 'I believe that peace is unstable where citizens are denied the right to speak freely or worship as they please; choose their own leaders or assemble without fear'. As examples, Obama added: 'Only when Europe became free did it find peace. America has never fought a war against a democracy.' Third, this lasting peace must be bolstered with 'economic security and opportunity.'

Inspiring as the speech was, a speech is not the same as policy. After all, in it Obama promised to close Guantanamo (still open two years later). But a speech by a head of government is more than a single individual's private thoughts. It tends to be widely vetted within the bureaucracy as an expression of the government's policy intentions. And it serves to coordinate government action and generates reputational costs if it is flouted.

had too narrow a base of domestic support. These interventions did not advance liberal rights, and to the extent that they were driven by ideological motives, they were not necessary for national security.

To the conservative liberals, the alternatives were starkly cast: Third World authoritarians with allegiance to the liberal capitalist West, or 'communists' subject to the totalitarian East (or leftist nationalists who, even if elected, are but a slippery stepping stone to totalitarianism) (Kirkpatrick 1979). 20 Conservative liberals are prepared to support the allied authoritarians. The communists attack property in addition to liberty, thereby provoking conservative liberals to covert or overt intervention, or 'dollar-diplomacy' imperialism. The interventions against Mossadegh in Iran, Arbenz in Guatemala, Allende in Chile, and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua appear to fall into this pattern (Barnet 1968: Chapter 10). President Reagan's simultaneous support for the military in El Salvador and guerrilla 'freedom-fighters' in Nicaragua also tracks this pattern, whose common thread is rhetorical commitment to freedom and operational support for conservative free enterprise.

To the social welfare liberals, the choice was never so clear. Aware of the need for state action to democratize the distribution of social power and resources, they tend to have more sympathy for social reform. This can produce, on the part of 'radical' welfare liberals, a more tolerant policy towards the attempts by reforming autocracies to redress inequitable distributions of property in the Third World. This more complicated welfare-liberal assessment can itself be a recipe for more extensive intervention. The conservative oligarchs or military bureaucrats with whom the conservative liberal is well at home are not so congenial to the social welfare liberal, yet the communists are still seen as enemies of liberty. In their foreign policy, left liberals justify extensive intervention first to encourage, and then to sustain, Third
World social democracy in a political environment that is either barely participatory or highly polarized. Thus Arthur Schlesinger recalls President Kennedy musing shortly after the assassination of President Trujillo (former dictator of the Dominican Republic): 'There are three possibilities in descending order of preference, a decent democratic regime, a continuation of the Trujillo regime [by his followers] or a Castro regime. We ought to aim at the first, but we can't really renounce the second until we are sure we can avoid the third' (Schlesinger 1965: 769; also quoted in Barnett 1968: 158). Another instance of this approach was President Carter's support for the land reforms in El Salvador, which one US official explained in the following analogy: 'There is no one more conservative than a small farmer. We're going to be breeding capitalists like rabbits' (Simon and Stephen 1981: 38). President Clinton's administration seems to have succumbed to a similar dose of optimistic interventionism in its conviction that friendly nations could be rebuilt democratically in both Somalia and Haiti, although democracy had never existed in the first and was led in the second by Jean Bertrand Aristide, a charismatic socialist and an eloquent critic of American imperialism.

**Complaisance and isolationism**

The third effect apparent in the international relations of liberal states is David Hume's second assertion, that of 'supine complaisance'. This takes two forms: one is the failure to support allies; the other is a failure to oppose enemies.

Liberal states have often been shortsighted in preserving their basic preconditions under changing international circumstances, particularly in supporting the liberal character of the constituent states. Self-indulgent isolationism or appeasement by democratic majorities, reluctant to bear the fiscal cost, has failed on occasion—as it did with regard to Germany in the 1920s—to provide the timely international economic support for liberal regimes whose market foundations were in crisis. Liberal democratic majorities failed in the 1930s to provide military aid or political mediation to Spain, which was challenged by an armed minority, or to Czechoslovakia, which was caught in a dilemma of preserving national security or acknowledging the claims (fostered by Hitler's Germany) of the Sudeten minority to self-determination. Farsighted and constitutive measures seem to have only been provided by the liberal international order when one liberal state stood pre-eminent among the rest, prepared and able to take measures, as did Britain before the First World War and the USA following The Second World War, to sustain economically and politically the foundations of liberal society beyond its borders. Then measures such as British antislavery and free trade, the US loan to Britain in 1947, the Marshall Plan, NATO, GATT, the IMF, and the liberalization of Germany and Japan helped construct buttresses for the international liberal order (Kindleberger 1973; Gilpin 1975; Krasner 1976; Hirsch and Doyle 1977; Ikenberry 2001).

Of course, ideologically based policies can also be self-indulgent. Oligarchic or authoritarian allies in the Third World do not find consistent support in a liberal policy that stresses human rights. Conservative and realist critics claim that the security needs of these states are neglected, and that they fail to obtain military aid or more direct support when they need it (the Shah's Iran, Humberto Romero's El Salvador, Somoza's Nicaragua, and apartheid South Africa). Equally disturbing from those points of view, communist regimes are shunned even when a détente with them could further the strategic interests of the USA (China before 1976, Cuba). Welfare liberals particularly shun the first group, while laissez-faire liberals baulk at
close dealings with the second. In both cases economic interests or strategic interests are allegedly slighted.\textsuperscript{21}

A second manifestation of complaisance lies in a reaction to the excesses of interventionism. A mood of frustrated withdrawal affects policy towards strategically and economically important countries. Just as interventionism seems to be the typical failing of the liberal great power, so complaisance characterises declined or 'not quite risen' liberal states.\textsuperscript{22} Following the exhaustion of wars, representative legislature may become especially reluctant to undertake international commitments or to fund the military establishment needed to play a geopolitical role. Purely domestic concerns seem to take priority, as they did in the USA in the 1920s. Rational incentives for free riding on the extended defence commitments of the leader of the liberal alliance also induce this form of complaisance. During much of the nineteenth century the USA informally relied upon the British fleet for much of its security needs. During the Cold War, the Europeans and the Japanese, according to some American strategic analysts, failed to bear their 'fair' share of defence burdens.

Liberalism, if we take into account both Kant and Hume, thus carries with it three legacies: peace among liberals, imprudent vehemence towards non-liberals, and complaisance towards threats. The first legacy appears to be a special feature associated with liberalism and it can be demonstrated both statistically and through historical case studies (Owen 1996; O’Neal and Rusk 1997; Rousseau 2005). The latter two legacies cannot be shown to be special to liberalism, though their effects can be illustrated historically in liberal foreign policy and reflect laissez-faire, and social democratic, welfare variants. But the survival and growth in the number of liberal states suggests that imprudent vehemence and complaisance have not overwhelmed liberalism’s efficacy as a form of governance.

**Liberal foreign policy analysis**

Liberalism has complicated implications for theories of foreign policy (Nincic 1992; Zacher and Matthew 1995; Doyle 1997; Moravcsik 1997). Defined by the centrality of individual rights, private property, and representative government, liberalism is a domestic theory. Transposed to the international plane, liberals share a common framework or zone of peace with fellow liberals, where they vary according to whether property or welfare should guide international preferences and whether the risks of isolation are greater or less than those of internationalism. Foreign policy analyses strive to account for these patterns by focusing on whether individual rights, domestic commercial interests, or a more complicated combination of both, together with republican institutions and international perceptions, shape policy.

Liberal theorists agree with the realists that states exist under anarchy, but they disagree as to the nature of anarchy. Unlike the realists, liberals do not assume that international anarchy is a 'state of war'—a time 'wherein', in Hobbes's phrase, 'the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known' (Hobbes, Leviathan: 100). The realist 'state of war' is a time in which all states fear the possibility of war such that they are driven into contests of relative 'positional' (Grieco 1988) zero-sum games that produce balance of power alignments. Thus temporary cooperation is only possible within an alliance. Instead, the contest among liberal states can be a positive- or negative-sum game within a separate zone of peace among fellow liberals. A failure to inform others may undermine coordination when liberals are seeking compatible goals. In
more competitive situations, a failure to trust others may undermine cooperation when each would prefer at least one alternative to a failure to cooperate. But their inter-liberal security dilemma is generally solved by stable accommodation, rather than balancing. They can come to appreciate that the existence of other liberal states constitutes no threat, but instead constitutes an opportunity for mutually beneficial trade and (when needed) alliance against non-liberal states.

Thus liberals differ significantly from the realists. But liberal theorists also differ from each other, and they do so in systematic ways. Like realists, each of the liberal theorists must make assumptions about human nature, domestic society, and international structure as found in Kenneth Waltz's three images (Waltz 1959). Liberals pay more attention to domestic structures and individual differences than do realists, and believe that the international system (or Third Image) has a less than overriding influence and so distinguish themselves not only from structural realists but also from almost all realists. For the present analysis, we can identify three types of liberals: First Image Lockean (human nature), Second Image Commercial (societal), and Third Image Kantian (republican internationalist). Each of these images can explain the three features of liberal foreign relations, and each highlights special aspects and reveals difficult choices within liberal foreign policy.

Locke's international system, like that of realists such as his fellow seventeenth-century philosopher Thomas Hobbes, is anarchic. But the Lockean state is based on representation and ultimately on consent, while the Hobbesian state is indifferent to these matters as long as the state is sovereign. Locke's citizens, like Hobbes's, are rational independent individuals. The difference then lies in the importance that Locke attributed to the duties to protect life, liberty, and property that Locke thought accompanied citizens' rights to the same. It is these duties that lead just commonwealths to maintain peace with each other provided, i.e. that their natural partiality and the poorly institutionalized character of world politics do not overcome their duties to try to resolve disputes peacefully.

But partiality and weak international institutions are difficult to overcome, and so imprudent aggression and complaisance often occur. Thus Locke portrayed an international condition of troubled peace, only one step removed from the realist state of war and one fraught with 'inconveniences' that could deteriorate into war through the combined effects of bias, partiality, and the absence of a regular and objective system of adjudication and enforcement. There is, for example, much of Hobbesian rational unitary egoism in the Lockean 'Federative Power', with its pursuit of 'national advantage'. Locke is prepared, unlike most liberals, to delegate foreign policy to the executive, trusting that no better institution can pursue the public interest. In troubled times, Lockean international 'inconveniences' might well approach a nearly general state of war. But we also see one crucial difference. Locke's statepersons, like his citizens, are governed by the duties of natural law—life, liberty, and property. Lockean states are then distinguished by a commitment to mutual trust under the law. In the literature explaining the logic of negotiation, trust is crucial for stable agreements, and all rational egoistic bargainers will want to cultivate a reputation for it (Heymann 1973; Dunn 1984).

The commercial liberals—a second tradition of liberal scholarship focusing on Second Image domestic social forces—highlight the pacifying international-effects of markets and commercial capitalism. The tradition that Albert Hirschman has called doux commerce (soothing commerce) originates in the eighteenth-century attack on the realist doctrine of relative economic power then advocated by the Mercantilists (Hirschman 1982). Although
the commercial liberals such as Smith and Schumpeter argued that representative government contributed to peace—when the citizens who bear the burdens of war elect their governments, wars become unattractive—for them, the deeper cause of the zone of liberal peace was commerce. After all, democracies had been more war-prone in history. Thucydides’ story of democratic Athens was familiar to all with a classical education. Passions could wreak havoc among democrats as well. What was new was manufacturing and commerce—capitalism. Thomas Paine, the eighteenth-century radical American democrat, announced: ‘If commerce were permitted to act to the universal extent it is capable, it would extirpate the system of war’ (Paine 1995: Chapter 5). Paine contributed to a growing recognition of a powerful insight systematically developed by Enlightenment philosophers: war does not benefit commercial manufacturing societies. This view was articulated most comprehensively by the great Scottish philosopher-economist Adam Smith, and was then extended into a general theory of capitalist pacification by the Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter.

Like the realists, Schumpeter regarded the international system as anarchic. Like many realists (including Hobbes), he regards citizens as individualistic, rational, and egoistic, and usually materialistic. But Schumpeter sees the combination of democracy and capitalism as opening up a revolutionary transformation of domestic state and social structure. These societies are as self-interestingly deterministically pacific as the Hobbesian Leviathan is bellicose. Hobbesian Leviathans, after all, were merely Hobbesian individuals writ large, with all their individual competitiveness and egoism. Schumpeter’s state is a structured whole, distinct from its parts, transformed as it were by an ‘invisible hand’ (to borrow the classic commercial metaphor from Adam Smith). According to Schumpeter (1955: 68), when the people’s energies are daily absorbed in production, ‘economic rationalism’, or the instability of market competition, necessitates calculation. It also ‘individualizes’ as ‘subjective opportunities’ replace the ‘immutable factors’ of traditional hierarchical society. Rational individuals then demand democratic governance. Market capitalism and democratic majoritarianism make individual material egoism and competitiveness into pacifism. Democratic capitalism means free trade and a peaceful foreign policy simply because they are, Schumpeter claimed, the first best solutions for rational majorities in capitalist societies. This is the heart of the contemporary enthusiasm, expressed by many liberal politicians, for global democratization and capitalism as the inevitable and pacific routes to peace at the ‘end of history’.

Thus First and Second Image liberals differ from each other. Schumpeter makes the peace, which is a duty of the Lockean liberal statesman, into the structured outcome of capitalist democracy. Both highlight for us powerful elements of liberal world politics. But if there is a long state of peace between liberal republics, Locke offers us a weak explanation for it. (How do they avoid partiality and bias so regularly in their relations?) He also misses the persistent state of war between liberals and non-liberals. (Why are the liberals so regularly more partial here?) Schumpeter misses the liberal sources of war with non-liberals, unless we should blame all these wars on the non-liberals.

Kant and the republican internationalists try to fill these gaps as they illustrate the larger potential of the liberal tradition. Immanuel Kant’s 1795 essay ‘Perpetual Peace’ offers a coherent explanation of two important regularities in world politics—the tendencies of liberal states simultaneously to be peace-prone in their relations with each other and unusually war-prone
in their relations with non-liberal states. Republican representation, liberal respect, and transnational interdependence, (to rephrase Kant's three 'definitive articles' of the hypothetical peace treaty he asked states to sign) are three necessary and, together, sufficient causes of the two regularities taken in tandem.

Kant's theory held that a stable expectation of systemic peace among states would be achieved once three conditions were met. He calls them the 'definitive articles' of the hypothetical peace treaty he wants states to sign. Together they constitute a liberal republic and explain the foundations of the three features of liberal foreign relations. We can rephrase them as follows.

- **Representative republican government** which includes an elected legislative, separation of powers, and the rule of law. Kant argued that together those institutional features lead to caution because the government is responsible to its citizens. This does not guarantee peace. It should select for popular wars.

- **A commitment to peace based upon a principled respect for the non-discriminatory rights** that all human beings can rightfully claim. This should produce a commitment to respect the rights of fellow liberal republics (because they represent free citizens, who as individuals have rights that deserve our respect) and a suspicion of non-republics (because if those governments cannot trust their own citizens, what should lead us to trust them). 24

- **The possibility of social and economic interdependence** Trade and social interaction generally engender a mix of conflict and cooperation. A foreign economic policy of free trade tends to produce material benefits superior to optimum tariffs if other states will retaliate against tariffs, as they usually do. Liberalism produces special material incentives for cooperation because, among fellow liberals, economic interdependence should not be subject to security-motivated restrictions and, consequently, tends to be more varied, less dependent on single issues, and less subject to single conflicts. 25 (See Box 3.5.)

Kant suggested that each was necessary and together they were sufficient to establish a secure expectation of peace. The first principle specifies representative government responsible to the majority; the second and third specify the majority's ends and interests. Together the three generate an expectation of peaceful interaction among fellow liberals—the liberal zone of peace—and suspicion towards non-liberals. Liberal aggressive imprudence and complaisant indifference are the choices that elected legislatures and executives make, reflecting the preferences (ideas, ideals, and interests) of the governing coalitions elections.

**Box 3.5 - The liberal foreign policy process**

Liberalism could shape foreign policy in democracies either because public opinion is liberal and demands it, or because the political elite has liberal values and implements them. But a more likely process is that neither the public nor the elite is united in a single set of values, and that the elite typically manages policy but non-liberal members of the elite are deterred from choosing anti-liberal policies because they have good reason to doubt that anti-liberal policies would be sustained by a majority of the public at the next election.
produce. When galvanized by international threats or pushed by commercial interests, elected governments become aggressive towards non-liberals. When exhausted by war, they become complaisant. Governing coalitions also choose conservative, laissez-faire, or reformist social welfare variants of liberalism which, as discussed, lead to differing foreign policies.

**Mitigating trade-offs**

If a concern for protecting and expanding the range of international freedom is to shape liberal strategic aims, then foreign policy towards both liberal and non-liberal worlds should be guided by general liberal principles. At a minimum, this should mean rejecting the realist balance of power as a general strategy by refusing to balance against the capabilities of fellow democratic liberals, and trusting the liberal community. At its fullest, this also means going beyond the standard obligations of general international law. Membership in the liberal community should imply accepting a positive duty to defend other members of the liberal community, to discriminate in certain instances in their favour, and to override in some circumstances the domestic sovereignty of states in order to rescue fellow human beings from intolerable oppressions such as genocide and ethnic cleansing. Authentically liberal policies should in some circumstances call for attempts to secure personal and civil rights, to foster democratic government, and to expand the scope and effectiveness of the world market economy as well as to meet those basic human needs that make the exercise of human rights possible. (See Table 3.1)

In order to avoid the extremist possibilities of its abstract universalism, liberal policy should be constrained both by a respect for consequences measured in terms of liberal values and by a geopolitical budget. Strategy involves matching what we are prepared to spend with what we want to achieve; it identifies aims, resources, threats, and allies. Balancing the first two, minimizing the third, and fostering the fourth are the core elements of a liberal foreign policy that seeks to preserve and expand the community of liberal democracies without violating liberal principles or bankrupting liberal states (Muravchik 1991; Deudney and Ikenberry 1991/92; Smith 1994).

Liberals should not embark upon crusades for democracy because in a world armed with nuclear weapons, crusading is suicidal. And in a world where changes in regional balances of power could be extremely destabilizing for ourselves and our allies, indiscriminate provocations of hostility (such as against the People’s Republic of China) could create increased insecurity (for Japan and ourselves). Liberals—even liberal hyperpowers such as the US—simply do not have the excess strength that frees them from the need to economize on dangers (as the USA painfully rediscovered in Iraq and Afghanistan).

Instead, liberal strategy for expanding the international community of liberal states should lean towards the defensive. It should strive to protect the liberal community, foster the conditions that might allow the liberal community to grow, and save the use of force for clear emergencies that severely threaten the survival of the community or core liberal values. The strategy should first preserve—protecting the community and managing and mitigating the normal tensions among liberal market economies—and then expand. Ruling out an offensive state strategy, one should rely primarily on transnational civil society for expansion by three methods; it should begin with ‘inspiration’, and call upon ‘intervention’ only when necessary.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historical period</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18th century</td>
<td>Swiss Cantons, French Republic 1790–1795, USA 1776–</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800–1850</td>
<td>Swiss Confederation, USA, France (1830–1849), Belgium (1830–), Great Britain (1832–), Netherlands (1848–), Piedmont (1848–), Denmark (1849–)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850–1900</td>
<td>Switzerland, USA, Belgium, Great Britain, Netherlands, Piedmont (1861), Italy (1861–), Denmark (1866), Sweden (1864–), Greece (1864–), Canada (1867–), France (1871–), Argentina (1880–), Chile (1891–)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900–1945</td>
<td>Switzerland, USA, Great Britain, Sweden, Canada, Greece (1911, 1928–1936), Italy (1922), Belgium (1940), Netherlands (1940), Argentina (1943), France (1940), Chile (1924, 1932), Australia (1901), Norway (1905–1940), New Zealand (1907), Colombia (1910–1949), Denmark (1914–1940), Poland (1917–1935), Latvia (1922–1934), Germany (1918–1932), Austria (1918–1934), Estonia (1919–1934), Finland (1919–), Uruguay (1919–), Costa Rica (1919–), Czechoslovakia (1920–1939), Ireland (1920–), Mexico (1928–), Lebanon (1944–)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 3.1 (continued)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Historical period</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total number</th>
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This is an approximate list of 'liberal regimes' (through 1994, thus including regimes that were liberal democratic as of 1990) drawn up according to the four 'Kantian' institutions described as essential: (1) market and private property economies; (2) polities that are externally sovereign; (3) citizens who possess juridical rights; (4) 'republican' (whether republican or parliamentary monarchy) representative government. The list of these includes the requirement that the legislative branch have an effective role in public policy and be formally and competitively (either inter- or intra-party) elected. Furthermore, I have taken into account whether male suffrage is wide (i.e., 30%) or, as Kant would have had it, open to 'achievement' by inhabitants (for example, to poll-tax payers or householders) of the national or metropolitan territory (Kant's Metaphysics of Morals, in Kant's Political Writings, p. 139). This list of liberal regimes is thus more inclusive than a list of democratic regimes or polyarchies (Powell 1982: 5). Female suffrage is granted within a generation of its being demanded by an extensive female suffrage movement; and representative government is internally sovereign (including especially over military and foreign affairs) as well as stable (in existence for at least three years). (Banks and Overstreet 1983; The Europa Yearbook 1985; Gastil 1985; McColm and Freedom House Survey Team 1991; Finn et al., 1993). The contemporary list, excluding liberal regimes with populations less than one million, includes all states categorized as 'Free' by Freedom House and those 'Partly Free' (four political and five civil liberties or more free).

* There are domestic variations within these liberal regimes. For example, Switzerland was liberal only in certain cantons; the USA was liberal only north of the Mason-Dixon line until 1865, when it became liberal throughout. These lists also exclude ancient 'republics', since none appear to fit Kant's criteria (Holmes 1979).

* Canada, as a commonwealth within the British empire, did not have formal control of its foreign policy during this period.

Preservation

Above all, liberal foreign policy should strive to preserve the peace union of similarly liberal societies, which is not only currently of immense strategic value (being the political foundation of both NATO and the US-Japanese alliance), but is also the single best hope for the evolution
of a peaceful world. Therefore liberals should be prepared to defend and formally ally with authentically liberal democratic states that are subject to threats or actual instances of external attack or internal subversion. Liberals have taken for granted and underestimated the importance of the democratic alliance. Their alliances in NATO, with Japan, and in ANZUS, and alignments with other democratic states, are not only crucial to their present security, but the best hopes for long-term peace and the realization of their ideals. Liberals should not treat them as once useful but now purposeless Cold War strategic alignments against the power of the USSR.

Global problem-solving, ranging from climate change to nuclear proliferation to economic growth, will require diplomacy that involves all states, including China and Russia and many other non-democracies. For these purposes liberal states will need to work across ideological divides and strengthen multilateral institutions such as the UN, IMF, World Bank, and WTO. But the liberal world also needs to strengthen its own collective security multilaterally, not replacing the UN with an ‘alliance of democracies’, but supplementing it with democratic collective security. The current need to redefine NATO and the increasing importance of the US relationship with Japan offer us an opportunity to broaden the organization of liberal security. Joining all the democratic states together in a single democratic security organization would secure an important forum for the definition and coordination of common interests that stretch beyond the regional concerns of Europe and the Far East. With the end of the Cold War, pressures towards regionalism are likely to become increasingly strong. In order to avoid the desperate reactions that might follow regional crises such as those of the 1920s and 1930s, a collective security organization for liberal democracies seems necessary. It could reduce pressures on Japan and Germany to arm themselves with nuclear weapons, mitigate the strategic vulnerabilities of isolated liberal states such as Israel, and allow for the complementary pooling of strategic resources (combining, for example, Japanese and German financial clout with American nuclear deterrence, and with American, British, and French expeditionary thrust). The expansion of NATO on the European continent is one part of this security umbrella. It should include all established democratic members and then establish a transitional category for all democratizing states that have yet to experience two democratic elections.

However, much of the success of multilateral management will rest on shoring up its economic supports. ‘$6000 GDP per capita’, Adam Przeworski and colleagues have noted, ‘democracies are impregnable and can be expected to live forever’ (297). Below that per capita income level, steady low-inflation economic growth is one key to protecting democratic government (Przeworski et al. 1995: 298). Unilateral solutions to national economic growth (exchange rate depreciation, increased taxation) may be necessary, but they are not sufficient and some (long-term protectionism) are neither. Avoidance of a costly global economic recession calls for continued trade liberalization and expansion of international investment to match whatever contractions of governmental spending and private consumption are needed to contain national inflationary pressures.

Discovering ways to manage global interdependence will call for difficult economic adjustments at home and institutional innovations in the world economy. Under these circumstances, liberals will need to ensure that those suffering losses, such as from market disruption or restriction, do not suffer either a permanent loss of income or exclusion from world markets. Although intense economic interdependence generates conflicts, it also helps to sustain the material well-being underpinning liberal societies and to promise avenues of development to Third World states with markets that are currently limited by low income. To this
CHAPTER 3 LIBERALISM AND FOREIGN POLICY

should be added mutually beneficial measures designed to improve Third World economic performance. Export earnings insurance, international debt management assistance, export diversification assistance, and technical aid are among these. In the case of the truly desperate poor, such as is the condition of some of the populations of Africa, more direct measures of international aid and relief from famine are required, as a matter of both political prudence and moral duty.

Furthermore, if measures of temporary economic protection are needed, liberal states should undertake these measures only by international negotiation and only when the resulting agreements are subject to a regular review by all the parties. Otherwise, emergency measures could reverberate into a spiral of isolationism. Thus the liberal community needs to create a diplomatic/international atmosphere conducive to multilateral problem-solving. Foreign policies conveying a commitment to collective responsibility in US diplomacy will go far in this direction (Bergsten et al. 1978; Cooper et al. 1978; Stiglitz 2002: Chapters 10 and 16).

Expansion

Preserving the community is important in part because there are few direct measures that the liberal world can take to foster the stability, development, and spread of liberal democratic regimes. Many direct efforts, including military intervention and overt or covert funding for democratic movements in other countries, discredit those movements as the foreign interference backfires through the force of local nationalism.

Therefore much of the potential success of a policy designed to foster democracy rests on an ability to shape an economic and political environment that indirectly supports or instigates democratic governance and creates pressures for the democratic reform of authoritarian rule.

Politically, there are few measures more valuable than an active human rights diplomacy, which enjoys global legitimacy and (if successful) can assure a political environment that tolerates the sort of dissent that can nourish an indigenous democratic movement. There is reason to pay special attention to those countries entering what Huntington (1981b) has called the socio-economic transition zone—countries having the economic development typically associated with democracy (see also Przeworski 1995). For them, more direct support in the form of electoral infrastructure (from voting machines to battalions of international observers) can provide the essential margin persuading contentious domestic groups to accept the fairness of the crucial first election.

Following the Second World War, the allied occupation and re-making of Germany and Japan, and the Marshall Plan’s successful coordination and funding of the revival of Europe’s pre-war industrial economies and democratic regimes offers a model of how much can be achieved with an extraordinary commitment of resources and the most favourable possible environment (Schwartz 1991). In practice today, short of those very special circumstances, there are few direct means to stimulate democratic development from abroad apart from inspiration.

Inspiration

The simplest programme for liberal expansion is to be the ‘City on a Hill’. The success of liberalism at home stands as an example for emulation and a refuge for beleaguered liberals in oppressive countries everywhere. Liberalism, moreover, taps into deep chords of common
humanity that lend confidence that all may some day follow a similar path towards liberation, allowing for the appropriate national and cultural differences. Peoples will liberate themselves by modernizing themselves. One liberal 'strategy' is simply to live up to their own principles at home, and wait for others to modernize themselves.

Francis Fukuyama's striking argument about the 'End of History' presents a radical restatement of the liberal modernization theme, bringing together both its materialist and idealist strains. His study envisions the failure of all forms of autocracy, whether in Eastern Europe or elsewhere, and the triumph of consumer capitalism and democracy under the irresistible onslaught of modernization. Today, however, we have mounting evidence that free-market capitalism may not even be the quintessential capitalist answer to growth under the conditions of late-late capitalism. The most striking rates of growth of the post-war period appear to have been achieved by the semi-planned capitalist economies of East Asia—Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, Japan, and now China and India. Indicative planning, capital rationing by para-statal development banks and ministries of finance, managed trade, and incorporated unions—capitalist syndicalism, not capitalist libertarianism—seemed to describe the wave of the capitalist future.28

While China's current success (10% growth annually) with 'market-Leninism' or 'national corporatism' seems to confirm the non-liberal path, the potential for liberalism need not be completely discounted. Economists have raised concerns about whether Asian capitalism can evolve from capital accumulation to 'total factor productivity', which may require a loosening of indicative planning. Thus in China market forces have stimulated the formation of thousands of business and professional groups and greater village-level (democratic) self-management. Another route to democratization lies in the institutional routinization of authority, what Minxin Pei has called 'creeping democratization' in the Chinese context (Pei 1995). Even when leaders are opposed to democratization and even when the forces of civil society lack the power or the interest to promote a democratization of the state, democratization may 'creep' in. When leaders seek to defend their authority by recruiting allies, ceding to them competency embodied in institutional routines and government structures, the beginnings of constitutional checks and balances are set in motion. Representing diverse and sometimes extensive interests, the new institutions limit arbitrary power and begin to delegate power in their turn, further institutionalizing a regime. Step by step, the foundations of the rule of law are laid, as they are now (albeit slowly) in China, where new clusters of authority in the National People's Congress—such as the court system and the legal profession, and village councils—are emerging.

Here the roles of global civil society and international civil politics are particularly important. Tourism, educational exchanges, and scientific meetings spread tastes across borders; indeed, such transnational contacts with the liberal world seem to have had a liberalizing effect on the many Soviet and East European elites who visited the West during the Cold War, demonstrating both Western material successes (where they existed) and regimes that tolerated and even encouraged dissent and popular participation (when they did) (Deudney and Ikenberry 1991/92). The international commitment to human rights, including the Helsinki Watch process, found a reflection in Gorbachev's 'universal human values'. The 'Goddess of Liberty' erected in Tian'anmen Square represented another transnational expression of ideas shared on a global basis (see Chapter Seventeen).
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Intervention

Liberal principles can also help us think about whether liberal states should attempt to rescue individuals oppressed by their own governments. Historically, liberals have divided on these issues. Traditionally, and in accord with current international law, states have the right to defend themselves, come to the aid of other states aggressed against, and take forcible measures to protect, where necessary, their citizens from wrongful injury and release them from wrongful imprisonment (Cutler 1985). However, modern international law condemns sanctions and force designed to redress the domestic oppression of states. The UN Charter is ambiguous on this issue, since it finds human rights to be international concerns and permits the Security Council to intervene to prevent what it determines to be 'threats' to 'international peace and security'.

Choosing a foreign policy of non-intervention has important moral foundations. Non-intervention helps to encourage order—stable expectations—in a confusing world without international government. It rests on a respect for the rights of individuals to establish their own way of life free from foreign interference. The basic moral presumption of liberal thought is that states should not be subject to foreign intervention, by military or other means. Therefore states should be taken as representing the moral rights of individuals unless there is clear evidence to the contrary. Although liberals and democrats have often succumbed to the temptation to intervene to bring civilization, metropolitan standards of law and order, and democratic government to foreign peoples who have expressed no demand for them, these interventions find no justification in a conception of equal respect for individuals. This is simply because it is to their sense of their own self-respect and not our sense of what they should respect that we must accord equal consideration.

What it means to respect another's sense of self-determination is not always self-evident. Ascertaining what it might mean can best be considered as an attempt at both subjective and objective interpretation. One criterion is subjective. We should credit the voice of their majority. Obviously, this means not intervening against states with apparent majority support. In authoritarian states, however, determining what the wishes of the majority are is particularly difficult. Some states will have divided political communities with a considerable share, but less than a majority, of the population supporting the government, a large minority opposing, and many indifferent. Some will be able to suppress dissent completely. Others will not. Therefore widespread armed resistance sustained by local resources and massive street demonstrations against the state (and not just against specific policies) can provide evidence of a people standing against their own government. Still, one will want to find clear evidence that the dissenters actually want a foreign intervention to solve their oppression. The other criterion is objective. No group of individuals, even if apparently silent, can be expected to consent to having their basic rights to life, food, shelter, and freedom from torture systematically violated. These sorts of rights clearly cross-cut wide cultural differences.

Whenever either or both of these violations take place, one has a prima facie consideration favouring foreign intervention. But even rescuing majorities suffering severe oppression or individuals suffering massive and systematic violations of human rights is not sufficient grounds to justify military intervention. We must also have some reasonable expectation that the intervention will actually end the oppression. We need to expect that it will end the
massacre or address starvation (as did India's intervention in East Pakistan and Tanzania's in Uganda). Or, if pro-democratic, that it has a reasonable chance of establishing authentic self-determination, rather than (as J. S. Mill warned) merely introducing puppet rulers who, dependent on outside support, soon begin to replicate the oppressive behaviour of the previous rulers. Moreover, the intervention must be a proportional response to the suffering now endured and likely to be endured without an intervention. Countries, any more than villages, cannot be destroyed in order to be saved. We must consider whether means other than military intervention could achieve the liberation from oppression. And we must ensure that the intervention, if necessary, is conducted in a way that minimizes casualties, most particularly non-combatant casualties. In short, we must be able to account morally for the expected casualties of an invasion, both to our own soldiers and the non-combatant victims. Lastly, interventions should incorporate a normal sense of fallibility, together with a decent respect for the opinions of the entire community of nations. Meeting these standards requires, wherever feasible, a resort to multilateral organizations to guide and legally legitimate a decision to violate the sovereignty of another state.

Conclusion

Liberal foreign policy presents both a promise and a warning. Alliances founded on mutual strategic interest among liberal and non-liberal states have been broken, economic ties between liberal and non-liberal states have proved fragile, but the political bonds of liberal rights and interests have proved a remarkably firm foundation for mutual non-aggression. A separate peace exists among liberal states. But in their relations with non-liberal states, liberal states have not escaped from the insecurity caused by anarchy in the world political system considered as a whole. Moreover, the very constitutional restraint, international respect for individual rights, and shared commercial interests that establish grounds for peace among liberal states establish grounds for additional conflict irrespective of actual threats to national security in the relations between liberal and non-liberal societies. And in their relations with all states, liberal states have not solved the problems of international cooperation and competition. Liberal publics can become absorbed in domestic issues, and international liberal respect does not preclude trade rivalries or guarantee farsighted collective solutions to international security and welfare.

Key points

- For more than two centuries, liberal countries have tended to maintain peaceful relations with each other. Liberal democracies are each other's natural allies.
- Therefore a fundamental postulate of liberal foreign policy is preserving and expanding the liberal zone of peace.
- Liberalism contributes to the understanding of foreign policy by highlighting how individuals and the ideas and ideals they espouse (such as human rights, liberty, and democracy), social forces (capitalism, markets), and political institutions (democracy, representation) can have direct effects on foreign relations.
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- But liberalism has also proved to be a dangerous guide to foreign policy, often exacerbating tensions with non-liberal states.
- The foreign policy question essential for all democracies is thus: Can the liberal peace be effectively preserved and expanded without provoking unnecessary danger and inflicting unnecessary harm?
- Scholars have analysed liberalism's effects by distinguishing three key interpretations of liberal foreign policy: individualist, commercial, and republican.

Questions

1. What characteristics identify a typical liberal state? How well does an actual liberal state that you know—the US, UK, France, Germany, Japan, South Africa—match those characteristics?
2. What differences are said to distinguish individualist, commercial, and republican liberalisms? How and why do their foreign policies differ?
3. What might the citizens and leaders of liberal states do to improve the prospects that the good features of liberal foreign policy (the liberal peace) are enhanced and the bad ones (imprudence, interventionism) constrained?
4. Under what circumstances should a liberal theorist of foreign policy support or reject international military intervention?
5. What should a liberal theorist expect to happen in US-European relations and US-Chinese relations if Europe unites in a powerful democratic federation or China both continues to grow and democratizes? Would these expectations differ from those that a realist balance of power theorist would expect?

Further reading

A valuable collection of essays by proponents and critics of the democratic peace proposition.

A wide-ranging survey of international relations theory, including liberalism, realism, and socialism, and their policy implications.

Kant, I. (1795), 'Perpetual Peace', In H. Reiss (ed.), Kant's Political Writings (trans. H. B. Nisbet).
Written in 1795 by the great German philosopher Immanuel Kant, when there were few if any liberal republics; nonetheless, the classic source for the liberal peace.

The classic nineteenth-century liberal defence of both non-intervention and liberal imperialism.

A quantitative assessment of the democratic peace, with insightful case studies.

Visit the Online Resource Centre that accompanies this book for more information:
www.oxfordtextbooks.co.uk/orc/smith_foreign/